IN MEMORIAM

Sandra Sue Ellisor (Sandy), MS, MT(ASCP)SBB

1945–2007

Sandy was born and lived her first 6 years in Houma, Louisiana, a very small town south of New Orleans. She spent many hours outside every day on “safari,” exploring her surroundings with her crackers, her cookies, and her great curiosity. Her family moved to New Jersey and then to Indiana, where she finished high school.

Sandy received her bachelor of science degree in 1966 from Western Kentucky in Bowling Green and her medical technology certification (MT[ASCP]) in 1966 while at Norton Memorial Infirmary in Louisville, Kentucky. She moved to the West Coast to work at Irwin Memorial Blood Bank in San Francisco, California, and received her specialist in blood bank certification (ASCP[SBB]) in 1971. In 1984, she was awarded a master's in clinical science from San Francisco State with an emphasis on immunology and management, which would serve her well when she started her consulting business in later years.

In 1971, Sandy joined Spectra Biologicals, Inc., as a technical representative and consultant. In 1974, she joined the American Red Cross (ARC) Central California Region in San Jose as director of the Immunohematology Reference Laboratory (IRL) and Technical Education. As a knowledgeable teacher and lecturer and because of her great interest in education, she developed and implemented the SBB training program for San Jose. As the chairman of the National ARC IRL Committee, she oversaw the establishment of the criteria and measurement tools for the levels of regional IRLs. The high standards of reference laboratories in the ARC system are a tribute to her dedication and organization skills. She was also a founding editor of Red Cell Free Press, a technical newsletter that was distributed to all of the ARC IRLs. The newsletter later became Immunohematology, Journal of Blood Group Serology and Education, the only peer-reviewed and cited international journal published by the ARC.

Sandy's first adventure into the field of small business ownership began in 1979 when she opened Blood Bank Enterprises, an education consultation and technical writing business. She then returned to the ARC and moved to Baltimore, Maryland, where, between 1984 and 1991, she held the offices of director of Reference Laboratory, Technical Education, and Regional Compliance Office (dealing with all levels of compliance regulations), and finally, administrator of Scientific and Laboratory Services. She was now demonstrating her ability to administer and give operational directives to well over 100 staff members and to manage a multimillion dollar budget.

Another career change came in 1991 when Sandy joined Ortho Clinical Diagnostics, Inc., Raritan, New Jersey, a partnership that would last 10 years. She became technical marketing manager and would spend most of her career as the Biovue and RhoGAM Products technical marketing manager. In this capacity, she traveled the world.

In 2002, she was back on the West Coast and she started ss.ellisor enterprises, BLOOD BANK CONSULTATION. By now, she had a world of experience! She had done it all—regulatory, budgeting, management, administration, reference laboratory, marketing, training, writing, and teaching. In addition, she was manager of her own business until her death in November 2007.
Sandy gave many talks locally and at the international level. She had many peer-reviewed papers published and was on numerous committees, including the California Blood Bank Society (CABB) and the AABB. She also was an active member of the Invitational Conference of Investigative Immunohematologists for a number of years. The honors for her contributions to the field of immunohematology include the CABB Owen Thomas Memorial Award in 1988, and the Pennsylvania Association of Blood Banks presented her with the Lyndel Molthan, MD, Memorial Award. In 1989, the AABB presented her with the Ivor Dunsford Memorial Award for her technical expertise.

Sandy was an amazing and interesting person in many ways. She was an avid and excellent bird watcher who introduced many colleagues to bird watching early in the morning, before technical meetings. She loved to hike, camp (especially at Yosemite, which was one of her favorite places), read a good mystery, and capture on camera all the wildflowers, which she knew by name. She was a “crab-addict”! This was a great food love that she acquired in her youth and she taught many of us how to crack, eat, and suck out every shred of good meat from each crab. But she was the only one who ever loved the yellow she-crab fat! She was stubborn and principled! In fact, she gave up a job one time because of principle. Of course, her hallmark was her amazing laugh. From this tiny person came a huge and distinctive laugh that could be heard and remembered forever.

Sandy will be remembered with great fondness and admiration by all who were her friends and who benefited from her many and varied contributions to immunohematology.

Delores Mallory, MT(ASCP)SBB
Emeritus Editorial Board

The family and friends of Sandy Ellisor have requested that contributions in Sandy's name be made to the following:

1. The Audubon Society (for her love of birds).

2. Chihuahua Rescue & Transport at: CRT, Inc. 3414 Pemberton Dr., Pearland, TX 77584 (the people who took care of and found homes for her pets).

3. An educational fund to encourage novice technologists to pursue a career in immunohematology. Checks can be made to NYBC with “PocketBook education fund” on the memo line. Send to Marion Reid, Immunochemistry, NYBC, 310 East 67th St., New York, NY 10065.