

NUCLEAR MEDICINE WEEK 1987 TRANSFORMS FROM



Enthused by the extraordinary success of last year's National Nuclear Medicine Week, members of The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) are already looking ahead to this year's commemorative week—July 27 through August 2, 1987. Last year, hospitals all

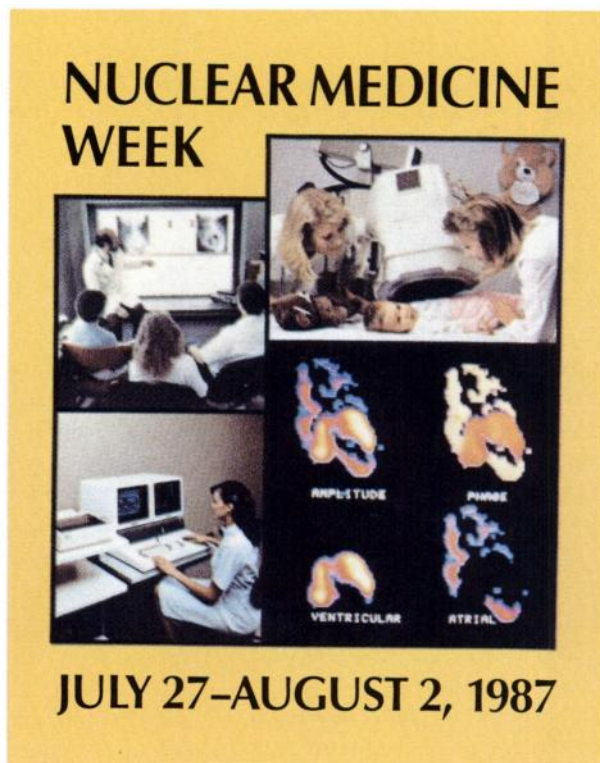
across America organized activities during this week to increase the awareness—among both the medical community and the general public—of the contributions of nuclear medicine to health care (see *J Nucl Med Technol* 1986; 14:241–243).

This year, the word “National” has been dropped to extend the scope beyond the United States (US) borders so Nuclear Medicine Week can provide a vehicle for promoting this specialty around the world. The SNM may have concentrated on the US last year in part because the members had worked so hard to obtain enough support in Congress for legislation directing US President Ronald Reagan officially to proclaim National Nuclear Medicine Week (see *Newsline*: July 1985, p. 690; August 1986, p. 1233).

Some nuclear medicine professionals outside the US, though, decided last year that they wanted to participate. Haussaun Jones-Bey, who directed the Media Stars Contest last year, pointed out that a hospital in Taiwan called him for information on entering its Nuclear Medicine Week public relations activities in the contest. General Electric (GE) Medical Systems sponsored the Media Stars Contest, which awarded a \$250 honorarium to an individual responsible for planning and executing the most effective public relations campaign for Nuclear Medicine Week, and a \$1,000 donation to that individual's hospital or institution.

Promotional Guidelines Include Marketing Booklet

“The SNM is an international organization, and Nuclear Medicine Week will have even more impact this year if other countries also participate,” said Virginia M. Pappas, CAE, deputy executive director of the SNM. Ms. Pappas and Lori Carlin, then administrative coordinator, handled the distribution of the “Guidelines for Promoting Nuclear Medicine Week,” as well as over 2,000 posters and 10,000 buttons, from the SNM Central Office. The guidelines describe how to promote Nuclear Medicine Week within hospitals and in local communities through open houses held in nuclear medicine departments, press coverage, television talk shows, public service announcements, and



Two posters—one realistic and one abstract—will be used this year to promote Nuclear Medicine Week. This poster, designed by Marty Stoler of Chalfont, PA, portrays the humanitarian aspects of nuclear energy. “I wanted to show people helping people through nuclear medicine,” said Ms. Stoler.

proclamations made by city mayors and state governors.

This year, the guidelines will also include a booklet from Du Pont that outlines a step-by-step marketing plan for nuclear medicine departments. The industrial community played an integral role last year in Nuclear Medicine Week. ADAC, Cadema, Capintec, Medi-Physics, Squibb, and Sincor provided financial support. Siemens and Medi-Physics incorporated the Nuclear Medicine Week theme into their advertising campaigns in the July 1986 issue of *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*. Several companies have made commitments for Nuclear Medicine Week 1987 (and more commitments are being sought), including GE, which will once again sponsor the Media Stars Contest.

The Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center of Shreveport, LA, won the Media Stars Contest in 1986 with an entry, submitted by James P. Adams, public affairs director, that included a feature article with color photographs on Nuclear Medicine Week in a local newspaper, a separate newspaper announcement, a 30-minute television program, a television news spot, a mayoral proclamation, and a photo

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essay in the Shreveport VA employee newsletter.

After the Media Stars Contest, more than 80 hospitals responded to a questionnaire sent by the SNM Central Office asking how they observed Nuclear Medicine Week in their communities. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, and the commemorative week gave many departments a chance to show patients, referring physicians, and hospital administrators the value of nuclear medicine.

Referrals Increased after Nuclear Medicine Week

"Although I don't know if it is related to Nuclear Medicine Week, our referrals have been on the rise since that week," said one respondent. Many hospitals held open houses, in some cases showing the nuclear medicine department to 150-200 people over the course of Nuclear Medicine Week. "Finally our administrator came to our department and saw some of our achievements," said one physician. Open houses also attracted hospital trustees and the public.

Other participants reached out to hospital staff and patients by asking cafeteria workers to wear Nuclear Medicine Week buttons, by printing cards explaining what nuclear medicine is and what it offers and leaving these cards on all the cafeteria tables, and by providing tray favors or flowers tagged with Nuclear Medicine Week information to all patients. Educational displays were exhibited in hospital lobbies and at county fairs, and some departments sent staff members to speak to elementary and high school students about nuclear medicine. The mayors of at least eight cities and the governors of at least seven states officially proclaimed July 27-August 2 as Nuclear Medicine Week. Some departments held special grand rounds that week, and others submitted articles about nuclear medicine to county or state medical society publications. A group of technologists even published a 51-page, pocket-sized nuclear medicine booklet for referring physicians.

Since Nuclear Medicine Week occurred a few months after the Chernobyl accident, many of the visitors to nuclear medicine departments asked general questions about radiation risk. Nurses in particular expressed their reservations about handling patients after radionuclide procedures, and one nuclear medicine department decided to institute ongoing educational sessions for the nursing staff. One survey respondent suggested that Nuclear Medicine Week adopt an "Atoms for Health" theme.

In addition to all the educational activities, Nuclear Medicine Week also provided an opportunity for social events that brought together physicians, scientists, technologists, and others on staff in nuclear medicine departments. Several groups boosted morale by holding departmental breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and picnics.



This artistic rendition of a heart scan, composed of torn and cut paper with typography, brings the idea of thallium-201 scintigraphy more within the grasp of the general public, "portraying the medical use of radiation with a reassuring image," said Trey Speegle of New York City, the designer.

The idea for Nuclear Medicine Week originated in the SNM Technologist Section. James J. Wirrell, CNMT, immediate past president of the Technologist Section, chairs the Task Force on Nuclear Medicine Week. "Nuclear Medicine Week, as the participants last year realized, can be an extremely important vehicle for strengthening the entire field of nuclear medicine practice. Coordinating the promotional events by providing guidelines, posters, and buttons is a valuable service provided by the SNM," said Mr. Wirrell, "and we greatly appreciate the financial support from the manufacturers that enabled us to provide this service." Last year, the expenses of printing and mailing exceeded the donations by several thousand dollars. Mr. Wirrell noted, adding that he hopes to see even more financial support this year from the commercial sponsors.

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