



MICROTIME

The Georgia Society for Histotechnology

Issue 2

SUMMER 2015

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A CALL FOR GSH NOMINATIONS!

See page 14 for details

Your delegates represented you well in the capital city and the HOD proved to be a contentious event. Several motions were brought before the house, but most did not pass.

One motion called for the audio recordings of all general meetings to be kept for five years, but the motion failed and will continue to be for two years. The nominations and elections committee decided to rescind their motion and to continue to take suggestions. Of course, any changes will go before the HOD.

I encourage you to go to the nsh.org website and read carefully over the annual report for 2014 and now for 2015. Jack Ratliff, our Region III director gave a very thorough report. It covers many of the questions you might have about the happenings of this year's NSH/HOD.

One particular area of interest is the collaboration of the NSH with Targos and its affiliates. If any of our members are currently performing molecular testing, we would love to hear from you and hear how this collaboration would directly benefit you. In DC, I attended the Region III meeting and also the general membership meeting. I directly asked the NSH president about the financial responsibility of the NSH and this collaboration. My question was for an explanation of the collaboration and the financial burden to the NSH, but instead I received a "sales pitch" for the upcoming forum at Emory University.

I encourage you to request a copy of the current budget from NSH, if you are a member. It is usually posted on the NSH website with detailed accounting. Please go to nsh.org, then to "NSH Today" and then to "Annual Report".

Your GSH board of directors are working on the location and speakers for the next HISTOPALOOZA! III. After several site visits, (Jekyll Island, Brasstown Bald & Legacy Lodge Lake Lanier) a decision will be made by the deadline of September 30. We would appreciate your input before the final decision. Once again, we read the critiques of this year's symposium and will bring back the HT/HTL and QIHC reviews. Many this year wanted an extra day or half day for the HT review. Your requests were heard, so we will extend the workshop to a full day of HT review, followed by the next morning of HTL review. Watch for a preview of the meeting in our next newsletter.

Please call me with any concerns or suggestions.

Warm Regards,

Wanda K Simons, HT ASCP

GSH President



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Contact for further details Chad McMahan, SCSHT President and Meeting Manager, 864-541-1340

Georgia Society for Histotechnology



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Deadlines for Submission are:

- September 1 - Fall
- December 1 – Winter
- March 1 - Spring
- June 1 - Summer

Histology Openings!



Position Announcement: Chief Histology Technician

Qualifications:

1. High School Diploma and a minimum of 2 years college in an appropriate field, and at least 5 years of experience in a histology lab, or any equivalent combination of training and experience. Minimum of three (3) years supervisory experience.
2. Must have HT or HLT certification at time of appointment, with experience with immunohistochemistry.
3. Thorough knowledge of budgetary procedures to support the effective use of funds and support profitability.
4. Competent in ordering supplies and equipment ensuring cost effectiveness and waste minimization.
5. Ability to plan and organize work schedules for subordinates to ensure adequate and efficient staffing levels.

Ability to supervise technical personnel including hiring, training, motivating, coaching or discipline, and performance assessments. Compensation: Minimum annual salary is \$43,694 or higher depending upon experience. In addition UGA employees have access to a choice of health plan options and vision, dental, short-term and long term disability plans, generous leave accruals. Retirement plans include either Teachers Retirement System of Georgia or a choice of several 401(k) plans. Details may be found here: <http://www.hr.uga.edu/benefits>

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HOW TO PREPARE MACROS-Part II.

Continued from Fall issue of 2014 HOW I LEARNED TO PREPARE MACRO SECTIONS-Part I – By Shirley Powell

To prepare macro sections, the specimen of choice is sliced thinly, about ½ inch to 1 inch, depending on the density and fragility of the tissue. This can be done free hand with a long bladed knife or a Deli meat slicer can be used for uniform tissue thickness. Fixation, dehydration, clearing and infiltration can take from a week to months, depending on thickness and tissue type. Bones take longer due to the need to be sawed and trimmed, decalcified before processing. Breast may also take longer because of fat content.

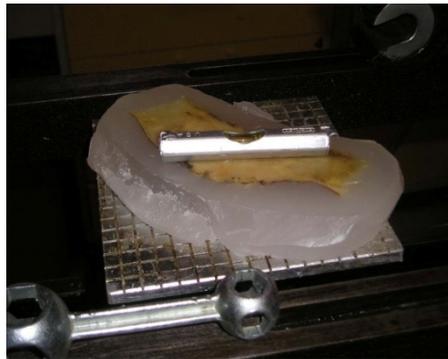
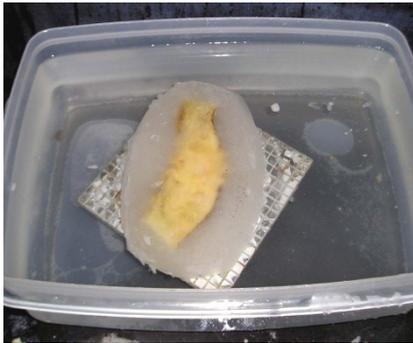
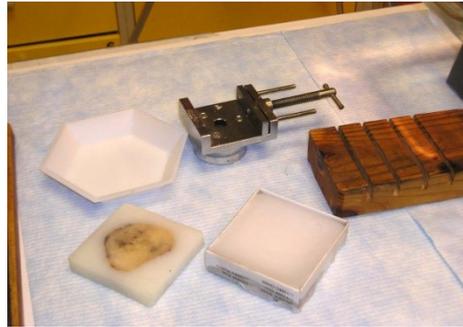
The same steps and solutions are used as in routine processing but in larger containers in a Vacuum oven using “vacuum only” at 15 inHg with alcohols & Xylene steps. Use heat and vacuum with paraffin.



If vacuum oven is not available a mechanical agitation using magnetic stirrers or orbital shakers work well. Automated processors can be used as well making sure the tissue is secure in a basket and the processing schedule lengthened. Plastic or glass containers to accommodate the size of the specimen in solution at a ratio of 1:15 volume may be used. A vacuum pump can be attached to a desiccator as pictured below with a platform to hold the tissue off the bottom for best circulation.

After processing is complete the specimen is embedded in the appropriate size mold. The embedding molds can be made from boxes/tops deeper

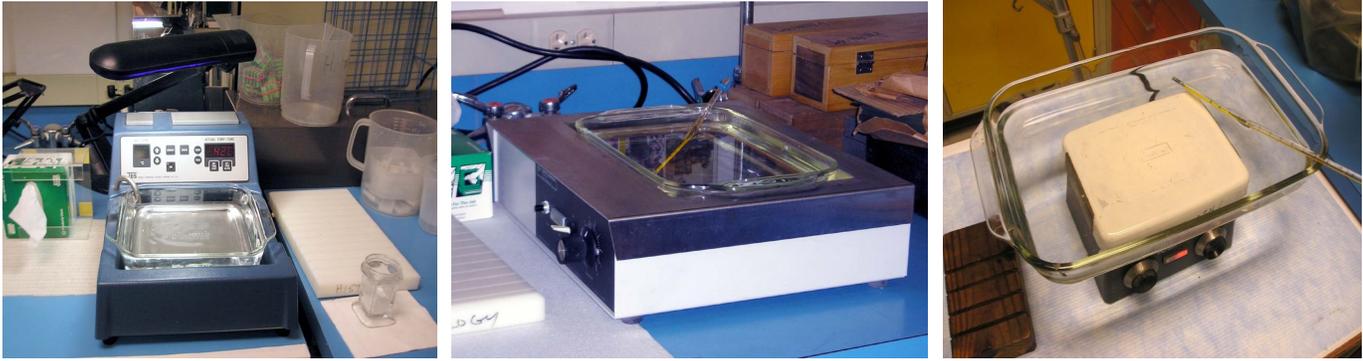
than tissue thickness. Disposable flexible plastic food containers may also be used. Be creative, any flat vessel that allows half inch of paraffin around the tissue sides and enough on the back to mount on chuck/block holder will work. After solidification trim the excess paraffin leaving at least half inch rim of paraffin around the edge of tissue. Mount blocks on the specimen holder of the microtome according to microtome manufacturer instructions.



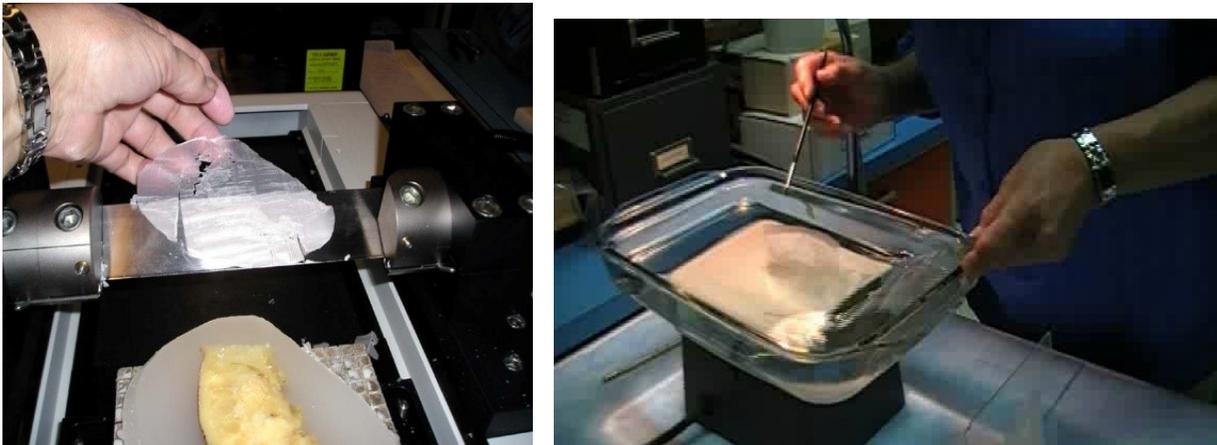
Microtomy is carried out using a large sliding microtome, manual or automated.



Large steel microtome knives or large disposable blades with holder are used. The size depends upon the microtome used.



Water baths need to be large enough to allow sections to spread and allow it to be picked up on the slide. These are commercially available or may be home made by placing a glass baking dish (9 X 13 X 3 or deeper) on hot plate will substitute. Place a thermometer in it to monitor the temperature. Use a commercial adhesive or gelatin (allow gelatin to dissolve completely). After the block is mounted on the chuck and placed on the microtome per manufacturer's instructions face block until full tissue exposed as in routine sectioning. Set thickness to 8 to 10 μm . Then soak the block with ice water for 30 minutes. Approach knife to tissue slowly to obtain section. As the section rolls up, use forceps to grasp paraffin rim with fingers or forceps and use a brush to unroll.



Move the knife away from tissue block and place section on water bath and allow it to stretch. Insert a slide into water bath under section and with the brush hold section in place while lifting slide out of water and drain vertically in slide rack then place in an oven or on warming stage overnight.



Staining can be done in any container that will accommodate the size slide used and reagents. Plastic containers, rectangular pitchers, cereal holders for alcohols and for the Xylene use compatible plastics or glass or metal containers. Restaurant supply, hardware stores, or places like the marts or dollar stores are good resources for containers. There are some vendors who carry unique containers as well.



The slides are warmed in an oven or slide dryer, preferably over night. A warming stage may also be used for drying. Then the slides are deparaffinized, hydrated through decreasing percent alcohols to distilled water. Use plastic forceps to transfer slides and so not agitate vigorously, be gentle. Progressive or regressive H&E stain may be performed. Alkaline solutions will tend to make sections wash off.

Coverglass can be made to order to any size Large, medium or Lantern size commercially. Coverglasses should be a few millimeters smaller than slides but you can use another slide as a coverglass but it will be much thicker. For large slides coverslipping may be a challenge. Wipe off any unwanted tissue fragments and put a generous amount of resin mounting media on the slide at one

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end, do not let Xylene dry out, the media will spread faster. Begin at end of the slide, lowering and bending coverslip toward the slide without letting the held end touch the slide. This takes a little time and patience. Slowly lower the coverglass down and chase out any bubbles. Then carefully blot the edges. Lay flat until media is dry.



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GUEST EDITORIAL:

The question was asked, what advice would I give new histology graduates?

First, I congratulate you for choosing histotechnology as your profession. I found my histology career very rewarding in many ways. Histology is a profession that can lead you to many work areas such as clinical, veterinary, research, specialty laboratories, electron microscopy, industry, consulting, traveling and so on.

You have received your foundation for developing your professional future. Maintain your enthusiasm for building upon this foundation. Gaining knowledge is an everyday occurrence in histology. One way to build on your future is to show professionalism. Join the National Society for Histotechnology (NSH) and your state histology society and attend meetings. The people putting on these meetings are doing it for YOU. It's disappointing for a lecturer to spend hours preparing a presentation and have six people show up. Get involved by writing an article for the newsletter, prepare a lecture, be a volunteer at a meeting or serve on a committee. We all have something that can be shared with others. NSH and state societies are excellent resources for developing a professional network.

Many new graduates are recruited to surgical pathology histology laboratories. There are many commonalities, but remember, all labs are different. What you learned in school may not be applied in your new workplace so be flexible. I recommend you become the best microtome operator, embedder or special stain tech you can be. Some laboratory tasks are rather mundane, but a necessity to the success of the overall operation. I never asked anyone to do something I wouldn't do myself. Show the senior techs you want to learn and they will share with you. Go to work with a positive attitude. Being negative will restrict what could be potentially shared with you. Don't take shortcuts. Learn good techniques and don't settle on mediocrity. Remember, garbage in is garbage out. What you put in the slide folder is a reflection of your technical abilities.

Histopathology labs and institutions are all about change. This could be related to new equipment, new techniques, moving to a new location, dealing with equipment failure, turnover of techs, supervisors, managers, medical residents and attending pathologists. Change is a stress indicator so learning to deal with what you have no control over is beneficial to your wellbeing in the workplace.

Strive to be a team player, be someone others can come to for help or advice. Treat fellow coworkers and professional staff with respect and a smile. Personality conflicts are inevitable. Develop good interpersonal skills. Being a person of integrity will show you are above these conflicts. Accept work assignments without complaints. Remember, it's not easy being a supervisor or manager.

Are you uncomfortable with the microscope? Look around, who uses the microscope the most? Approach this person and ask for a tutorial on proper alignment and use of the scope. Do you have a 'neat' slide? Share it with a coworker and talk about what you see. If you have access to a microscope with a digital camera, use it to build an image collection or a teaching set to share as an in-service for your lab group. Always review your special stain and immuno slides before presenting them to the pathologist. Look for proper staining, day to day reproducibility and staining quality. Being proactive with quality control communications to the pathologists saves them time and worry. A note in the folder goes a long way.

Many doors and opportunities can open for you if you show enthusiasm, willingness to learn and adapt yourself. Advancement often comes after proving yourself or from 'putting your time in.' One year experience following graduation does not make you an expert.

We are a pathologists' right hand. Without a histology staff, a pathologist cannot perform their diagnostic service. I was taught to spoil the doctors by taking care of them and providing them with the best quality slides and preparations they have ever seen. It is your contribution to patient care so eagerly accept their special requests. Yes sir, yes mam, no problem, I will get on it right away. They need it or they wouldn't be asking.

Most importantly, there is a person on the other side of the accession number. It could be your family member, your minister, neighbor or the person you see on the side of the road in need of help. Treat every block of tissue and slide as if it is your own.

I was once on an airline flight traveling to Chicago to grade slides at the ASCP for the previously required HT, HTL and QIHC practical examinations. Sitting next to fellow passengers, conversation turned to our professions. They were realtors coming back from a convention. They were in such awe to hear about the science of histology and thanked me for my contribution to society. I am proud of you for wanting to be a histologist and thank you for becoming part of our profession. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Jim Burchette, HT (ASCP)

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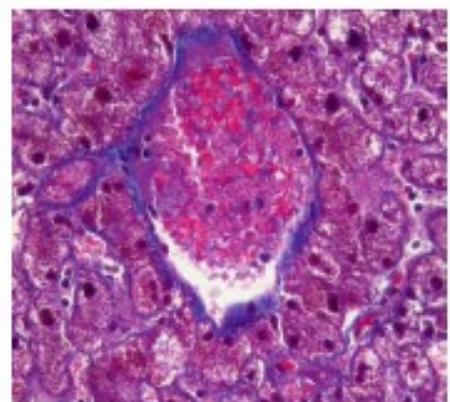
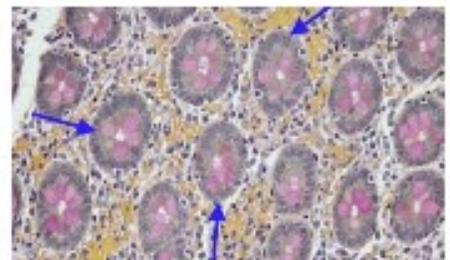
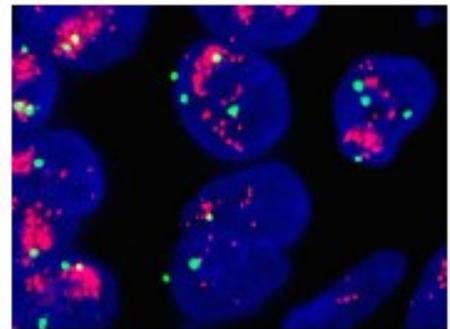
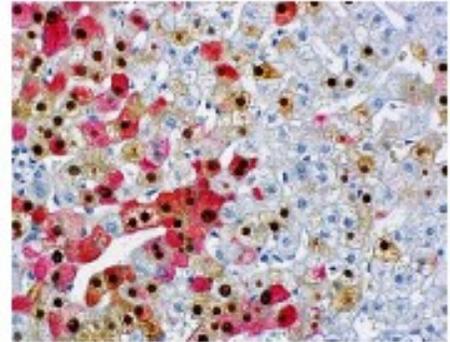
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GSH OFFICER NOMINATIONS TIME

PLEASE READ WHAT'S NEW BELOW!

2016- An Election Year for GSH Officers It is hard to believe that 2 years has passed so quickly and that we are coming up on another election year. In the spring of 2016, GSH members will elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer to serve the 2016-2018 term. Now is the time to think about who you would like to nominate to represent our members. All candidates must hold a current/up-to-date membership so it will be important to renew memberships for 2016. Look for "Call for Nomination" announcements in future Microtime editions and in emails from GSH.

Announcing Online Voting for the GSH 2016 Election! I am excited to announce that voting for the GSH 2016 election will be conducted online. It will be very important to provide a valid e-mail address when submitting, or renewing, your GSH membership so that you can participate in the voting process. Voting will be hosted by the Elections Online website. More information will be coming in future Microtime editions and/or GSH emails.

Cindy Baranowski, HT (ASCP)

GSH Nominations/ Elections Chair
GSH Awards Chair

NSH Awards

The National Society for Histotechnology is dedicated to recognizing outstanding histology professionals and students through our annual Leadership, Education and Advocacy Awards and Scholarship Program. We encourage professionals at all levels to apply and nominate your colleagues!

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