

THE CUTTING EDGE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR
THE TEXAS SOCIETY FOR HISTOTECHNOLOGY



Photo Courtesy of Toni Lona, TSH Convention 2025

Welcome to our Newsletter!

Dear TSH Members,

It's my absolute pleasure to welcome you to the first issue of our newly reimagined TSH Newsletter!

I'm Toni Lona, your new Newsletter Chair, and I'm thrilled to help bring fresh energy, creativity, and connection to this corner of our professional community. Whether you're slicing, staining, troubleshooting antibodies, or mentoring the next generation of histotechs, you are the heart of this society, and this newsletter is for you!

I'm a Chicago native, Kansas State University alumna, and newly-christened Texan. I'm HTL certified, with a background in infectious disease pathology and veterinary biomedical science. These days, I serve as a Histotechnologist IV at the Galveston National Laboratory at UTMB, where I work across routine histology, spatial biology, and high-consequence research. I'm especially passionate about beautiful stains, method troubleshooting, and making chromogens behave.

Outside the lab, I'm a proud mom, rescue animal foster, and lifelong learner. I believe science should be shared, and that includes the clever ideas, the tricky fixes, and the oddly satisfying lab moments only fellow histotechs truly get.

My vision for this newsletter is simple: I want it to feel like us. Smart, supportive, sharp, and maybe even a little silly when the moment calls for it. Each issue will spotlight the brilliant work happening across Texas labs, highlight educational opportunities, and celebrate our community with photos, features, and yes, even the occasional meme.

Most importantly, this is a space for your voice. Got a story, tip, photo, or funny moment to share? Send it my way at anlona@utmb.edu. Let's build something we all look forward to opening.

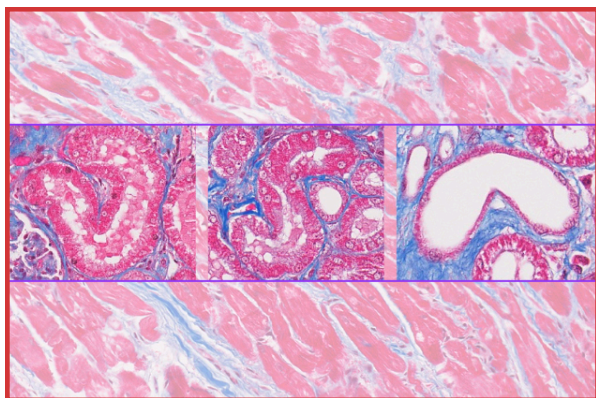
In service and solidarity,
-Toni

Antoinette EF Lona MSc.,
HTL(ASCP)^{cm} - Editor-in-Chief
Newsletter Chair
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Stain of the Month

In honor of Independence Day, we're celebrating a staining classic that brings its own kind of fireworks to the microscope: Masson's Trichrome. With its signature red, white, and blue palette, this stain is as iconic in histology as the Fourth of July is to summer



*Letters are canine kidney
Background is feline heart*

Color Breakdown

- Muscle fibers & cytoplasm: Bright red
- Collagen & connective tissue: Deep blue (or green, depending on your protocol)
- Nuclei: Sharp black or blue-black

Fixation is key:

For best results, fix tissue in Bouin's solution or postfix formalin-fixed tissue in Bouin's at 56°C for 30–60 minutes. This enhances nuclear detail and dye penetration.

Adjust your differentiation

If collagen is too dark or muscle lacks definition:

- Shorten aniline blue exposure
- Extend acetic acid differentiation time
- Small tweaks here can yield big clarity gains.

Use clean water:

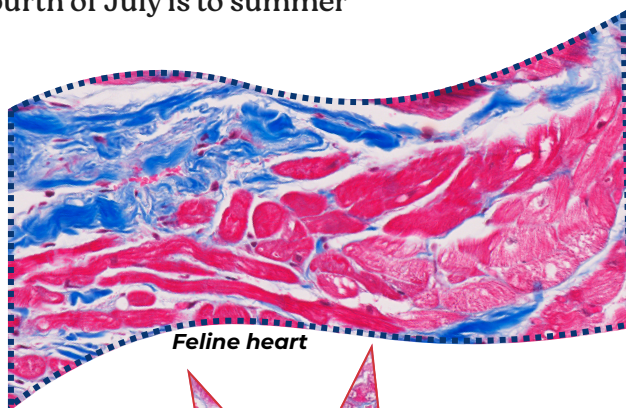
Hard or unfiltered water can affect acid dye binding. Use distilled or filtered water between steps to avoid background haze.

Combo staining tip:

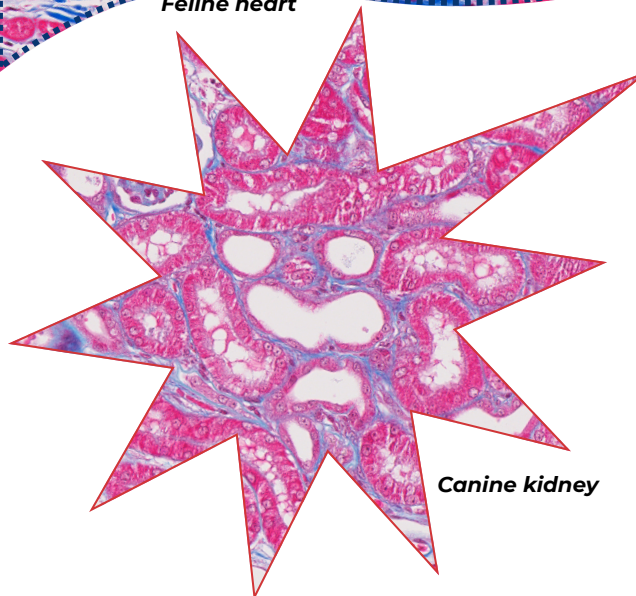
Try pairing Masson's with an elastic stain (e.g., Verhoeff-Van Gieson) to highlight vessel walls or fibrotic structures, great for complex tissue profiling!

Control tissue suggestions:

Use uterus or small intestine; they offer reliable contrast and crisp nuclei for verifying protocol consistency.



Feline heart



Canine kidney

Fireworks & Fibers: Celebrating July with Masson's Trichrome

Staining performed by Natalie Dobias
HTL(ASCP)^{cm} QIHC^{cm} and Antoinette EF
Lona MSc., HTL(ASCP)^{cm} from the
Galveston National Laboratory at UTMB



Next Month: Picro-Sirius Red!

To honor the dog days of summer, send in your best picro-sirius red stains and any tips and tricks you have!



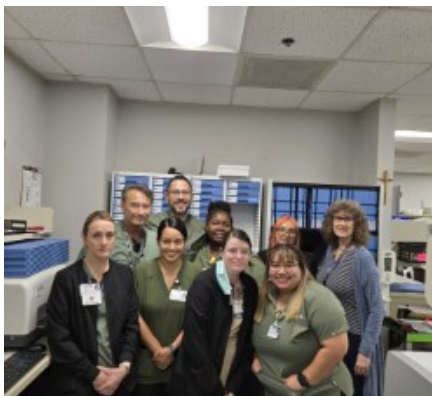
Lab Spotlight

Methodist Hospital and Methodist Children's Hospital

Methodist Hospital and Methodist Children's Hospital is one of the largest providers in the state of Texas.

The hospital itself (Methodist) opened in 1963 and in 1995 Methodist Healthcare System was formed as a 50/50 co-ownership with Methodist Healthcare Ministries, and HCA Healthcare. We provide high quality care to patients from San Antonio, it's 26 surrounding counties and around the world.

We are a very high-volume Histology/Pathology lab averaging about 1300 blocks per day offering Cytology, general Histology, Frozen Section Cryotomy services, Special Stains, IHCs and Molecular staining for Methodist/Methodist Children's Hospital, Methodist Specialty and Transplant, Methodist Stone Oak, Methodist Landmark, Methodist Ambulatory Surgical centers and South Texas Radiology Imaging Centers. We have 3 full shifts and are a 24 hour/day laboratory. Currently we have 46 employees in the Pathology department ranging from CLAs, Transcriptionists, Coders, Certified Lab Technicians, HT1s, HT2s and IHC Technologists. We work closely with St. Phillips College, University of Texas and most recently University of North Dakota Histology programs accepting students and interns from all three programs throughout the year.



**Thank you for all the incredible work
you guys do!**

*Want a moment in the spotlight? Have an amazing
tech you want to highlight? Any student or intern
who goes above and beyond? Showcase them here!*

Email us at:
anlona@utmb.edu



FREE CEUs! **Silver Stains** Hosted by StatLab

Stat Lab is rolling out a webinar called "Silver Stains" on Wednesday, July 23rd, at 12:00 PM CST.

Snag your spot here:

<https://tinyurl.com/mrx7jd74>

<https://www.texashistology.com>



Stains Without Borders

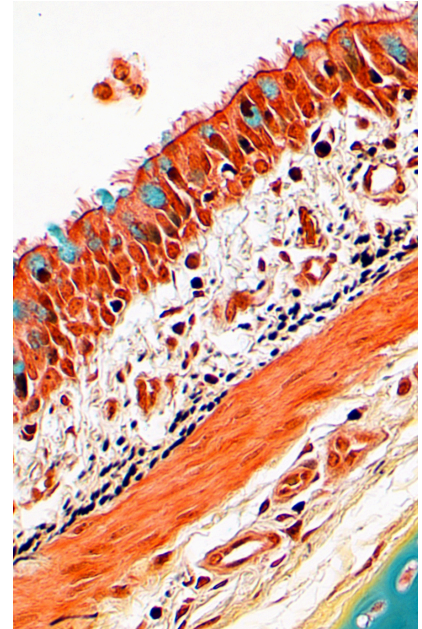
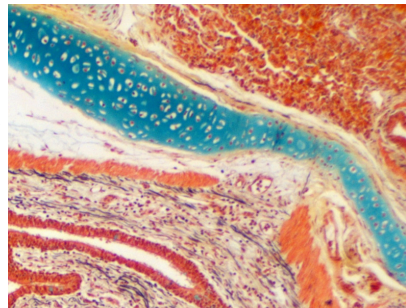
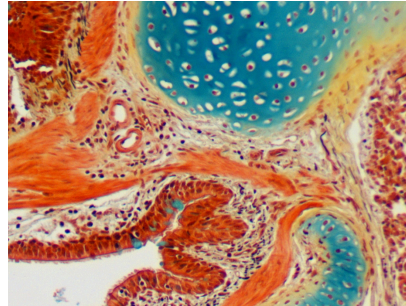
Spotlighting stellar work beyond the
Texas borders!

Russell Movat Pentachrome

**Colleen Forster BS, HT
(ASCP)^{cm}, QIHC(ASCP)^{cm}**

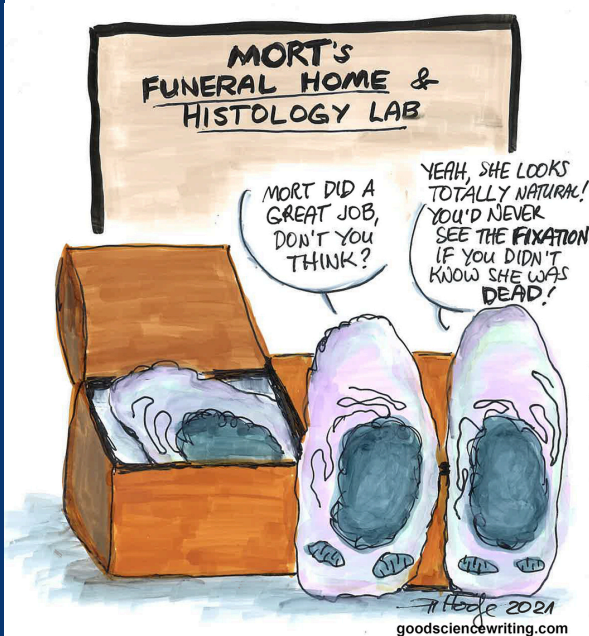
Histology Manager
BioSim Innovations
Brooklyn Park, MN

Check out Coleen's stunning hand-stained Russell-Movat Pentachrome! With incredible precision and patience, she brought out vivid differentiation of muscle, collagen, mucin, and fibrin all in a single section. This complex special stain is notoriously difficult to master, but Coleen nailed it by hand, showcasing both technical skill and an eye for histological artistry. Bravo, Coleen!



histology

We all need a laugh sometimes...



<https://www.texashistology.com>





CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!

Are you a passionate histotech with a cool case, clever tip, or compelling story to share? The Texas Society for Histotechnology (TSH) Newsletter wants to hear from YOU!

We're currently accepting submissions for upcoming issues and would love to feature your voice. Whether it's a how-to article on a staining technique, a fun lab anecdote, a photo of your latest beautiful slide, or a comic that only fellow histotechs will understand? There's a place for it in our pages.

You don't need to be a professional writer to contribute. We welcome pieces of all lengths and tones, from technical to humorous, and we're happy to help polish your draft if needed. Student voices and first-time contributors are especially encouraged to submit!

This is YOUR newsletter, let's make it a vibrant, collaborative space that reflects the creativity, expertise, and heart of our Texas histology community.

Submit your ideas, photos, or full articles to anlona@utmb.edu. Deadline for the next issue is July 25th.

Got something in your microtome drawer worth sharing? Don't keep it to yourself, submit it today!

JOIN TSH!

Click the link below to become a member of TSH and connect with a vibrant community of histology professionals across Texas. Whether you're a student, tech, pathologist, or vendor, there's a place for you in TSH! Gain access to exclusive resources, educational events, networking opportunities, and more. We'd be glad to have ya! 🐻

👉 [Join TSH here!](https://www.texashistology.com)