



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: A CHANGING OF THE GUARD AND OTHER TRANSITIONS IN OUR SOCIETY



Roberta Rudnick

on our web site: www.geochemsoc.org/about/committeesandpersonnel/board-directors.

The GS itself is also in a state of transition, beyond the normal changing of the guard, and you, as a member, can help to guide the society into the future. There are two issues at the forefront of these changes. First, the GS is undertaking strategic planning, with the aim of bringing greater benefits to our members. Secondly, we are beginning to deliberate on the future of the society's sponsorship of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta* (GCA). I discuss both topics below.

On 17 August 2019, the GS Board of Directors met with a strategic planning facilitator to thrash out ideas on how our society can better serve our members. Prior to this meeting the GS membership was sent a survey to complete, the facilitator seeking input from a cross-section of stakeholders. Armed with this background information, the board came up with the following four priorities for the next five years:

- 1) Engagement: increase the value members receive beyond GCA and Goldschmidt, etc.
- 2) Identity: ensure members have a clear understanding of (and connection to) the society and all that it offers.
- 3) Stewardship: ensure the society identifies and promotes best practices for professional conduct (where human values and professional excellence coexist).
- 4) Foundation: continually strengthen the society's capacity to evolve with the needs of its membership.

We are now in the process of developing specific actions that will help us achieve these goals and will share more information with the membership soon.

The second major issue the society faces is how to best support the community through our journal. Currently, and along with the Meteoritical Society, we sponsor *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta*. Because GCA is owned by Elsevier publishers, we do not control subscription or open access costs. Many GS members serve GCA as volunteer editors and reviewers, and the journal is highly regarded. However, some members have recently lost access to GCA due to libraries cancelling contracts with Elsevier due to high costs. The GS must consider this along with the overall trend in toward open access publishing.

We are evaluating different options for helping our members publish their research in a manner that makes it as accessible as possible to the community. The issue hinges on open access. Our libraries pay substantial subscription fees to provide access to journals published by for-profit publishers, such as Elsevier, and yet individuals from these institutions who wish to make their papers available to the community (and to the greater public, who often foot the bill for the research through their tax dollars) are assessed significant open access fees (currently \$3,150 per paper for GCA).

As this issue of *Elements* arrives in your mailbox, there is a transitioning of leadership at the Geochemical Society (GS). Vickie Bennett will take the GS helm on 1 January 2020, and I will move into the role of past-president where I will serve for another two years. Laurie Reisberg, who served ably for six years, will head into a well-deserved retirement from the society. The next vice-president, who will come from Europe, has yet to be determined but will be announced soon

The GS sought members' feedback on this issue in a survey sent out in July 2019, and the membership strongly indicated that the society should continue to sponsor a journal, and it should investigate alternatives to the current situation. Accordingly, we are in the process of recruiting a Future of Publication Committee that will investigate options for our society, including the possible launch of an open access journal for and by the societies (GS and the Meteoritical Society). Rest assured that this is not a move that will be taken lightly, but we cannot proceed without information and assessment of possible business models and how they will impact the society.

If you have any input you would like to share, or if you wish to be involved in implementing the strategic plan, or to serve on the Future of Publication Committee, it's not too late. Please e-mail your thoughts and desires to: president@geochemsoc.org

Finally, I can't stress enough how important our volunteers are to the strength of our society. Below, you will find a list of volunteers who are rotating off their various committees. In particular, I would like to thank Laurie Reisberg who served six years in the presidency and set a new standard for commitment, grace, and diplomacy. On behalf of all members, I extend our sincere thanks to these many volunteers!

Wishing you a joyous holiday season,

Roberta L. Rudnick

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

The Geochemical Society warmly thanks its many dedicated volunteers. Our sincere gratitude goes to the following GS members whose board and committee terms conclude in 2019.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Erdem Idiz (University of Oxford, UK)
- Tamsin Mather (University of Oxford, UK)
- Laurie Reisberg (CRPG, France)
- Sam Savin (New College of Florida, USA)
- Claudine Stirling (University of Otago, New Zealand)

ORGANIC GEOCHEMISTRY DIVISION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Carme Huguet (Universidad de los Andes, Colombia)
- Brad Rosenheim (University of South Florida, USA)
- Elisabeth Sikes (Rutgers University, USA)

ALFRED TREIBS AWARD COMMITTEE

- Pim van Bergen (Shell UK Limited, UK)
- John Volkman (CSIRO, Australia)

AWARD NOMINATION COMMITTEE

- John Moreau (University of Melbourne, Australia)
- Qingzhu Yin (University of California, Davis, USA)

C.C. PATTERSON AWARD COMMITTEE

- Joel Blum (University of Michigan, USA)
- Gordon Brown (Stanford University, USA)

ETHICS COMMITTEE

- Chris Ballentine (University of Oxford, UK)
- Catherine Jeandel (Observatoire Midi-Pyrénées, France)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Mike Perfit (University of Florida, USA)
- Dominique Weis (University of British Columbia, Canada)

F.W. CLARKE AWARD COMMITTEE

- W. Berry Lyons (The Ohio State University, USA)
- Bernard Marty (CRPG, France)
- David Sherman (University of Bristol, UK)

GEOCHEMICAL NEWS EDITORS

- Frances Jenner (The Open University, UK)
- Lin Ma (University of Texas at El Paso, USA)

GEOCHEMISTRY FELLOWS COMMITTEE (JOINT COMMITTEE WITH EAG)

- Penny King (Australian National University)
- Naohiro Yoshida (Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan)

JOHN HAYES AWARD COMMITTEE

- Brian Popp (University of Hawai'i, USA)
- Dale Schoeller (University of Wisconsin, USA)
- Roger Summons (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA)

JOINT PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE (WITH THE METEORITICAL SOCIETY)

- Thorsten Kleine (University of Muenster, Germany)
- Jisun Park (City University of New York, Kingsborough, USA)
- Mark Rehkamper (Imperial College London, UK)

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- Emi Ito (University of Minnesota, USA)
- Tetsuya Yokoyama (Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Sophie Decree (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences)
- Louis A. Derry (Cornell University, USA)
- Yoko Furukawa (Naval Research Laboratory, Japan)
- Katherine Kelley (University of Rhode Island, USA)
- James Schiffbauer (University of Missouri, USA)

V.M. GOLDSCHMIDT AWARD COMMITTEE

- Sigurður Gíslason (University of Iceland)
- Mark Theimens (Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, USA)

THE GOLDSCHMIDT CONFERENCE AND ITS CARBON FOOTPRINT

As recent demonstrations across the world show, there is a growing awareness of climate change and its impacts on human society. Whereas this is not news in our community, it does provoke an examination of how we, as a society of scientists, should contribute solutions.

The Geochemical Society's largest program is the Goldschmidt Conference, which is developed each year with the European Association of Geochemistry, both societies being co-owners of the conference. In odd-numbered years, the conference is held in Europe with EAG as the lead organizing society; in even-numbered years, the conference is held in North America, with the Geochemical Society as the primary organizer. But about once every 8 years, the GS plans the conference at a venue outside Europe or North America, such as the 2016 meeting in Japan. Each year, 3,000–4,000 scientists from more than 60 countries come together for a week of great science and networking. This gathering leads to vital collaborations, career development, and the formation of new friendships. Because the meeting moves around the world, it also gives delegates opportunities to experience new places and cultures.

A large, international meeting also entails significant consumption of natural resources through the usage of a convention center and delegates' travel. There is no denying the fact that Goldschmidt has an environmental impact. As more of us consider the carbon footprint of our travel, this raises questions about how the GS and EAG should organize the meeting. First among these inquiries is where should Goldschmidt be held?

Meetings in Europe permit some delegates to travel by rail, a more environmentally friendly mode of transport than flying. Train travel is efficient and quite practical in Europe, because of both the high population density and the excellent infrastructure. However, nearly 30% of delegates who came to Barcelona (Spain) this year came from Asia or Australia. Another 22% came from North America. We do not have good data on how many of our European attendees actually took the train (as opposed to flying). Every year, irrespective of where the conference is held, the two largest countries in terms of delegates attending are the US and China.

The Geochemical Society is international. Our members come from >70 countries and have the following breakdown: 50% North America; 28% Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, and the Middle East; 22% Europe. At first glance, Hawai'i may not seem like a good place to hold Goldschmidt, since nearly everyone has to fly there. But for many scientists from Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, Hawai'i will present the shortest distance of travel to the conference they have had since the 2016 meeting in Yokohama (Japan). It's also closer for many people in western North America than meetings in Europe. From our experience in 2016, we know that more Asian and Australian scientists are likely to attend next year because the venue is easier to reach. This will accomplish the important goal of making Goldschmidt accessible to scientists from all parts of the world, even if some who live farther from Hawai'i decide not to attend. Note that nearly 800 Japanese scientists participated in the Yokohama meeting, compared to 180 in Barcelona.

As we look into the future, the travel required to reach the conference venue will be a major consideration for the societies. So will energy conservation programs being offered by the convention centers. We are happy to say that the Hawai'i Convention Center relies largely on passive cooling, and, thus, consumes far less energy than the substantial amounts required to actively cool most other large centers. We are also exploring options such as recording sessions so that people who cannot attend the meeting can still benefit from some aspects of it. We are increasing the options for networking and interaction while at the conference and looking for ways to maximize the overall value of the conference experience.

Travel and human interaction are still very important to the endeavor of science. Figuring out how to achieve this while reducing our carbon footprint is a real challenge that will require many complementary solutions. We look forward to hearing your ideas at gsoffice@geochemsoc.org. Comments sent to this address will be shared with the leadership of both societies.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF GEOCHIMICA ET COSMOCHIMICA ACTA HONORING THE LIFE-TIME ACHIEVEMENTS OF LAWRENCE A. TAYLOR

Professor Lawrence A. Taylor (1937–2017) was a champion for the study of materials from inner Solar System bodies to understand origins. A >600 page special issue of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta* (volume 266) is now available and will be **freely accessible to all readers from 1 January to 31 March 2020**. This collection covers an array of topics that span Prof. Taylor's diverse interests, including the Moon, Earth, Mars, and asteroidal parent bodies. To view the special issue, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2nYkQG8>.