Letter from the President

Barbara Hales

It is 2010! Fifty years ago in New York, the Fourth Teratology Conference became the Organization Meeting of the Teratology Society. The following officers were elected by acclamation: President, Josef Warkany; President-Elect, James G. Wilson; Secretary-Treasurer, Marjorie M. Nelson; Recorder, Sidney Q. Cohan; Council Members, M. Lois Murphy, David Gunberg and F. Clarke Fraser. The Teratology Society’s first annual scientific meeting was held in 1961. It is fascinating to read the program of this first meeting in the article entitled “The History of Organized Teratology in North America” by James G. Wilson and Josef Warkany (Teratology 31:285-296, 1985). So much has changed and yet so much remains the same. Our 2010 meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, under the theme "Healthy Lifestyles for Parents and Children“ will capture some of both! The role of genes, nutrition, the environment – step continued on page 2

Vice-President Report

Update on Plans for the 50th Annual Meeting

John M. Rogers

As chair of the Program and 50th Annual Meeting committees, I’m thankful for all of the help I’ve received from committee members and others to make this landmark meeting a success. I think the scientific program has something for everyone, a great mix of cutting edge science and a look back at the past 50 years of the Society and the science. We have over 100 submitted abstracts, great continuing education courses, and CME credits for those who want to participate. The updated Teratology Primer will be available by the time of the meeting, as well as an update of the “History of the Teratology Society” article published in 2000 by Tom Shepard, Mason Barr, Bob Brent, Andy Hendrickx, Dave Kochhar, Godfrey Oakley and Bill Scott.

At the President’s Welcome Reception we will have a silent auction with prizes featuring food, goods and services from local Louisville merchants, and others. On Tuesday afternoon, there will be a special session celebrating the 50th meeting, with tributes to Josef Warkany, James Wilson, F. Clarke Fraser and others, along with a look forward by our students and newer members, and a game of “jeopardy” with topics highlighting people and achievements of the Society. The “Mentor Corp” recordings will be available for viewing during the meeting and we’ll have some highlights of that at the banquet. We will have pictures, documents and other things of historical interest on display in the common areas. Please send me or the business office copies of any photos or other things that you think might be of interest. We will also have several commemorative items for all attendees. We need help increasing the number of sponsors for the meeting, so if you have not already done so, please read the recent e-mails from the Society about how you can help raise support for the meeting.

It is going to be a great time for all in Louisville, so register now if you have not done so already, and make your arrangements to be there and be part of it!
back to radiation and thalidomide and forward to vitamin B₁₂ or the 21st century developmental toxicology. You will not want to miss either the cutting edge science OR the displays and events commemorating our 50th anniversary. Our new “Distinguished Service Award”, honoring an individual who has provided outstanding service to The Teratology Society, will be presented for the first time in Louisville.

At the 1967 Annual Meeting the decision was made to start our journal “Teratology: Journal of Abnormal Development.” Since, Teratology has “gone forth and multiplied” to be today our Birth Defects Research journals Parts A, B and C. We are especially pleased that all three Parts of Birth Defects Research are planning special issues to celebrate the achievements of the Teratology Society and its members during their first 50 years.

So now we move to the challenges and opportunities of today. Council and our Standing and Ad Hoc committees have set increasing the visibility of the Society, engaging the membership and increasing committee activity and awareness via the Website as key priorities. We are very pleased that the “Teratology Primer”, first published in 2005, will not only be updated but also be online so that it is accessible to everyone interested in birth defects research. The delivery date is set for June 2010! We also are pleased that a commitment has been made to implement collaboration tools, to be accessed through our website. These tools should be attractive to students and postdocs, useful for enhancing communication among the membership and within committees, and facilitate the development of an electronic membership application, a long-term request of the Membership Committee. For some of us, like me, this really will be a welcome to the 21st century. Of course, we need your help, your input, and your comments in moving forward! Please contact me or the Business Office if you have an interest in serving on one of our committees, have ideas for the Society, or would like to volunteer in some capacity.

Most importantly, join us for the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Teratology Society, June 26-30, 2010, at the Marriott Louisville Downtown in Louisville, KY, to celebrate the scientific achievements in birth defects research over the past 50 years. Register early. Remember to sign up for your CME credits! And bring your trainees, colleagues, friends and family. We hope to see all of you there.

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**Journal Special Issues**

**Birth Defects Research**
celebrates the society’s 50th anniversary

**Birth Defects Research Part A: Clinical and Molecular Teratology**

The October issue of BDRA will be a Special Issue marking the 50th anniversary of the Teratology Society. The Guest Editors are Sonja Rasmussen, Tina Chambers, and Barbara Hales. The issue will reprint 4 classic, highly cited papers from Teratology, on the topics of alcohol, retinoic acid, diabetes, and an environmental teratogen. For each topic, there will be three or four new articles solicited from current experts, presenting current understanding of mechanisms and prevention.

**Birth Defects Research Part B: Developmental and Reproductive Toxicology**

BDRB plans to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Society by publishing a series of articles that describe the impact of a number of seminal papers published in the ‘60s and ‘70s. The focus will be on papers that served as a foundation for a large body of work on teratogenic mechanisms. Each article will provide a description of the seminal paper, a commentary on its significance, and a review and perspective on the research that built on the initial finding or hypothesis. Most of the seminal papers will be from the pages of Teratology.

**Birth Defects Research Part C: Embryo Today: Reviews**

BDRC will highlight several problems that have been studied over the years and follow how the research evolved from descriptive to mechanistic levels from seasoned investigators who have been active in the field for several decades and who understand the historical context of a long-standing problem, who can write about the evolution of technologies used to study that problem, who know firsthand the current state of the science and understand the challenges and opportunities for moving this research forward. Focused topics will demonstrate historical context, technological evolution, and future implications for biological understanding of birth defects.

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continued from page 1
The Teratology Society has benefited greatly from the leadership of the founding members and officers for 50 years. The Nominations Committee has prepared an outstanding slate of candidates to carry the momentum forward into the next decade. Voting members of the Teratology Society have the opportunity to cast their vote electronically.

This year’s candidates are:

**Vice President-elect**

Edward Carney  
The Dow Chemical Company

L. David Wise  
Merck Research Laboratories

**Treasurer**

Wafa A. Harrouk  
U.S. FDA

Chris Stodgell  
University of Rochester

**Councilor**

Mark Hurtt  
Pfizer, Inc.

Tacey White  
GlaxoSmithKline

The Teratology Society appreciates the willingness of these individuals to serve the membership.
Folic Acid Awareness
Deborah Hansen

Whether or not you’re planning to have a baby this year, (about 50 percent of all pregnancies are unplanned), you can start a new habit that will help give a baby a healthy start in life.

January 4-10 was Folic Acid Awareness Week and a great reminder of the importance of taking a multivitamin with 400 mcg of the B-vitamin folic acid every day. Starting before pregnancy begins, is an important way to reduce the risk of birth defects of the brain or spine called neural tube defects (NTD) by up to 70 percent. NTDs occur in the first weeks of fetal development, often before a woman even knows she is pregnant.

Hispanic babies are 1.5 to 2 times more likely than others in the United States to be born with a neural tube defect (NTD). The CDC reports that Latinas in the United States consume the least amount of folic acid and have the least knowledge about folic acid among racial or ethnic groups in this country.

The Teratology Society is a member of the National Council on Folic Acid, a partnership of national organizations, associations, and state folic acid councils reaching over 100 million people a year with the folic acid message. For more information about folic acid, visit www.folicacidinfo.org.

Plan Ahead
Future TS Meetings!

50th Annual Meeting
June 26-30, 2010
Marriott Louisville Downtown
Louisville, KY

51st Annual Meeting
June 24-29, 2011
Loews Coronado Bay Resort
Coronado, CA

52nd Annual Meeting
June 22-27, 2012
Marriott Waterfront Baltimore
Baltimore, MD

53rd Annual Meeting
June 21-26, 2013
Loews Ventana Canyon Resort
Tucson, AZ

(Adapted from photo by Jeff Kubina/Flickr, available under a Creative Commons License (Attribution 2.0))
Too Much of a Good Thing?

Deborah Hansen

January was Birth Defects Prevention Month, and one week of that month was set aside as Folic Acid Awareness Week (Jan. 4-10, 2010). A recent issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition contains two articles examining folate intake. Authors of both studies used NHANES data collected from 2003 to 2006 and both focused on folate intake, especially regarding the recommended upper intake level (UL).

One of the studies (Yang et al., Am J Clin Nutr 91:64, 2010) found that only 2.7% of the population exceeded the UL of 1 mg/day, and most of these individuals were taking supplements containing over 400 ug of folate. They concluded that adults who either consume no supplements or consume supplements with no more than 400 ug of folate are unlikely to exceed the UL.

The other study (Bailey et al., Am J Clin Nutr 91:231, 2010) also reported a low frequency of individuals exceeding the UL (5% in their study). However, the not-so-good news is that women take in less folate than men. Regardless of the age group, 12-19% of women consume less than the recommended level of folate, while only 4-9% of men fall into this category. Total folate intake was highest for non-Hispanic whites, followed by Mexican Americans and non-Hispanic blacks. Over 23% of non-Hispanic black women fall below the recommended intake of folic acid.

An editorial by Irwin Rosenberg in the same journal issue points out that the FDA models used in 1996 correctly predicted an increase in folate levels among women of childbearing age while minimizing over exposure to others in the population. He refers to several recent studies which discuss possible safety issues with high levels of folate intake and suggests that the recommendations made over a decade ago should be carefully reviewed and updated.

Teratology Reference Library Available

Retired professor and 42 year member of the Teratology Society offers "free to a good home" an extensive collection of bound journals, books, and reprints relating to the first 40 years of modern experimental teratology, in excellent "near new" condition, already packed and inventoried. Inventory available. Contact Prof. B. E. Smith at bradley.smith@vanderbilt.edu.
Welcome, New Teratology Society Members!

Members who joined in 2009:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Cange</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria V. Cangialosi, Ph.D.</td>
<td>University of Palermo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura A. Cox, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research</td>
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<td>Donna R. Davila, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Abbott Laboratories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luc De Schaepdrijver, D.V.M., Ph.D.</td>
<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson Pharmaceutical Research and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kristin Rogers DiBona</td>
<td>The University of Alabama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teresa Dodd-Butera, Ph.D.</td>
<td>CSU San Bernardino, College of Natural Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shannon M. Fernandez, Ph.D.</td>
<td>GlaxoSmithKline</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Harvey, M.S., B.S.</td>
<td>Amgen, Inc.</td>
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<td>Maria Dolores Hernandez Almaguer</td>
<td>Facultad de Medicina, UANL</td>
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<td>Eric Pendleton Hooker, M.S.</td>
<td>Tetra Tech Sciences</td>
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<td>Frederick Kenneth Huynh, B.S.</td>
<td>California State University, Northridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amy L. Inselman</td>
<td>FDA/National Center for Toxicological Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winnie Jeng, Ph.D., DABT</td>
<td>Sanofi-Aventis US Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>James H. Kim, Ph.D., DABT</td>
<td>ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian J. Koos, M.D., D.Phil.</td>
<td>David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA</td>
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<td>Sophie Kulaga, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Centre de Recherche Hopital Ste-Justine, Universite de Montreal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Landgrigan, M.D., M.Sc.</td>
<td>Mount Sinai School of Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley N. Lovich</td>
<td>Emporia State University</td>
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<td>Om Makwana</td>
<td>University of Arizona</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klara Matouskova, M.D., M.P.H.</td>
<td>University of Toronto</td>
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<td>Lutfiya Miller, B.Sc.</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
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<td>Estefania G. Moreira, Ph.D.</td>
<td>University of Louisville</td>
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<td>Ntube Nini Olive Ngalame, M.S.</td>
<td>McGill University</td>
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<td>France-Helene Paradis</td>
<td>University of Toronto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annmarie Ramkissoon, B.Sc.</td>
<td>The Mercer University School of Medicine</td>
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<td>Padmanabhan Rengasamy, MS, Ph.D., DSc</td>
<td>University of Rochester</td>
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<td>Amber Rinderknecht, Ph.D.</td>
<td>University of North Carolina Wilmington</td>
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<td>Susan Sinclair Roberts, Ph.D.</td>
<td>McGill University</td>
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<td>Ava Schlissier, B.Sc.</td>
<td>USDA/ARS/ Poisonous Plant Research Laboratory</td>
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<td>Sharon P. Terry, M.S.</td>
<td>University of California, Davis</td>
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<td>Kevin Welch, Ph.D., BS</td>
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<td>Hsunhui Yang</td>
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Annual Meeting Deadlines:

**May 15** – Advance Registration Deadline

**May 24** – Hotel Reservation Deadline

**June 1** – Pre-registration

Is there something missing?

Suggest any one-time or recurring content ideas to Kim Brannen (brannen@med.unc.edu).