



Society of Forensic Toxicologists, Inc.

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ToxTalk

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1996 ANNUAL MEETING HOSTS

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IN THIS ISSUE

REGULAR FEATURES: Journal Club & Professional Calendar & Career Opportunities & Blutalkoholkonzentration & Drugs in the News & From the Editor's Desk & Elmer Gordon

TECHNICAL NOTES: Solvent Safety in the Laboratory (Marker) & **CASE NOTES:** Flunitrazepam: Does its absence mean it is not present? (Robertson) & The Nevada Supreme Court Decision on Hair Analysis (McBay)

OF SPECIAL INTEREST: Nominating Committee 1997 Slate & 1994-95 Treasurer's Annual Report & *Minutes of the 1995 Annual Business Meeting

INSERTS: 1996 SOFT Meeting Information, Preliminary Program, and Presentation Titles
*If available at time of printing/ mailing

CALENDAR CHECK!

9/10/96 Meeting registration, no late fee

10/1/96 Mail registration for meeting

ON DECK: PLANNED FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

President's Message (Walls) & From the Editor's Desk (Monforte) & Closer Look at SOFT - Meeting Resource Committee (Watts) & Journal Club (Walls) & Case Notes: (Selavka et al, all members) & Blutalkoholkonzentration (Wigmore) & Drugs in the News & 1996 SOFT Meeting, report (Farrell) & Health & Safety Committee (Isenschmid et al) & JAT Call for Papers & Board/Annual Meeting Synopsis (Huestis) & Abstracts of the 1996 SOFT Annual Meeting & YOUR CONTRIBUTION! &

ToxTalk is mailed quarterly (bulk mail) to members of the *Society of Forensic Toxicologists, Inc.* It is each member's responsibility to report changes of address to the SOFT mailing address (Mesa, AZ - above). Non-members may now receive **ToxTalk** for \$15 per calendar year. Make your check payable to SOFT, and mail it to the **ToxTalk** Editor.

All members and others are encouraged to contribute to **ToxTalk**. Mail material to :

Joseph R. Monforte, Ph.D., DABFT, ToxTalk Editor

846 Smoki Dr (H.P.), Prescott, AZ 86301-7347

NEW FAX NO: 520-771-1625

Phone: 520-711-0617 (after 11 a.m. E.S.T.)

DEADLINES: Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, and Nov. 1.

NEXT DEADLINE: Nov. 1, 1996

SOFT is a supporting organization of the American Board of Forensic Toxicology

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK . . . Joseph R. Monforte, Ph.D., DABFT

This issue of **ToxTalk** contains a new feature article, "Drugs in the News." The purpose of this feature is to communicate to the membership information relative to drugs which are of current interest to the general public and consequently, to our profession. The idea for these articles occurred to me when I was in San Francisco and read a newspaper article on the use of flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) as a "date rape" drug. This drug is the topic for my first article, and I have included an additional article on heroin.

The drug(s) will be selected on the basis of media articles and, when appropriate, additional technical information will be supplied by the Editor and/or editorial staff. As always, the membership is invited to contribute articles. If successful, "Drugs in the News" will appear as a regular feature article in each issue of **ToxTalk**.

An administrative note - All changes of address, dues, etc. should be send directly to the SOFT Administrative Office. Items incorrectly mailed to me will be delayed until I am available to forward them.

This is the last issue of **ToxTalk** prior to the SOFT 26th Annual Meeting, which promises to be another great one. See you in Denver!

Submit your items for ToxTalk to:

Dr. Joseph Monforte, ToxTalk Editor
846 Smoki Dr (HP)
Prescott, AZ 86301-7347

Phone: 520-717-0617 (*after 11:30 a.m., E.S.T., please*)

NEW DIRECT FAX NO.: 520-771-1625

For 20 years, **ToxTalk** has been distributed to SOFT members. Reviewing old issues makes one realize how much SOFT has changed, as well as how many things have stayed the same. I hope you'll enjoy the following.

EXCERPTS FROM TOXTALK

SOFT Treasurer's Report: September 1, 1976 to September 1, 1977.

\$1,205.25	Balance from 1976	58.53	Income from 1976 Annual Meeting
840.00	Income from 1977 dues & new applications	600.00	Income from 1977 Annual Meeting
\$2,703.78	Total Income		

From the Minutes of the Business Meeting, October 21-22, 1976 (New York City): Treasurer Thomas Manning reported a balance of \$1,202.25. The word "National" was stricken from the name of the Society, to be known as the Society of Forensic Toxicologists. Vice President Len Bednarczyk was to host the 1977 SOFT Meeting, a 3-day cruise, Miami to Nassau. The names of the first persons certified by new ABFT were read. The 1978 Board, after elections, would consist of President Leonard Bednarczyk, Vice President Robert Blanke, Secretary Yale Caplan, Treasurer Thomas Manning, and Directors June Jones, Joseph Monforte, Thomas Rejent, Robert Simon, and Jane Speaker. "The problems involved in accreditation of individual laboratories was left for further discussion..." **ToxTalk** editor Jesse Bidanset "issued a call to members to provide material..." 1977 dues: \$20 for full members, \$10 for associate members.

From Volume III, No. 1 (1979): Suggestions for an official SOFT logo were solicited. (The official logo was presented by Joseph Balkon at the annual meeting in 1980.) The category, "Student Member," was created. ♪

MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS FOR SOFT 1996 TODAY!

Marriott Denver Tech Center 1-800-228-9290 or 303-779-1100

Special \$92 rate for SOFT meeting participants

1996 SOFT ANNUAL MEETING

DENVER, COLORADO

OCTOBER 14-18

Submitted by Laurel Farrell

THIS IS IT! This issue of ToxTalk contains all updated pre-registration information for SOFT 1996 that you need to avoid those ugly late registration fees - but you'll have to be quick!

The meeting looks fantastic! The SOFT 1996 Committee has made our task much easier. Here is the current information on the scientific program, workshops, and vendors:

Amanda Jenkins and Bruce Goldberger, Scientific Program Co-Chairs, have received over 70 abstracts for your '96 meeting. Their crew of volunteers has been processing these through the review process and notifying the submitting authors. A list of the presentation titles is included in the meeting inserts. You will find that the presentations cover postmortem forensic toxicology, clinical forensic toxicology, GC/MS, immunoassay, and alternate specimens.

The workshop descriptions are once again included with this issue's inserts. Dan Isenschmid and Denny Crouch have an excellent program planned. I encourage you to pre-register for these workshops. On-site workshop registrations will be accepted, up to the allowable limit of the meeting room, but if you pre-register, you are guaranteed a workshop manual.

The vendor and sponsor response to this meeting has also been great. They are keeping Lisa O'Dell hopping! We have planned numerous breaks and functions in the exhibit area to allow you ample time to see the latest products and to thank our supporters.

Committee chairs please call us if you will need a meeting time/room during the conference. We must make necessary arrangements with the hotel prior to the conference or the hotel may not be able to accommodate you.

President Walls has reinforced the dress code for this meeting - CASUAL. I have received a number of calls inquiring what the weather will be like in October - good question, impossible to answer. It could be 30 and snowing, or 75. Watch the weather reports and bring casual clothes you can layer (denim works well).

We appreciate all the notes and calls from people willing to volunteer. During this last month, we may call you! As we put the finishing touches on the meeting, we will be able to tell where we will need your help.

SOFT 1996 looks forward to your colorful Colorado visit!

If you need additional, last minute information, please contact the meeting committee members listed below:

Co-hosts:	Laurel Farrell (303-691-4727) and Bob Zettl (303-691-4738)
Scientific Program:	Amanda Jenkins and Bruce Goldberger
Workshops:	Dan Isenschmid and Dennis Crouch
Exhibitors:	Lisa O'Dell

Workshop topics:

Revised #1: Use of LIMS in a Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory (Monday 1-5) - A. Jacobs, Moderator

NOTE: original #1: Drugs & Driving HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

#2: Toxicology of Inhalants (Monday 1-5) - L. Farrell, Moderator

#3: Isoenzyme-specific Metabolism of Drugs of Forensic Interest (Tuesday 8:30-noon) - D. Moody, Moderator

#4 Capillary Chromatography Training Seminar (Tuesday 8:30-5:00) - R. Morehead, Moderator

#5 Toxicology and the Internet (Tuesday 1-5) - D. Frederick, Moderator

#6 Fundamentals of Medical Examiner Toxicology (Wednesday 8:30 - noon) - W. Anderson, Moderator

#7 Current Issues in Forensic Urine Drug Testing - FUDT (Wednesday 8:30 - noon) M. Baylor, Moderator

Hotel: Denver Marriott Tech Center 1-800-228-9290 or 303-779-1100

Special reduced room rate: \$92 (current rate) including tax (same as federal government reduced rate)

Shuttle service from Denver International Airport: \$15 one way.

'SO-SOFT' AVAILABLE TO GUESTS AT 1996 SOFT MEETING

If you are bringing a "Significant Other" to the Denver SOFT meeting, be sure to pass this information along. A comradery has developed among many of the persons who accompany SOFT members to the annual meeting. We are particularly aware of the pleasures and pitfalls of being a "guest" and will make a concerted effort to present an opportunity for "guests" to meet and plan events at the SOFT meetings. Please tell your Significant Other to look for a notice marked **SO-SOFT** at the Denver meeting. We will communicate via notes regarding possible plans, lunch, etc.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE 1997 SLATE

Submitted by: *Vina Spiehler, Ph.D., 1996 Nominating Committee Chair*

SOFT Nominating Committee's slate for the 1997 SOFT officers as follows:

President: Vickie Watts
Vice President: Joe Saady
Treasurer: J. Robert Zettl
Board of Directors: Amanda Jenkins and Tom Simonick

From ToxTalk archives & editor's notes:

VICKIE W. WATTS, M.S. Vickie W. Watts received her Master's degree in Forensic Toxicology from the University of Maryland and her B.S. degree in Chemistry from Augustana College in 1976 where she was Phi Beta Kappa. Ms. Watts has over 18 years experience in the field of forensic toxicology. She has received career and research awards from SOFT, AAFS, and CAT, is a member of the National Safety Council's Committee on Alcohol and Other Drugs, Past Chairman of the AAFS Toxicology Section, and Past President of the California Association of Toxicologists. Ms. Watts has served on or chaired a variety of committees for SOFT and served on the Board of Directors (1991-93). Ms. Watts was the meeting host for the 1993 SOFT/CAT Joint Meeting in Phoenix, 1993-95 SOFT Secretary, and currently SOFT Vice President.

Biographical information submitted:

JOSEPH J. SAADY, Ph.D., DABFT Dr. Saady received an M.S. in Pharmacology and Toxicology and a Ph.D. in Pathology/Toxicology from Virginia Commonwealth University, where he has been employed since 1972. Currently, he is the Director of Toxicology Specialty Testing, which includes the Drugs and Driving Program, drug testing, and related tissue forensic work. He has served on various national committees, including the National Academy of Sciences, Committee on Toxicology; The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists Biological Exposure Index Committee; and the Toxicology Review Board for the U.S. Army. An active member of SOFT, his activities have included Board of Directors, E.R.A. Committee, SOFT/AAFS DUID Committee, and two terms as SOFT Treasurer (1993-1996). He is a Diplomate of ABFT, serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Analytical Toxicology, and has published more than forty scientific papers.

J. ROBERT ZETTL, B.S., MPA J. Robert Zettl has worked for the Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Division of Laboratories, since 1965 during which he has held various positions. His current position is Alcohol Test Program Supervisor. After receiving his BS from Pittsburg State University (Kansas) in 1964, he went on to obtain his Masters in Public Administration from the University of Colorado in 1991. His professional activities include membership in numerous organizations, including SOFT, AAFS, SAT, SWAFS, past chairman of the NSC's Committee on Alcohol and Other Drugs, a consultant to NHTSA, Federal DOT regional workshop participant, CAP/FUDT and HHS/NLCP inspector, and presentations and publications with emphasis on alcohol testing and training. Bob is presently on the SOFT Board of Directors and Co-Host of the 1996 SOFT Annual Meeting in Denver.

AMANDA JENKINS, Ph.D. Dr. Jenkins is an Assistant Toxicologist at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, State of Maryland, and a Post Doctoral Fellow at the Addiction Research Center, NIDA, NIH, in Baltimore. She has been an active SOFT member including member and, subsequently, chair of the Health and Safety Committee. Her research work has earned Dr. Jenkins two Educational Research Awards. She currently serves on the Membership Committee and is Scientific Co-chair for the 1996 SOFT meeting.

THOMAS F. SIMONICK, B.S. Thomas F. Simonick graduated with a BS degree in biology from the University of California in 1973. His experience includes 13 years in forensic toxicology and presently is a Senior Criminalist with the Mesa Police Department Crime Laboratory. Mr. Simonick has served on the organizing committee of the 1993 SOFT-CAT Joint Meeting, the Drugs and Driving Committee, and was Co-editor of the 1995 Special Edition of JAT. He has also served as moderator and assistant moderator at several SOFT meetings. Mr. Simonick has served on various committees of CAT and AAFS, and is currently a member of the JCETT Committee, representing AAFS. ☺

Editor's Note: The election will be held during the 1996 Annual Business Meeting in Denver. Only FULL MEMBERS may vote. Nominations may also be made from the floor.

TREASURY NOTES

SOCIETY OF FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS ANNUAL TREASURER REPORT 1994 AND 1995

INCOME	1994	1995
Application fees	420	420
Dues (including late fees)	16395	16069
ERA Fund donation	906	526
Interest (all accounts)	6052	9317
Lab guidelines	575	540
Mail label lease	450	600
Meeting 1993 and 1994	20886	23018
SUBTOTALS	45684	50490

EXPENSES		
ABFT award, other	110	2500
Administrative office:		
Contractual labor	n/a	4114
Executive Coordinator	5372	7031
Postage	418	1410
Printing	328	1774
Storage space	640	536
Supplies	1917	3122
Telephone	806	675
Bank fees	140	191
Committees	436	217
CPA fee	420	1325
ERA Fund Awards	1500	1500
Incorporation fee	170	170
JAT special issue	187	2623
Meeting expense 1994 and 1995	3557	5000
Officer expense	3102	1837
SOFT sponsored hospitality@ AAFS	1463	1488
ToxTalk:		
Contractual labor	4441	1781
Postage	914	1302
Printing	1599	863
Supplies	246	605
Telephone	268	33
SUBTOTALS	28034	40097

SOFT ASSETS ON 12/13/95

Checking balance	\$26,438.63
ERA Fund	\$62,213.08
Emergency Fund	\$25,000.00

Joseph J. Saady 20 Jan 96
by Joseph J. Saady, Treasurer

FROM THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE . . .

Members: Daniel Isenschmid (Chair), John Cody, Laurel Farrell and Elizabeth Marker

Please feel free to submit comments or suggestions to: Daniel Isenschmid, Ph.D., Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office
1300 E. Warren, Detroit, MI 48207

SOLVENT SAFETY IN THE LABORATORY

Submitted by: Elizabeth Marker, Ph.D.

The major hazards of solvents in the laboratory relate to their chemical nature and to the biological effects caused by exposure. As toxicologists we are all aware of the potential physical effects of solvents, either through acute or chronic exposure. As chemists, we are all aware of the flammable nature of most common laboratory solvents, some halogenated solvents such as chloroform being an exception. Thus, the safe use of solvents in the laboratory is of more than passing interest to the practicing toxicologist. When a little science is mixed with a little common sense, solvents can be used safely.

As with many things, the best defense is a good offense. Above all, ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets for all solvents on the premises are available in a location accessible by all employees with access to the solvents. Make sure that all laboratory areas have proper ventilation. In general, laboratory room air flow should meet current standards for changes of air per hour. Use solvents in fume hoods as much as possible and ensure that hoods have adequate air flow. The OSHA standard for hood certification is an average velocity of 100 ft./min. or greater, at a specified sash height. Hoods should be certified once per year by a qualified technician and clearly labeled that they have been certified. Use of solvents in uncertified hoods should be discontinued. The fume hood should be kept free of clutter and should not be used as a solvent storage location. Only the amount of solvent necessary for the days work should be kept in the hood. If carrying a glass solvent bottle in the laboratory, place the bottle into an appropriate plastic carrying tote to prevent breakage and spillage if the bottle is accidentally dropped or knocked over. Return all solvents to a storage cabinet at the end of the day.

Solvent storage should be in OSHA and fire department approved flammable cabinets. Make sure cabinets are properly vented and are located in a reasonably cool place, not in front of radiators or other heat sources. Flammable storage rooms, properly constructed, are also suitable. These rooms should include non-flammable building materials and a blow-out wall to the outside.

The danger due to the flammability of solvents is easy to forget after years of uneventful use, but most solvents have low flash points. To avoid explosions in the work and solvent storage areas, periodically check electrical outlets and light switches for proper grounding. Light sockets and bulbs in solvent storage rooms should be protected by appropriate explosion-resistant materials. Obviously, open flames and smoking in solvent use areas must be forbidden.

Outdated solvents (especially ether) and solvent waste should be properly disposed of through a chemical waste contractor. Solvent disposal drums should be placed in a secondary container large enough to ensure that all of the solvent in the primary container will be contained in the event of leakage. A manifest, indicating the types and proportions of solvents in the waste drum are required by most chemical waste contractors. All records of waste pick-up and disposal should be maintained by the laboratory for inspection, if needed.

This is all common sense for the protection of everyone in the laboratory and hopefully will serve as a breath of fresh air to senses dulled by familiarity. ☼

**WHY DON'T YOU
SUBMIT A CASE NOTE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF TOXTALK?**

Letter to the Editor: POSSIBLE LATEX ALLERGY SOLUTION

Submitted by Laureen Marinetti-Sheff, M.S., Department of State Police, East Lansing, MI

In response to the article in the last ToxTalk on latex allergy - my colleagues and I have also been bothered by this problem. Our solution is a 100% nitrile medical exam glove. This glove is powder-free, hypoallergenic, more puncture resistant than normal rubber latex or vinyl, and is in compliance with OSHA's standard for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens - 29 CFR 1910.1030. We also like the fit and dexterity they provide. They are available from Best Manufacturing Co (800-241-0323). ☼

Technical Notes: BLUTALKOHOLKONZENTRATION No. 14

Submitted by: J.G. Wigmore, B.Sc., Toxicology Section, Centre of Forensic Sciences, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

STATISTICAL EVALUATION OF FORENSIC BACK-CALCULATION RATES IN ALCOHOLICS

H.T. Haffner, A. Batra, N. Bilzer, K. Dietz, et al, *Blutalkohol* 53-61, 1992.

German title: *Statistische Annäherung an forensische Rückrechnungswerte für Alkoholiker*

Sixty-eight alcoholics (62 male, 6 female) were admitted to three psychiatric clinics for detoxification and treatment. The patients consumed alcohol in the clinic "ad libitum," and the BACs obtained were between 0.053 and 0.330 g/100 mL. Two hours after the cessation of alcohol consumption, multiple blood samples were collected for up to 21 hours or until the BAC reached 0.011g/100mL. The 2 hour wait prevented possible errors from BAC plateaus of "diffusionssturz" (diffusion drop) in the calculation of the rate of alcohol elimination. The BACs were determined by GC and ADH methods.

The average rate of alcohol elimination was 0.022 g/100 mL/h (range 0.013 - 0.037 g/100 mL/h). For back-calculations involving alcoholics, a range of elimination rates of between 0.013 and 0.031 g/100mL/h would include 95% of the subjects. In comparison, for back-calculations involving nonalcoholics a range of elimination rates between 0.010 and 0.021 g/100mL/h would include 91% of the subjects.

The authors conclude that the commonly employed rate of elimination of between 0.010 and 0.021 g/100mL/h does not apply for alcoholics. ☹

THE NEVADA SUPREME COURT DECISION ON HAIR ANALYSIS

Submitted by Arthur J. McBay, Ph.D., E/DABFT

A Nevada employee was discharged because a 30-day hair test for cocaine was reported as positive. Since the chain of custody was broken for that specimen, a 90-day specimen was obtained, and it was also positive for cocaine. Sometime in the 90 day period prior to being tested, claimant ingested cocaine. The claimant's attorney questioned the validity of hair testing, and he presented three papers to support his claim. "After reading these papers, the referee was not convinced that the testing was not valid. The authors raised some questions about the tests, but the bottom line was that drugs do show up in the hair if they are used by the individual and if properly tested, can be detected. The questions about chemicals in the hair and rate of growth and race of the individual were addressed by the employer's witnesses and the documents they presented. The preponderance of evidence establishes that hair drug testing done properly is an accepted form of drug testing. Given the testimony, the preponderance of evidence establishes the testing was done properly." The referee's determination was affirmed. The finding was subsequently reversed by a district court. The Employment Security Department and the hotel appealed to the Nevada Supreme Court. This court concluded that "RIA testing coupled with a confirmatory GC/MS test is a valid drug-testing methodology."

The Supreme Court reversed the district court's decision and reinstated the board of review's decision to deny the employee unemployment benefits. (State Emp. Sec. Dept. -v- Holmes 914 P.2d 611-617, NV 4/3/96).

The Amicus Curea submitted in this case is available on Internet at <http://www.htrac.com/amicus.html>.

A 1994 copy of the 219 references to hair testing is also available at <http://www.htrac.com/biblio.html>. As of June 1996, this bibliography contains 344 references. ☹



CALL FOR CASE NOTES

Your case note should be about 1/2 page in length, no more than a full page. Material or a disk (using Microsoft Works/Word 2.0) may be mailed to:

Joseph R. Monforte, Ph.D., DABFT, ToxTalk Editor
846 Smoke Dr. (H.P.), Prescott, AZ 86301-7347

- or - FAX: 520-771-1625 - new direct fax (after 11:30 a.m., E.S.T.)

Other items of interest to SOFT members are also welcome.

Next deadline: **NOVEMBER 1, 1996**

Case Notes:

Flunitrazepam: Does its absence mean it is not present?

Submitted by: Michael D. Robertson, National Medical Services, 2300 Stratford Ave., Willow Grove, PA, and Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), a premedication for surgery and prescribed night-time hypnotic, is widely used clinically throughout the world, excluding the USA. Its use is, however, becoming more prevalent in the USA due to increased illicit and "recreational" use. An inevitable consequence of the widespread therapeutic use of flunitrazepam is its frequent association with toxicity and death.

The following is a description of common postmortem toxicological findings associated with the flunitrazepam-related death of "Mr. Average" (based on 30 deaths in which flunitrazepam was involved). Mr. Average died as a result of mixed drug toxicity after the ingestion of large quantities of various prescription medications, including Rohypnol, and/or alcohol.

Upon analysis of various toxicological specimens, the following concentrations of flunitrazepam were detected:

Specimen	Femoral Blood	Vitreous Humour	Urine	Bile	Liver
Flunitrazepam (mg/L)	ND	ND	ND	0.71	ND
7-Amino flunitrazepam (mg/L)	0.06	0.01	0.29	0.5	0.06

ND = Not Detected (detection limit 0.01 mg/L)

Many laboratories in the United States appear to examine postmortem specimens for flunitrazepam only. From these results, it can be seen that following the ingestion of even large quantities of flunitrazepam the detection of this compound in any postmortem specimen other than bile is extremely unlikely. In no specimen was flunitrazepam detected without the 7-amino metabolite.

In conclusion, when examining biological specimens, especially postmortem specimens, the determination of the presence or absence of the 7-amino metabolite is essential when examining the involvement of flunitrazepam. That is, the absence of flunitrazepam in a specimen does not exclude the involvement of this drug in a death. ✖

YOUR TAXES AND PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

Are you taking advantage of legitimate tax deductions when you attend the SOFT Annual Meeting? The following, from an article, "In the Tax Man's Shadow" by Todd Englander which appeared in **Medical Meetings** (June 1996, V23 #4, 41-44) may be of interest to you. However, be sure to confirm your tax deductions with your accountant.

"What is the IRS definition of a business meeting? ...An event where 'the taxpayer (...sponsor or attendee) is benefiting or advancing the interest of his trade or business.'" (Sounds like a SOFT meeting!)

"What meeting expenses are deductible? All meeting costs - including food and beverage, lodging, travel, entertainment, and recreation - ...if the items are directly related to the 'active conduct of business or directly preceding or following a substantial and bona fide business discussion.'" Note: Meals and entertainment can only be deducted at the current rate of 50% of actual costs. Also, personal expenses for activities that have no relation to the meeting are not deductible; example: a balloon ride over Denver.

"What are the key tests for a meeting's deductibility? ...Attendance 1) must affect or enhance a person's trade or business, 2) must be 'ordinary and necessary', and 3) cannot be 'lavish and extravagant.' A fourth consideration is documentation. Receipts, conference brochures, plane tickets, and other back-up materials must be on hand." ✖

F.T.C.B. INFORMATION

The Forensic Toxicologist Certification Board, Inc. addresses the professional certification needs of toxicologists who desire to be evaluated by a peer Board without regard to educational degree attained, demonstrate active successful endeavor in the field of Forensic Toxicology, and successfully complete a knowledge examination. The FTCB is currently sponsored by the Southern Association of Forensic Scientists and the Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists. Details may be obtained from:

Everett T. Solomons, President, Forensic Toxicologist Certification Board
P O Box 37808, Decatur, GA 30037-0808

DRUGS IN THE NEWS

submitted by Joseph R. Monforte, Ph.D., DABFT

FLUNITRAZEPAM: Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) is a sleeping pill marketed in Mexico, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia, but is not legally available in the United States. In the U.S. it has been most frequently encountered in Florida and Texas as a drug of abuse. On a weight basis it is approximately ten times as potent as Diazepam and is supplied in 1 and 2 mg doses. It is known by various street names: Roachies, La Rocha, Rope, Rib, Roche', Rophies, Roofies, and Ruffies.

According to Baselt, therapeutic blood concentrations are quite low, usually less than 0.01 mg/L. Only very little flunitrazepam is excreted unchanged. Metabolites of analytical interest are norflunitrazepam and 7-aminoflunitrazepam which, when detectable, are present in plasma at very low concentrations (0.002 - 0.004 mg/L). See this issue of TOXTALK for typical postmortem findings in deaths involving flunitrazepam.

Flunitrazepam is in the news because of its association with date rape (Florida). The drug is allegedly added to the victim's drink without their knowledge. Use of the drug for this purpose has resulted in several arrests and convictions. The use of the drug for gang rape initiations (Texas) was first documented in December, 1995.

The above information was abstracted from a Flunitrazepam fact sheet prepared by the Haight-Asbury Free Clinic, a memorandum prepared by the Texas-Florida Rohypnol Response Group and Baselt, *Disposition of Drugs and Chemicals In Man*.

HEROIN: On May 1, 1996, the Arizona Republic published an AP article which described an epidemic of hospital emergency room admissions resulting from drug overdoses in Philadelphia. Although no fatalities were reported, 116 E.R. admissions were reported within a short time period during this same time frame in Baltimore. Philadelphia experienced a similar event (43 E.R. admissions) in February, 1996.

The culprit is dubbed "Super Buick" and "Homicide," and this particular batch contained an odd and super-potent blend of cocaine, heroin, dextromethorphan, a vitamin, thiamine and scopolamine. Victims exhibited two contrary, but equally dangerous, reactions. On admission, depressed respiration and faint, irregular heartbeat were typical symptoms. Narcan was administered as a narcotic antagonist, allowing scopolamine to dictate symptomatology, and the individuals became nearly uncontrollable. Some patients became so violent that as many as four workers were required to restrain them. It is speculated that a deliberately prepared potent batch was placed on the street to ruin a local drug dealer.

Authorities described the situation as a "double-edged sword." They wanted to warn addicts of the danger on the street, but realized at the same time these warnings would also peak the interest of many addicts eager to try the "good stuff."

Social implications were subtle, but significant. A school crossing guard noted that at least the absence of addicts allowed children to play in the street again. ♣

REGISTER FOR THE SOFT MEETING BEFORE SEPTEMBER 10th TO AVOID THE LATE FEE
NO MAIL REGISTRATION ACCEPTED AFTER OCTOBER 1st

ABFT NEWS

A.B.F.T. LABORATORY ACCREDITATION PROGRAM: The American Board of Forensic Toxicology, Inc., is accepting applications for laboratory accreditation by ABFT. The first ten laboratories to apply will be eligible for a reduced application fee. The application fee will be nominal to pay for expenses involved with the application and inspection process. The first group of inspectors, who are reimbursed for expenses only, have been identified and trained. If your laboratory is interested in this accreditation program, contact the ABFT Administrative Office (as noted below).

4th ANNUAL A.B.F.T. BREAKFAST: ABFT certificants are reminded to register for the 10/17/96 breakfast (7 a.m.) on their SOFT Annual Meeting registration forms.

1996 REQUALIFICATIONS: Thirty-eight ABFT Diplomates were successfully requalified. Two Emeritus applications were accepted: George Cimbura and Wellon Collom.

IMPORTANT DATES: The following are scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 15, during the SOFT annual meeting in Denver:

Board Meeting: noon to 6 pm (with lunch)

Exams: 8:30 to noon (must pre-arrange with Dr. Poklis)

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS: Forensic toxicologists with a doctorate or masters degree who are interested in certification by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology should contact:

ABFT Administrative Office, P.O. Box 669, Colorado Springs, CO 80901-0669
(Telephone: 719-636-1100)

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