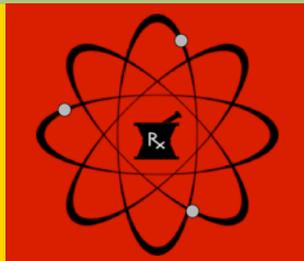


The Nuclear Monthly Missive



Brought to you by the New Practitioners Committee

March 2013

The Newest Briner on the Block

Captain William H. Briner. You've heard of him. (You know, one of the founders of nuclear



pharmacy, started the first nuclear pharmacy at the NIH. Come on, keep up.) And unless you've been hiding under a rock, you've also heard of the William H. Briner Distinguished Achievement Award in Nuclear Pharmacy. The award is presented to someone who, like

Briner, is considered a pioneer in the development of nuclear pharmacy; someone who has made significant contributions to the advancement of our practice; someone who has remained involved throughout his or her career. This year's someone is a very humble and deserving, Robert Beightol (PharmD, BCNP, FAPhA, FASHP).

He is the youngest of 4 boys and was the third child to become a pharmacist, not because it was his childhood dream, but likely because of the influence from his parents and older siblings. "My father wanted to be a pharmacist, but because he was one of nine children, college wasn't really an option." Luckily for him, graduating from college was *the* option, and both of his parents naturally nudged him

Did you know...

Did you know that the first commercially-available Tc-99m generator wasn't introduced until 1964?

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towards pharmacy. But when Robert graduated from the University of Georgia in 1971 with a BS in Pharmacy and started his career in retail, he began questioning his decision to practice pharmacy. "Retail just wasn't for me," he tells me. Robert even thought maybe medical school could be a viable alternative, and spent a year exploring this path.

It was then that he read an article in *Parade Magazine* featuring UNM's new program in nuclear pharmacy. Hmm. . . *nuclear* pharmacy? It sounded rather

"The field of nuclear pharmacy has made me happy."

interesting to him, or at least rather different than what he was doing then. Several phone calls later, he was discussing the option of becoming a nuclear pharmacy resident under Dr. Jim Cooper at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. With more research, more patient care, and more interprofessional collaboration, and less of the humdrum he experienced in the chain drug store, he was beginning to feel more confident about his career decision. Only two years later, in 1976, Dr. Beightol had completed both UT's nuclear residency program and their PharmD program.



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Suggestions for next month's newsletter? Contact Ashley Mishoe at AshleyMishoe@me.com.



Fact: In 1975, while still in Tennessee, he compounded a late-night dose of sulfur colloid for a liver scan for none other than [insert long pause] Elvis Presley. (He went under code name, HIPAA.)

From Tennessee, he moved to Utah where he joined Bill Baker at the University of Utah Intermountain Radiopharmacy Program. This program provided nuclear pharmacy services to all of Utah, as well as parts of Idaho and Wyoming. In this setting, he was responsible for the day-to-day activities of running a nuclear pharmacy, where it was often necessary to prepare some radiopharmaceuticals, such as MDP, from “scratch”. Additionally, Dr. Beightol was an assistant professor at the College of Pharmacy, where he had the opportunity to both teach and participate in research. What kind of research? Indium-111 oxine. . . and by that, I mean actually *preparing* Indium-111 oxine and using it to label leukocytes. His efforts led to the first [article](#) in pharmacy literature describing the preparation of In-111 oxine and the radiolabeling process that is so commonly used today.

In 1982, a hospital in Roanoke, Virginia was interested in his research with In-111 oxine. Eastward they beckoned, so eastward he went. In this position, he served as a clinical nuclear pharmacist, where he collaborated with other practitioners to determine dosing strategies, and where he was responsible for outlining the therapeutic regimens for the thyroid patients. Robert tells me that his favorite aspect of his job

was meeting the ongoing challenges in the clinical setting and serving as a resource for other practitioners. Additionally, because the hospital wanted to begin more research studies, Dr. Beightol was instrumental in continuing research with In-111 oxine and in establishing the hospital’s first Institutional Review Board (IRB). However, during this time, the manufacturers who produced products that were exclusive for their company began entering into agreements limiting the distribution of said products only to certain suppliers. Because of this, the hospital could no longer acquire In-111 oxine for cell labeling. “Wait a second,” I interject as I try to process what he has just told me. “So

CONGRATULATIONS!

The recipients of the NANP Outstanding Nuclear Pharmacy Student Scholarship were awarded at the APhA Annual Meeting this month. Please help me in congratulating the following students:

2012: Bobby Glaze, UAMS

2013: Erika Podzielinski, Purdue

Each student was recognized at the Joint NANP and APhA-APPM Nuclear Pharmacists Reception, and received a \$2000 scholarship from NANP. Can you say, “Cha-Ching”?



you’re saying that although you published an article describing the methods for production of In-111

oxine and its use to label white blood cells, and your hospital had been using it in research studies, you couldn't get it?!" "Yes." Ouch.

At this point, the hospital decided to close the in-house nuclear pharmacy and sell it to Geodax. Robert remained with Geodax until the company was purchased by Cardinal Health in 2005. After a few years, he joined three others and opened an independent nuclear pharmacy nearby (after his no-compete contract ended, of course). Enter [Blue Ridge Isotopes](#) and Precision Nuclear of Virginia. His modest pharmacies provide approximately 200 doses daily of both low-energy and high-energy radiopharmaceuticals to the surrounding area, and serve as rotation sites for pharmacy students. It may not offer the clinical aspect and interdisciplinary team that he experienced in the hospital, but he still loves what he does and his career choices have made him happy.

Robert tells me that when he started his residency, one of the first things Dr. Cooper said to him was, "You are a professional, and as a professional, you will belong to, support, and be involved with those organizations representing your profession." And involved he has been. During residency, he joined APhA, as well as ASHP and SNM, and his participation did not stop there. He has been active with the APhA Nuclear SIG from its birth, and he and several others were instrumental in creating such an organized group. Robert tells me that although it was so small, "the nuclear pharmacy group has always been the standard for other groups within APhA." From serving as Chairman of the Nuclear SIG and the Communications Chair, to being



involved with the Radiopharmaceutical Sciences Council of SNMMI and the former nuclear group in ASHP, to publishing book chapters and other scholarly materials, Dr. Beightol has continuously promoted the practice of nuclear pharmacy, and has served as a mentor and preceptor for aspiring nuclear pharmacists. Because of his commitment to the practice, on the 25th anniversary of the SIG, he and 39 other devoted nuclear pharmacists were named as Nuclear Pharmacy Pioneers by APhA. How did this make him feel? "Humbled. Honored." It comes as no surprise that these are the same words that describe his reaction towards receiving the Briner Award this year.

"I love seeing the field of nuclear pharmacy evolve."

Outside of pharmacy, Robert is active in his church, and enjoys roasting pigs and spending time with his family, especially his 3 grandchildren. He and his wife love to travel, and he hopes to devote more time to traveling when he retires. Favorite past-time? "Playing golf. . . or rather, playing at it."

For the future of nuclear pharmacy, Robert predicts that we will see more therapeutic agents, including radiolabeled antibodies, and more patient-specific drugs. Although the field may seem stagnant at times, he tells me how much it has changed since he started practicing, adding, "I love seeing the field of nuclear pharmacy evolve." To students and new practitioners who will ultimately be a key part of this evolution, his advice is to look at all areas within pharmacy. Decide what you want out of pharmacy as a profession, and see which career path will fulfill your goals. No matter the route you choose, ensure that you are always a resource for physicians and an advocate for patients. Retail pharmacy wasn't for him, but luckily for us, nuclear was.

Until next time,

Ashley Mishoe