



Six Rivers

CHAPTER CHATTER

Volume 4, Issue 2

May, 2004

Greetings Six Rivers Chapter Members!

Congratulations to all SRC Members for attaining the Chapter Excellence Awards at the National CLMA conference in Atlanta. It was a proud moment on stage as Renee Cuevas-Downs and I represented all of you in accepting the awards for Leadership and Administration, and Education. We also received an Honorable Mention for Membership.

In addition to the Awards, the Chapter also receives two certificates good for acquiring CLMA on-line merchandise, and two registrations to the national conference in Chicago for 2005. The SRC Board decided to use the merchandise certificates and one of the registrations as raffle items for a fundraiser we will conduct this summer to help raise money for our annual educational scholarship fund. The other registration will be used to send the 2005 President, Joyce Dicks, to the national conference to represent Six Rivers Chapter in Chicago.

All SRC members are eligible to participate in the raffle this summer, with the drawing for the winners to be at the SRC Fall Meeting at Deer Creek State Park. As an added incentive, if the member is present at the drawing, an additional \$200 will be given out for expenses for this conference trip.

Speaking of members, we just completed our first quarter of 2004 with 40 new and renewing members joining/rejoining Six Rivers. Thank you for your support!

The first quarter also saw another successful SRC fundraiser with our National Lab Week candy orders, with over \$600 raised. Thanks to Kathy Good for chairing this event.

We have just completed another successful Ohio River Valley CLMA/AACC collaborative conference, chaired by our very own SRC member, Sandy Frommeyer and her team. Thanks to their efforts over 100 professionals networked in Dayton on April 28-29, attending 16 sessions on technical/management topics, and reviewed over 45 vendor booths.

Please be sure to review the legislative summary the Joan Longberry has in this newsletter summarizing her trip to Washington D.C. as the SRC representative for CLMA. Also, please give serious consideration to lending support to the CLMA Political Action Committee (PAC). The CLMA PAC was successful in raising over \$12,000 at the national CLMA in March through its membership and has issued a challenge to each chapter. If SRC either raises the most dollars, and/or the highest percentage of members participates, we are eligible to win additional CLMA registrations. You can sign up for the PAC at: <http://www.clma.org/CLDR/files/PACPamphlet902.pdf> or fill out the PAC contribution form in this newsletter.

As we move into the summer, look for our SRC fun outing.....can you canoe? After all, we ARE Six Rivers, so it seems fitting that we spend time on one or two of them. Wanita Ruppert is organizing this event so look for more details in an upcoming broadcast email message or stay tune to our web site at <http://www.sixriversclma.org/index.html>

Your chapter is what you make of it, so please continue to actively participate as a member. Remember to "buddy up" with a new member, and mentor them on the various activities and events that Six Rivers holds. Invite your sales representatives and educators to become active CLMA members so that they may add to the diversity and knowledge of this great group. And contact your board members with ideas or offers of assistance in making your membership valuable to you.

Have a super summer!

Paul Labbe
President

Paul.r.labbe@questdiagnostics.com

937-297-8204

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Dorothy Skidmore

Visit our chapter web site for all
the latest info!

www.sixriversclma.org

Membership

**The entire Board and Membership would like
to welcome these new members.**

Karen Tarlton
Account Executive
WebMD
Springboro, OH

Bob Diehl
President Sales Manager
Micro Star Inc.
874 Clearfield Lane
Cincinnati, OH 45240

Michael G. Dixon
Manager of Labs
Academic Pathology Associates Inc.
231 Albert Sabin Way, Pathology ML 0529
Cincinnati, OH 45267

Jan A. Fuchs
Vice President Of Operations
Pomerene Hospital
981 Wooster Road
Millersburg, OH 44654

Reminder: Please renew your membership if the
expiration date is near. Every member is very
important to the success of our chapter.

Note: National Dues \$135
Local Chapter \$10

*CHAPTER CHATTER- published quarterly, usually in
February, May, August and November as an educational
service to members. The deadline for material
for publication is the 15th of the month preceding the
month of issue. Articles are welcome!*

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Legislative Symposium Attendees Take Message to Capitol Hill

Joan Longberry, Member
Health Policy Committee, CLMA Six Rivers Chapter

It was a cool, but sunny, early spring day in the nation's capitol when 87 laboratorians from 39 states converged on Capitol Hill to meet with their U.S. Representatives and Senators. There was obvious enthusiasm and confidence among the attendees who had come to Washington seeking support for key clinical laboratory issues as part of the annual ASCLS/CLMA Legislative Symposium held on March 22 and 23. Whether first-time or seasoned grassroots "lobbyists", ASCLS and CLMA members went to the "Hill" well prepared to educate their Members of Congress about the issues that impact on laboratory professionals and our practice.

Symposium attendees spent the entire first day being thoroughly briefed on the current legislative and regulatory issues, the position of ASCLS and CLMA on the issues, and how to effectively present the positions to our lawmakers. The symposium's outstanding faculty presented an overview and update of the Fiscal Year 2005 Medicare Budget, Medicare Reimbursement for Laboratory Services, Competitive Bidding, Laboratory Personnel Shortage Legislation and Funding, and CLIA. "Talking points" for each of the issues were presented and the "leave behind" issue papers were reviewed.

To further prepare attendees to meet with their Members of Congress, we were provided with insights into the workings of Congressional offices, how staff view visits from constituents and how to communicate your message effectively. The speakers emphasized the importance of presenting a position on an issue in a truthful and concise manner. They explained the need to develop and maintain a good relationship with both Members of Congress and their staffs. To bolster everyone's confidence, the speakers reminded the participants that they are the experts when it comes to the issues that impact on clinical laboratory practice.

After all the formal presentations, members of the ASCLS Government Affairs Committee facilitated role-playing in small groups to allow especially the first time attendees to "practice" presenting their message on each of the issues. The day ended with a relaxing dinner in the restaurant on the top floor of the hotel that provided us all with a breathtaking view of Washington at night.

The Legislative Symposium concluded the next day on Capitol Hill as ASCLS and CLMA members – with their notes, briefing papers and "leave behind" packets and wearing their most comfortable walking shoes – put their lobbying skills to work. As we headed to our appointments in the various House and Senate office buildings, we were eager and ready to educate our legislators about the importance of the services we provide. The following issues were among those discussed during meetings with Members of Congress and their staffs:

Competitive Bidding for Laboratory Services

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) enacted late last year requires that a competitive bidding demonstration project for clinical laboratory services under the Medicare program be conducted. While the entire laboratory community has a long history of strongly opposing a competitive bid process, the member organizations of the laboratory coalition (of which both ASCLS and CLMA are members) want the opportunity to work with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to ensure there is appropriate input for the implementation of the demonstration project from the major stakeholders.

The points of emphasis in the two letters delivered during the meetings with our lawmakers were to support our request that CMS establish an Advisory and Oversight Committee, as authorized by MMA, and to offer some basic principles to which we believe the demonstration should adhere. The first letter was designed to persuade members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees to include language in the appropriations bill to establish the Advisory and Oversight Committee for the demonstration project. And, further, we requested that the Appropriations Report contain language urging that the Advisory and Oversight Committee be comprised of representatives from the clinical laboratory (and Medicare beneficiaries) to provide technical oversight and advice and to assist with data collection, financial standards, and quality standards. The second letter was a suggested draft of a letter for every member of Congress to send to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson urging that CMS establish a Program Advisory and Oversight Committee.

Legislation to Address the Laboratory Personnel Shortage

During our meetings, we discussed the clinical laboratory personnel shortage crisis and requested support for two pieces of legislation to address the shortage. H.R. 623 (“Medical Laboratory Personnel Shortage Act of 2003”), introduced by Representatives John Shimkus, Jesse Jackson and Michael Bilirakis, would authorize education grants and loan repayment assistance to students in clinical laboratory science programs. We asked our Representatives to sign on to this important legislation as a co-sponsor. Since there is not yet a Senate version of H.R. 623, we asked our Senators to consider serving as a sponsor of the bill.

We also sought support for the “Allied Health Professions Reinvestment Act (AHRA)”, a bill (drafted, but not yet introduced) to amend Title VII of the Public Health Service Act to provide education and training for allied health professionals in exchange for a service commitment to work in a facility experiencing a critical shortage. The AHRA would also authorize appropriations for public service announcements, scholarships and grants, and provides for a faculty loan program to increase the number of qualified allied health educators. (Note: On March 23, the very day that we were seeking sponsors for the AHRA during our Congressional visits, Representative Cliff Stearns introduced H.R. 4016 – “Allied Health Professions Reinvestment Act of 2004”. As of early April, two of Ohio’s Representatives – Ted Strickland and Marcy Kaptur – have signed on to the bill as co-sponsors.)

Specimen Collection Fee

Once again this year, we asked for support of the “Medicare Laboratory Services Access Act of 2003” (H.R. 883). This legislation would update the Medicare payment for specimen collection with an increase to \$5.42 for 2004. With no increase from the \$3.00 fee established nearly 20 years ago, the amount represents what the collection fee would be if it had been indexed annually with the consumer price index (CPI) update. We asked our Representatives to co-sponsor the bill and requested that our Senators consider introducing a companion bill in the Senate.

We Made a Difference!

The annual Legislative Symposium is an important component of the proactive government affairs agenda for both ASCLS and CLMA. Association members, many of whom have attended several of the Legislative Symposiums over the years, believe in their ability to “make a difference” as effective grassroots advocates for issues confronting the clinical laboratory. This was the third consecutive year that CLMA has partnered with ASCLS in sponsoring the symposium. It affirms the intent of both organizations to collaborate with our association colleagues to pursue our shared legislative and regulatory agendas. During her opening remarks on the first day of the symposium, CLMA Director of Health Care Policy Kathy Ayres said it best when she emphasized the importance of our role and participation in advocacy efforts – “If not now, when? If not us, who?” Now is the time to consider participating in the Legislative Symposium in 2005. As a frequent attendee during the last 20+ years, I know you will enjoy the experience of being a “grassroots lobbyist” for our profession. And, like many of us, you may even get the “Potomac Fever”!

If you are interested in more detail on any of the issues or would like to see the advocacy materials from the symposium, additional information is available in the Policy section of the CLMA web site (www.clma.org). If you wish to read the bills mentioned above, visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> and search using the bill number.

PAC Chapter Challenge

The PAC Chapter Challenge kicked off during the conference in Atlanta. The winning chapters will be announced at the fall chapter leaders’ meeting (exact date and location to be determined). Attached are the details of the challenge. The Chapter whose members make the largest total dollar contribution **and** the Chapter with the highest percentage of members that contribute will each win a complimentary meeting registration to the CLMA/ASCP 2005 Conference and Exhibition in Chicago, March 5-8. The number of chapter members will be based on the number of members as of March 31, 2004. Any requests regarding the PAC Chapter Challenge and chapter PAC booth materials should be directed to Kathy Ayres at the Executive Office kayres@clma.org or 610-995-9580 x232.

Congratulations Six Rivers Chapter Members!

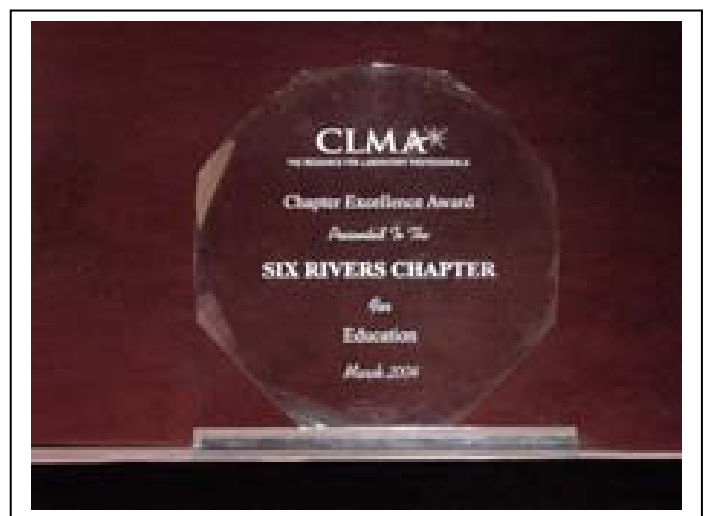
Six Rivers Chapter of the Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA) was presented Chapter Excellence Awards by the National CLMA office at the national conference in Atlanta on Sunday, March 28, 2004. Paul Labbe, President of the Six Rivers Chapter (SRC) and Renee Cuevas-Downs, Secretary of SRC received the awards on behalf of the 136 SRC members from the Dayton, Columbus, and Cincinnati area. CLMA presents chapter excellence awards in 5 categories: Leadership & Administration, Finance, Education, Membership, and Communication. Out of 72 chapters nationwide, the Six Rivers Chapter captured 2 awards in Leadership & Administration, and Education and also received an honorable mention in Membership. The Chicago Chapter was presented the Finance award with honorable mention in Communication. "I want to thank the Six Rivers Chapter members for their active participation and teamwork in achieving the goals to meet the criteria for these excellence awards and also thank the National Office for this recognition. Our membership will continue to promote laboratory medicine and leadership as the foundation for excellent clinical health care management."

Thanks also to the SRC Board who assembled the information and submitted the documentation necessary to meet the criteria, with special recognition to Joyce Dicks, Dorothy Skidmore, Jenny Murray, and Pam Oliver.

Great teamwork everyone!

Thanks

Paul Labbe
President, SRC



Six Rivers Chapter Raffle!

The Six Rivers Chapter of CLMA is raffling a registration to the 2005 National CLMA Conference in Chicago, IL worth over \$550! (You must be a current CLMA Member)

The conference will be held March 2005 and is only a 5 hour drive from our region. The winner of the raffle will be drawn at the Six Rivers Fall Conference at Deer Creek State Park in September 2004. You do not need to be present at the fall conference to win.....however, if the winner of the drawing is present, they will receive an additional **\$200** for hotel/travel expenses to the 2005 national conference.

All of this for just **\$10 per ticket** – Complete form below, all monies raised will go the:
Six Rivers Chapter Educational Scholarship Fund.



Six Rivers Chapter

CLMA 

THE RESOURCE FOR LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS

Raffle Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Number of raffle tickets: _____ @ \$10/ticket

Total amount: \$ _____ (SRC Educational Fund)

Please make out checks to: SRC Educational Fund and mail to:

SRC

c/o Sandy Frommeyer
CompuNet Clinical Labs
2308 Sandridge Drive
Dayton, Ohio 45439

Summer Excursion for the family



**Morgans Canoe and Outdoor Center
Ft. Ancient Canoe Livery**

Date: August 6, 2004

Arrive: 1:00pm - We will be on the river at 1:30.
Meal: 5:30 - includes: Hamburgers, Metts and Brats
Baked Beans, Cole Slaw and Veggie Tray with Dip
Lemonade and Iced Tea

Rain Date: August 20, 2004
Price: 21.50 per person
Children under 6 are free

If people do not want to participate in the canoe trip but want to come for the picnic they would pay only \$12.00 per person.

The Web site is www.morganscanoe.com

RSVP to Wanita Ruppert - Must be received by July 12, 2004

Wanita.I.Ruppert@Questdiagnostics.com or by phone at 937-297-8327.

WATCH FOR OUR BROADCAST MONTHLY E-MAIL!

OUR WAY OF LETTING YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR SIX RIVERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND
COMMITTEES ARE DOING.....

**Get up to date chapter information at
www.sixriversclma.org**

Another Successful Ohio River Valley CLMA/AACC Spring Meeting

The 2004 Ohio River Valley Conference was held April 27-April 29 in Dayton. “The Art of Healthcare – The Lab Mosaic” included a Tuesday evening wine & cheese reception and the Pre-conference workshop. Over 100 registrants attended the Wednesday and Thursday sessions with a great selection of speakers and vendor exhibits. Sixty-five attendees enjoyed the Networking scavenger hunt, planetarium and Italian buffet at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery.



We had help with registration from the Dayton Convention & Visitors Bureau



Vendor time to gather information, goodies & door prizes



Luncheons



Speakers for both technical and managerial topics

Upcoming Meetings

2004 Conferences

2004 Compliance Officer Training Academy: 6-part tele-conference program from CLMA, 6 Sessions – First Tuesdays, July through November, 3:00-4:00 PM, Sponsored in the Dayton area by Kettering Hospital, Grandview Hospital, Tri-Health Labs, WebMD, Kilbourne Labs, and CompuNet Labs.

RSVP's required : Contact John Sherer at 937.297.8241 or john.w.sherer@questdiagnostics.com

AACC National Meeting, July 25-29, 2004, Los Angeles, CA. For more information see: www.AACC.org

Six Rivers Fall Meeting, Deer Creek Conference Center, September 23-24. Speakers, luncheon, Silent Auction & exhibits, annual meeting. Check the website for further information. www.sixriversclma.org

2005 Conferences

2005 CLMA/ASCP Annual Conference, March 5 - 8, 2005, Chicago, IL

2005 AACC/IACC Annual Conference, July 24 - 28, 2005, Orlando, FL