

The Pat Strait Award for Excellence in Cancer Abstracting
About Pat Strait



For those of you that didn't have the pleasure of knowing Pat, you missed out on knowing a wonderful person. For those of you that did know Pat, I know you join us in celebrating her through this award.

Pat was the FCDS technical backbone for almost 16 years until her retirement in 1997. I have had the pleasure of knowing Pat Strait since 1981 when she first came to Florida as the Field Coordinator for the West Coast region.

Pat was a born educator and communicator. Actually, she was an educator by education and training as evidenced by the skill with which she taught us all about cancer registration. She was always a team player, molding FCDS into what it has become today. She taught so many of us about cancer registration. It is possible that even today, there is not a single county in Florida that does not have one of Pat's pupils working in the field.

In return for her teaching us about cancer registration and its techniques, we taught her about the wonderful world of computerized data base management. The early years were tough going. She never trusted the computer. She would gingerly press the keys and call the machine names if it didn't work the way she wanted it to. After entering the data, she would pull up the case three or four times to insure it was there and correct. Once she gained confidence in the computer's ability to recall data, she quickly became a pro. Pat designed our first interactive edit checking software and quality control software. She was the liaison between the programmers and the administrators on all technical aspects related to FCDS.

Hardly a week goes by here at FCDS that we don't work with something Pat designed or was instrumental in developing. Therefore, it is fitting that an award for Abstracting Excellence is named in honor of Pat Strait.

Jill A. MacKinnon, PhD
Epidemiologist and Project Director