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## CHANGE IS COMING!!!

Our e-newsletter is one of the major ways for our association to stay in touch with its members and to provide news about the profession and Academy activities. Since, the Board agreed to provide an updated look to our website last year, the e-Catalyst will also be undergoing some dramatic changes by Fall/2015 to create more interest and appeal to the members. Stay tuned!

# Highlights: LABCON 2015



Each year, MAMLS sends the President and President Elect to the CSMLS annual Congress. As such, I and Melanie Couture attended LABCON 2015. The location for LABCON 2015 was notable, with the venue -- the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth -- being held in downtown Montreal. The meals - breakfast, lunch and dinner throughout the week were exceptional.

The presentations were excellent! The educational sessions had topics for everyone -- from Pre-analytics, Ebola, Online world for Laboratory Professionals, Quality Management, POC Systems, and Infectious

Diseases -- to name a few topics. As LABCON was in Montreal, simultaneous translation in English and French was made available to all delegates.

Once again, this year, LABCON had "EventMobi" which was a mobile-enabled website. This event app was perfect for creating personalized agendas, accessing speaker information, creating opportunities for instant evaluations, information updates, exhibitors listings, and so much more.

Since LABCON was in Montreal, all the entertainment was held in style. The President's Soiree was an elegant evening of fine wine, excellent food and dancing. The Exhibitors' Reception, with *hors d'oeuvres* and cocktails, included Montreal style poutine! Delectable! For the athletic attendees, there was also a 3 km run with the President, Tania Toffner, at 0700 in cool downtown Montreal.

Mark your calendar for next year as LABCON 2016 will be Charlottetown, PEI and it promises to be an exciting conference.

*Thecla Athayde*

President, MAMLS 2015 Board of Directors

# Bienvenue à LABCON 2015:

## *Hello Montréal!!*



Parlez-vous Français? Non? Pas de problème en Montréal...just put on your headphones and turn to channel deux, et voilà! Français... to English. Perfect for uni-lingualists such as myself.

After 31 years in the profession, I just attended my second Medical Lab Congress. It's not easy to get away from work and family (and dogs) for such an event, and it is a little pricey, but it was definitely worth the sacrifice. I finally discovered what I had been missing all these years. LABCON is a BLAST!

Congress is an excellent platform for techs to share our knowledge and experience, to learn about new developments and techniques in laboratory medicine and to reconnect with old friends and colleagues. Mingling with people who inherently understand the challenges and satisfaction that we experience day-to-day is so refreshing! I realized that we are all one big network of like-minded individuals eager to discuss and share our different branches of learning and expertise...and to have fun in the process.

Communication is a very important aspect of all we do. Whether it be communicating with colleagues, superiors, those of different age groups or cultural backgrounds, interpersonal communication is an essential skill. Since I graduated, electronic communication has also become a huge forum for us old-timers to master. Email, Facebook and Twitter are all elements of modern communication which didn't exist in prehistoric times. The labs didn't even have computers.

With this in mind, I focused on sessions that dealt with improving my communication abilities. The "Debriefing" workshop with Amanda VanSpronsen and Rhonda Shea was a "hands-on" exercise in relating to difficult employees. I found what I learned could be applied, not only in the work environment, but in relationships in everyday life...like getting along with your teenagers or mother-in-law.

Electronic communication skills were the focus of Krista Urchenko, a relatively new graduate. She has her own blog [www.medlabmaven.com](http://www.medlabmaven.com) Check her out. The exposure that she is giving to our profession is extremely important to improving our public image and providing information to people who may want to join our profession.

Another session that I attended was dealing with lab budget cuts, a conundrum that all labs face in one way or another. Janet Reid gave an interesting talk outlining the LEAN strategies, and "work force adjustments", among other topics. I started thinking about some of the management philosophies behind running a lab and

**(Cont'd on page 4)**

(Bienvenue à LABCON 2015 - Cont'd from Page 3)

asked myself some powerful questions...

*Should you try to operate with minimal staff who are overworked and stressed?*

*Should you buy second hand equipment only to find your down time ends up costing more than saving?*

*Do you have managers managing your managers?*

I concluded that creatively managing a lab is a difficult process.

As Medical Technologists, we are generally very serious about our work. We need to be meticulous and almost obsessive on a daily basis. Lives are at stake! Too often, I think that the public has the impression that we're just a bunch of super-nerds and all we do is collect blood, then go back into our little labs and shake test tubes. Little do they know all the knowledge, training and experience hidden behind the scenes.

At this point in time, we are the medical profession's 'best kept secret'! Let's get out there and make ourselves known.

See you in Charlottetown, PEI next year!!

*Debra A. Glenn, MLT*



## Are You Missing Your Grad Pin?

MAMLS has a number of grad pins sitting in a box due to some grads being unable to attend their Grad dinner and celebration event.

Check out the photo – if you are a grad that did not get your pin, please contact Bill Younger directly at [wyounger@rrc.ca](mailto:wyounger@rrc.ca) so he can get your pin to you.

Then, wear it with pride!!!

# SOP: Sharing Our Past

Justy (Justine) Stoesz: Lab Experiences in My Life - 1950 to 2004

It was early in my life, having been raised one of nine on a small farm and enjoying the work outside the house, that I thought that life was wonderful. Mom would say, "The more the merrier." although, school studies were sometimes difficult as the work on the farm did take us from our studies a good part of the time. But often my mind turned to the future when I would have to decide what to do with my life.

It was necessary for four years to leave in the middle of high school and help with what was needed on the farm as Dad was not well. When younger siblings followed me to work on the farm, I was able to attend a Bible College. During that time I was desperate to get part-time employment to pay for my school fees. Work in a hospital did not interest me, but nothing else seemed to work out. The matron at the Municipal Hospitals at first turned me down, for which I was glad, but then she offered me one month of work in the laboratory to do wash-up jobs. This girl needed an emergency operation and later would be back. I loved anything to keep things clean, so I took the job. This girl never returned. Part-time and full-time was given me whenever I needed it after graduating.

The Pathologist one day asked if I would like to train as a Laboratory Technician. This surprised me as I knew that I would need to finish Senior Matriculation to be able to write the exams. He assured me that evening school could help in that. Training on the job was started and I loved it. Attending evening school and later training at Grace Hospital Lab School made for hard work. It had been many years of not knowing the vocation I would need to use on the mission field in Africa, Truly, I was thrilled when school and lab training were done.

But what now? Where would I go and what organization should I join where they need a technician? For a number of years, there were always waiting periods when I would attend meetings where returned doctors and nurses would give a report of their work in other countries. They need doctors and nurses but never spoke of needing Lab technicians. Patience was needed but I was assured that I had not trained in vain.

One day a doctor spoke at Elim Chapel and he told us that a new hospital had been built at Kijabe, Kenya under the Africa Inland Mission and they needed a technician to open a lab and start training technicians. I was thrilled as now I knew the Mission organization to join and the place where I wanted to go! I applied, was accepted, and in five months I left Canada for Africa. The leading in the past assured me that my life in the future was secure.

The new 33-bed Kijabe Hospital was opened in April 1961 and I arrived in August of the same year. The small room intended to be the laboratory, had to be emptied of boxes containing equipment to be used in other departments. A microscope and other equipment were set in place and I was soon ready for work. It was obvious after some time that help was needed and so Job came with lots of energy and a happy face. As more patients arrived, interviews were held for more lab help.

One by one, young men came who were eager to learn. Elijah, Shem, and Bossek from different tribes in the country, were hired. In those early days, I chose young men rather than ladies, as it was the men who would eventually be able to earn the family's needs. We were a great team and I learned much of their culture from them as we worked.

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**(Sharing Our Past - Cont'd from page 5)**

Daniel, Mercy, Benard, Felix, Timothy and many others who came as the work increased. Theory was taught, but most of the time was spent working in a busy lab. The men eventually knew what they were doing as they did the tests day after day. A piece of paper that showed they were trained was important to them, so around 1966 I enquired in Nairobi to see if our students could write the Kenyan Government exams.

The Director, Mr. Safari of the Kenyatta Hospital Laboratory School did not give me a positive answer. But one day he arrived at Kijabe Hospital unannounced to look us over. From that day on, Kijabe Hospital Laboratory Training School was official. He agreed that we had books on the shelves for students to study from and enough equipment to perform the tests. All 40 students who were trained at Kijabe Hospital through the coming years, have received their important papers.

We had great times together. Students of different culture made for a good team. As the years passed and more buildings were built to meet the increase of patients coming to Kijabe Hospital, more space was also given for the laboratory. So a move was done, to give the different departments of Hematology, Bacteriology, Biochemistry, Parasitology and Urinalysis more room to spread out. Parasitology was one department I learned a lot as one would actually see the eggs of the parasite, rather than just learning from books. Blood Banking department was soon added. A lab was built to receive donors. Donors were usually relatives arriving with the patients. Emergencies often kept us busy day and night. A space was added in later years for Histology and pathologists arrived to work on short-term to perform tests. Requests came from other countries other than Kenya for cytology tests.

Dr. Bill, the only doctor we had those early years, loved to tease and one day he sent into the Lab a request for sugar to perform on a specimen. The order was that I was the one to do the test which I felt was unusual. He came and looked around the corner and said, 'You need to taste the specimen before you test it'. It was apple juice!

A decision I felt needed to be made during the training of students, was to send them one by one out to our other Mission hospitals to open a new laboratory and work there for a year. This then lengthened their stay before they wrote their exams. A number have remarked since then this extra experience they had in the out skirts of the country, was important to them in their further work when they were employed in the future.

Other duties were often given to us working in the laboratory. As the Xray department had no trained technician, we in the laboratory were trained and did the work when needed. After 10 years I trained a local person for this department. The nurses often needed help with starting intravenous solutions or blood transfusions on patients in the wards. Scrubbing in on operations during the nights when emergencies arrived was interesting. It was helpful as often there were not enough nurses to do night duty as well as day.

Early in the years, we were able to find a copper distiller to distill water. This procedure often had to run through day and night to get enough clean water to make IV solutions. I remember often, with the help of the lab students, we were making saline solutions, sterilizing the filled bottles in an autoclave, and making sure they were ready to give to patients. I don't remember anyone ever having reactions to these solutions, nor to the blood transfusions on patients.

Another technologist arrived after some years, to help out mostly in the class-room teaching side of the work. She was also from Canada; Margaret Buhler was a great help in this field. By this time we had enough Lab personnel to do the practical work. I felt I needed a change so was asked to go for some months to help out in the lab of the hospitals on two of the four Comoro islands, situated off the coast of Kenya on the Indian Ocean. Although the work was mostly the same as in Kenya, I too found the employees there were helpful and good to work with.

**(Sharing Our Paths - Cont'd from Page 6)**

One test which took a lot of our time was testing for filaria. Patients would arrive at the hospital as soon as the sun had set in the evening, at which time the parasite could be found in the blood stream. Blood slides were made and stained the next day in order to search for the parasite. This I found very interesting!

When I was 70 yrs old, it was time for me to retire back home, but I knew I would be back to volunteer and to embark on a ministry that had been in my heart for some time. I did come for a year, to travel with a nurse to some of the fifty dispensaries to do supervisory work of the labs, run by Kijabe trained nurses and to do internal audits of their finances. This I enjoyed tremendously. So it was a day in 2004 when I left for home and could look back at the wonderful life that the Lord had given me to work in a country that became another 'home' to me.

In May of this year 2015 was a week to be remembered as I was able to return for the 100th Anniversary of Kijabe Hospital! That was a great experience to see many with whom I had worked and trained. I was truly blessed!



Photos from Justina Stoesz` 2015 return visit to the 100th Anniversary of the Kijabe Hospital in Kenya.



**Manitoba Congress of Medical Laboratory Science**  
**October 6, 7 & 8, 2015**  
**Keystone Centre**  
**Brandon, Manitoba**

**PRELIMINARY PROGRAM**

**Wednesday October 7th**

- 8:50-9:00** – Opening
- 9:00-10:00** - Keynote - Stephanie Staples
- 10:00-10:30** - Break
- 10:30-11:30** – Dr. Marko – Hematology-
- 10:30-11:30** – Dr. Ian Wilkinson- Director of MANQAP
- 11:30-12:45** - Lunch
- 12:45-13:45** – Breakout session – Stephanie Staples
- 12:45-13:45** – Nicole Nakatsu – Opioid Addiction
- 13:45-14:30** – Janetta Rossouw – Pathology Case Studies
- 13:45- 14:30** – TBA
- 14:30-15:00** - Break
- 15:00-16:00** –Tom Walus
- 15:00-16:30** – Sarah Nantais- Multiculturalism

**Thursday October 8th**

- 9:00-10:00** - Darcy Heron – Sysmex- Urinalysis
- 9:00-10:00** - Bernard Cox and Monique Clarke - Diagnostic Imaging
- 10:00-10:30** – Break
- 10:30-11:30** – Bernadette Ardelli – Parasitology
- 10:30-11:30** - Bessie Carydis – CSMLS - competency
- 11:30-12:45** - Lunch
- 12:45-13:45** - Chris Snow- Manitoba Tissue Bank
- 12:45-13:45** - Linda Schroeder– CMLTM
- 13:45-14:30** - Stephanie Myers – Medical Missions: A Lab Tech's Perspective
- 13:45-14:30** - Cory Badger, Stephanie Myers – Pharmacy - Anticoagulant Therapies
- 14:30-15:15** - Break
- 15:05-16:15** - Michele Sykes – Red River
- 16:15-16:30** - CLOSING REMARKS



# Manitoba Congress of Medical Laboratory Science



MCMLS 2015, c/o Westman Lab,  
150 McTavish Avenue East, Brandon MB R7A 7H8

**October 6, 7, 8 2015**

**Phone:** 1-204-578-4440 | **Fax:** 1-204-578-4867  
**Email:** manitobacongress@gmail.com

**Venue:** Keystone Centre  
#1 1175 18th Street, Brandon, MB R7A 7C5  
(204) 726-3500

## REGISTRATION FORM

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **MAMLS #:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Please attach a photocopy of your membership card)*

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (Day):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone (Evening):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Employment:** \_\_\_\_\_

### REGISTRATION FEES: Before September 30, 2015

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>2 days</u>	<u>1 day</u>	<u>half day</u>
Member MAMLS	\$85	\$45	\$25
Non-Member	\$155	\$80	\$45
Retiree	\$35	\$25	\$20 (No CEC credits issued)

Med Lab Students: Free

Note: Institutional packages will not be available.

Photocopy of MAMLS  
Membership required  
for member discount.

Please check off the appropriate area:

**Full 2 days**

Wed. (all day)

Wed.(AM)

Wed (PM)

Thurs. (all day)

Thurs (AM)

Thurs (PM)

### SOCIAL EVENTS:

Tuesday: 1900 - 2130

**Meet and Greet 2015** (displays will be set up)

Free (but must pre-register)

Wednesday:

**Lunch with the Exhibitors**

Free (but must pre-register)

Wednesday: 1630 - 1800

**MAMLS AGM**

\$5.00

Wednesday 1830 - 2400

**Black Tie Banquet and Casino Night**

\$40.00

(Buffet meal, prizes and dancing)

Thursday:

**Lunch with the Exhibitors**

Free (but must pre-register)

**Total Fees Submitted:** \_\_\_\_\_

Full payment must accompany registration. Make cheques payable to MCMLS. Post dated cheques will not be accepted. Requests for refunds will not be considered unless special circumstances permit and will be approved by the Chair.

### Mail registration forms and fees to:

MCMLS  
c/o Christelle Espenell  
Westman Laboratory  
150 McTavish Avenue E.  
BRANDON MB R7A 7H8

### For further information, contact:

Christelle Espenell or Karen Wear at 578-4482  
Email: manitobacongress@gmail.com

## Manitoba Congress of Medical Laboratory Science October 6, 7 & 8, 2015 Keystone Centre Brandon, Manitoba

### Sponsor Information

If interested in being a sponsor or participating in the Trade Show at MCMLS 2015 in Brandon, Manitoba, go to [www.mcmls.mamls.ca](http://www.mcmls.mamls.ca)

Or contact Kirsten Boyce at:

[manitobacongress@gmail.com](mailto:manitobacongress@gmail.com)

### Hotel Booking Information

A group discount is available at CanadInns Destination Centre Brandon.

Available Guest Rooms:

- 40 Deluxe Queen rooms (two queen size beds in each)
- 10 Deluxe King rooms (one king size bed in each)

Checking in October 6th and checking out October 8th, 2015.

The rate for the rooms is \$119 plus taxes / night.

You can call the front desk at (204) 727-1422 anytime and quote the group name "MCMLS 2015" or group number "299783" to reserve from the block of rooms.

Rooms will be held until September 11th.

[www.canadinns.com](http://www.canadinns.com)

## The Catalyst EDITORIAL POLICY

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and must not be taken to represent the opinions or policy of the Manitoba Association for Medical Laboratory Science or the Editor. Unless stated, no responsibility for the accuracy of the content published is assumed by the MAMLS or the Editor.

Submissions are welcome with the understanding that they may be shortened or amended at the editor's discretion.

Please submit your articles by email to: [mamlsprez1@gmail.com](mailto:mamlsprez1@gmail.com)