

**AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE ASSOCIATION
YUMA PACIFIC – SOUTHWEST (YPSW)
48th ANNUAL MEETING SUMMATION**

Meeting Theme: *“Scientific Accountability-Challenging Scientific Status Quo”*

Program Chair: Colin Young

Meeting Dates: January 18-20, 2023

Weather?: It was a little cooler in San Diego this year...50s and 60s. But no rain and certainly warmer than it was where many had travelled from. Mother nature was kind.

Venue: This year marked a return to an in-person meeting and a new venue. In consideration of the pandemic and a growing recognition that our venue of recent years (The Bay Club) would not be able to offer us proper spatial capacity, the 2020-2021 Executive Committee assessed many new venues and the likely costs to hold our future meetings at the same. The Committee narrowed it down to two; i.e., The Island Palms on Shelter Island (just a little further down the road from the Bay Club) and Paradise Point (near Sea World), and based primarily on cost factors, Island Palms was selected for the 2022 meeting. Due to the prolonged pandemic, the 2022 meeting regrettably became another remote meeting, but Island Palms was generous enough to honor the quotes it had given us for the 2023 meeting. After careful assessment, the Committee decided it was reasonable to plan an in-person meeting, and the attendance was outstanding!...65 attendees! The Island Palms venue for the meeting proved to be more than ample to support the group and allow for plenty of spacing between attendees. The guest rooms were equally nice (though some proved to be a bit further from the meeting room than would have been preferred). However, our Secretary/Treasurer Bob Lieckfield indicated that the customer service to our group was outstanding. Thus, worthy of reconsideration for our future meetings.

Changes?: Our BYOB social hours of the past are....well....a thing “of the past.” But let’s face it...we got away with that a lot longer than was appropriate! While we were concerned about the change, no true harm was realized and our social hours proved to be verrrry affordable and very nice. There was more room to mingle, the appetizers were outstanding, and the beverage selections ample. Yes, change is hard and you might miss what use to be, but this change was painless. So hopefully everyone embraces it as they did the calculator from the slide rule. :-D Now we just have to make sure that the keeper of the leftover booze stockpile, Megan Racicot, doesn’t get carried away with her treasure!
(Note! Megan had to miss the meeting due to the impending birth of her daughter. We sent her a group video of well-wishes and she responded that it made her day. “Billie Elizabeth” was born on the Sunday after our meeting. Everyone is healthy. Congrats to Megan and family!)

Day 1 Afternoon Tour: Who woulda thunk (sic) that a CIH could have commanded every environmental element of one of the largest redevelopment projects ever to occur in San Diego?! Yup, it’s true! Thanks to repeat prodding from Fred Boelter, Colin Young relented and led a tour of the environmental challenges that he managed over a 10 year period at Liberty

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Station, the former Naval Training Center (NTC) which was handed back to the City of San Diego under the Navy's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program. With assistance from Colin's friend Bob Russell, Esq., the environmental attorney that Colin worked with through the entire redevelopment, attendees were guided on a 2-3 mile walk through the redeveloped former Naval facility. Bob (a former Naval officer) began the tour with a history of the Navy's presence in San Diego, the formation of NTC and historical perspectives of most of the buildings that were preserved during redevelopment. Colin identified the locations of multiple environmental challenges that were encountered throughout the former base, including a massive burn dump, asbestos dumps and related issues, UST and related contamination discoveries, and even a grandiose mold issue that resulted during new construction, and explained how each was dealt with and the cost implications of each. Based on the feedback, the tour proved more successful than Gilligan's 3 hour tour, and everyone seemed to enjoy the walk, the history and the beers at Stone Brewing at the end.

The Meeting: A synopsis of the meeting couldn't do it justice. You had to be there. Sorry if you weren't. Consistent with the "scientific accountability" theme, the program opened with an updated presentation by Dr. Ed Calabrese regarding the false and apparently intentional misrepresentations of the foundations behind the current LNT model. Dr. Calabrese's intense research was remarkable. But what was more remarkable were his revelations of the resistance that he has received from the science community to even evaluate and consider his findings...blatant indicators of an old guard unwilling to change even when provided the objective substantiations. Don't scientists always want the right answer?! Apparently ego is mightier than the data. The presentation was jaw-dropping. But it didn't stop there.

Following Dr. Calabrese, Dr. John Cardarelli, as President of the Health Physics Society, revealed just how deep the resistance persisted within the health physics community. Dr. Cardarelli revealed that he produced and promoted the documentary on Dr. Calabrese's research, adding to the angst he received from members of the society. It would be an understatement to say that the hypocrisy revealed by Dr. Cardarelli was profound. But his persistence appears to be paying off and leading things in the right direction.

Taking a detour from the LNT issues, Dr. Martin Chapman provided an informative new look at the molecular properties of allergens and their true role as a catalyst to allergic diseases such as asthma and food intolerances. He described the structures of common allergens, such as dust mites, molds, peanuts, etc., and new state of the art tests for measuring them. For IH's that assess environments for the presence of such allergens, it was a welcome refresher to some common misunderstandings.

For only one morning of presentations, it felt like it was a full day.

Day two started right out of the gate with a presentation from our own John Mulhausen of the tools designed to help us maintain "accountability." John shared with us some new initiatives from both AIHA and ACGIH to address standards of care (i.e., performance expectations) and

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continuous improvement strategies/tools. The tools are there. Now they simply need to be used before the accountability can be realized.

Following John were two old friends of our section, Dr. John Howard and Chuck Geraci. In consideration of the socio-political pushback the science community clearly endured during the pandemic, Dr. Howard graciously accepted a request from Colin to address the challenges that an “objective” administration official/scientist must face in a forum of “subjective” arguments. How will science fair in a “post-truth” world? What do we need to know about the differences between misinformation and disinformation? How much responsibility should the science community accept for the socio-political mis/distrust? As always, Dr. Howard was both provocative and entertaining with his presentation.

On the heels of the “who to blame?” question, Chuck provided insight into the flaws of a scientist as a communicator. He referenced the work of Peter Sandman regarding “strategies for effective risk communication” and reminded us of some very simple principles; know your audience, listen, build trust, be honest and compassionate, etc. It was a good refresher in this “corona-normal” world.

The afternoon closed with two presentations regarding one of the hottest “exposure” topics besides the virus; i.e., the toxicity of PFAS and PFOA. Toxicologist’s Dr. Michael Dourson and Rick Welsh dove deep into the international-wide controversies regarding what should be interpreted as a safe dose to both. What is contributing to the lack of consensus? How can it be resolved? Is there really a fair basis for assigning toxicity in the ppt and ppq ranges? Does the lack of consensus reflect poorly on the scientific community and feed the lack of trust asserted by the socio-political public. The opinions were eye opening and clearly a precursor to many debates to come.

Following organizational updates from Larry Sloan and Mark Ames of AIHA and Tom Grumbles of BGC, the meeting closed with a heart-warming presentation of the Clayton Award, given posthumously to Steve Davis and accepted by his wife Chris Laszcz-Davis. Chris, at first understandably speechless, extended beautiful words and thanks at the evening banquet and a toast was extended in Steve’s memory.

The gavel was passed from President Ben Heckman to Colin, closing a successful meeting and year for YPSW and looking forward to this year and the next meeting. Many thanks to Ben for a job well done and helping to carry us through the turbulent pandemic period. Our next program will be at the hands of Dan Anna, the current VP.

We hope you’ll join us for the next meeting. Stay tuned for updates and input requests in the coming months.