well. In a pediatric institution with an NICU, there may be many premature infants at some risk, and if you rely on staff to provide you with birth weights, perhaps some at-risk patients will not be identified. If there is an irradiator on the premises, it will only add a small cost to irradiate for all neonates and may avert a serious mishap. If, on the other hand, you are in a center where most sick preemies will be transferred and there is no irradiator in the blood bank, waiting for an irradiated unit from the blood center may cause delay, storage concerns, and increased cost. It might be wiser to limit the use of irradiated components to those cases where there is an actual risk of TA-GVHD.

I also run the blood bank at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children, and we irradiate for all neonates; however, I am accepting the fact that many of these recipients are not actually at risk. Since we have our own irradiator, storage is not an issue.

Cathy Litty, MD
Assistant Medical Director
Penn-Jersey Region
Musser Blood Center
700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123-3594

Letters From the Editors

Ortho Dedication

The editorial staff of Immunohematology is grateful to Ortho Diagnostic Systems Inc., a Johnson & Johnson Company, for its generous contribution each year in support of the publication of the September issue of the journal. This is the eighth year that Ortho has made this contribution and the sixth year that copies of that issue have been sent to Ortho Banker’s Club members.

Ortho Diagnostic Systems is a leading worldwide manufacturer and distributor of reagents for the blood bank laboratory. This leadership is demonstrated through the development and distribution of a full line of blood bank products, infectious disease screening tests, RhoGAM™ Rh(D) Immune Globulin, and educational training and support.

We thank Ortho for its continuing support.

Delores Mallory
Editor-in-Chief

Mary McGinniss
Managing Editor

Loss of Rare Red Blood Cells

One of our liquid nitrogen storage tanks, housing half of our collection of rare red blood cells, thawed recently and the cells are unrecoverable. While we are trying to salvage whatever we can for DNA isolation and red cell membrane preparation, we are still faced with the tragedy of losing so many rare samples. If any of your subscribers have any rare red blood cell samples that they can share with us, we would be extremely grateful. Samples can be sent to the address of Jill Storry, MS, FIBMS, at the address below.

Thank you for your help.

Jill Storry, MS, FIBMS
Reference Specialist
Immunohematology Laboratory
New York Blood Center
310 East 67th Street
New York, NY 10021
(212) 570-3071
e-mail: jstorry@nybc.org

Condolences

It is with great sadness that we record the deaths of two dear friends of Immunohematology for our readers and for all who knew them personally and professionally.

Dr. Polly Crawford published her memories of blood banking in “Those Were the Days” in Immunohematology, vol. 13, no. 1, 1997. She was a contributor to “Hints for Blood Bankers” through 1989 and was a peer reviewer from 1984 through 1996. She was an editor and contributor to the American Red Cross publication Immunohematology Methods and Procedures, published in 1993. She is gone too soon and will be deeply missed.

Dr. George Bird wrote a wonderful review for Immunohematology (vol. 4, no. 3) in 1988 titled “Lectins: a hundred years” that documented his major and lifelong contribution in this fascinating field. From 1988 through 1993, he was a peer reviewer for our journal with the eye of an eagle. He, too, is gone too soon and will be deeply missed.

Delores Mallory
Editor-in-Chief

Mary McGinniss
Managing Editor