



## Renae Henkin, 1948–2006

I met Renae Henkin in December 1984 when she was Renae Marley, the new advertising manager for *JNM* and the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology*, when the SNM office was in New York, and when only optimistic visionaries believed PET would make the leap from research to clinical practice. Renae embodied that visionary optimism.

It was a time of change. *JNM* incorporated Newsline, which had been a quarterly newspaper for SNM members; Thomas P. Haynie, MD, was the new *JNM* editor; Stanley J. Goldsmith, MD, was the new Newsline editor. Renae committed herself to winning back the hundreds of advertising pages (and hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue) that disappeared in the early 1980s when radiopharmaceutical and instrumentation companies cut their marketing budgets. We used typewriters in that era before word processors, voice mail, or e-mail. I worked in partnership with Renae, writing Newsline articles that we hoped would draw in readers long enough to notice the advertising pages.

Despite her talent for business, Renae's SNM years lifted her vision far higher than the bottom line. Every time she learned a new detail about radionuclide uptake, or some engineering advance in gamma cameras, Renae was amazed and delighted. Nuclear medicine was an underdog in those days. Advances in anatomic imaging modalities—ultrasound, CT, MR imaging—had shaken our role in clinical practice. We needed people to understand the value of radionuclide studies as tools for detecting metabolic activity—the only way to see physiologic images. Renae fully embraced the cause of defending and promoting nuclear medicine. She grew to love everything about it—the science, the medicine, and the people.

Renae built bridges. She didn't see the boundary between SNM staff and members. She ignored hints of any rift between the "national" office and chapters. She invited herself to an SNM Central Chapter meeting in 1985. On the first day, the members greeted her with suspicion; on the last day, they thanked her publicly for such enthusiastic support, which made her cry. (Back then, nothing could inhibit her bursts of joy or indig-



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nation, her breathless excitement, her intense energy, her sincere smile, or her Brooklyn roots.) Whether you were a technologist, scientist, sales representative, product manager, or physician—if you cared at all about nuclear medicine, Renae was your friend. A highlight of her SNM days was attending the European Congress of Nuclear Medicine in 1986, in Goslar, Germany, and then visiting the Institute of Medicine at the Research Centre Jülich with me to interview Prof. Dr. L.E. Feinendegen for a Newsline story.

In 1987, Renae joined ProClinica, an advertising agency in New York that launched SPECT-amine ( $^{123}\text{I}$ -iofetamine) for Medi-Physics and Ceretec ( $^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$ -exametazime) for Amersham. ProClinica also invented RadNET, a distant ancestor of today's medical blogs and chat rooms. Robert E. Henkin, MD, then director of nuclear medicine at Loyola University Medical School (Chicago, IL), was a consultant for RadNET. Renae and Dr. Henkin exchanged e-mails about online conferences and documents uploaded to the RadNET library. One day in July 1988, those brief e-mails turned personal. Over the next 2 months, longer e-mails led to 6-hour phone calls, then to a diamond ring. In November 1988, Renae moved to Chicago to start a new life as Mrs. Henkin and mother to Robert's 3 sons, Greg, Joshua, and Steven.

"She loved my children and became SuperMom. She was PTA president, cheered the loudest at our kids' sports events, and became their confidante. She knew more about them than I did," said Dr. Henkin.

On top of all this, Renae remained immersed in medicine. She produced the *Nuclear Medicine Update* newsletter. She was chair of the philanthropic Loyola University Medical Center Auxiliary; under her leadership, it established a major scholarship for medical students. In 1988, Renae was elected chair of the American College of Nuclear Physicians Corporate Committee. From 1999 to 2004, Renae was director of the SNM Central Chapter. She mentored several technologists who moved into leadership positions, and she pursued her interest in defining a better working relationship between SNM and its chapters.

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In 1998, Renae felt pain in her ribs. When the x-ray came back negative, Renae insisted on a bone scan. She explained to her skeptical doctor how it could detect a stress fracture earlier than a radiograph. But the bone scan found something else. For 8 years, Renae lived her life to the fullest as a breast cancer survivor. She traveled the world with her husband as he gave lectures in China, Uzbekistan, and Japan. She led fundraisers for breast cancer research. She became a mother-in-law and devoted grandmother. She lived a life of triumph.

To the end Renae remained a selfless, optimistic visionary. Two weeks before her death, Renae spent

time with another patient in the cancer center's waiting room, helping her learn to cope, making her feel hopeful. One week before her death, Renae asked for physical therapy to regain her strength.

On November 29, Renae Henkin left this life, at home and in peace. How can we honor her memory? "The most fitting memorial would be a donation in her name to the SNM Education and Research Foundation," her husband said.

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