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Mineralogical Society of America

FROM THE PRESIDENT

*The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*¹

As the juggernaut of electronic publishing approaches, we should all consider what this might mean for our favorite journals and the cherished societies that publish them. Fueled by Moore's law, the approach is inevitable, so none should think we can turn back. Indeed, most of us embrace electronic media and eagerly await each new advance. But will there be unanticipated consequences?

Readers of *Elements* should pay special attention to GeoScienceWorld and the issues surrounding "open access" (see *Elements* 1: 244-245). If these terms are not yet on your radar, they will be soon.

Open or public access refers to a range of proposals that scientific articles should be posted on the web and available at no cost to all. In its current form (May 2006), the Cornyn-Lieberman bill requires all articles on research supported by NIH, NSF, DOE, and NASA to be uploaded within six months of publication. This is intended to speed access, enhance searches and indexing, and ease library budgets. If articles are free on the web, costly subscriptions can be cancelled. While these are noble goals, the concept meets stiff, but not universal, opposition by societies and publishers who raise the question: if institutional subscriptions are cancelled, who then pays? Even complete elimination of paper copies, unlikely to happen soon, would save only some of the cost of production of a scientific journal. A majority of the costs go for salaries and expenses of skilled technical editors and staff in order to achieve the widely desired peer review. At present, libraries pay much of this production cost. If libraries cancel subscriptions, will the costs be taken up by federal agencies, personal subscribers, or authors? I suspect not. Alternatively, would you trust the integrity of scientific literature to Wikipedia? We need a new business model.

GeoScienceWorld (GSW) is an exciting new venture that packages digital versions of 30 professional journals in a single subscription for electronic access (see Speer December 2005 *Elements* 313-314). The ease of use and new capabilities are breathtaking. The cost to libraries is significantly less than the sum of the individual journals, but it's all or nothing. Proceeds are returned to publishing organizations based on the number of articles uploaded and the number of internet hits. The first royalty check to MSA (April 2006) was larger than expected, but fell short of start-up costs. *American Mineralogist* is experiencing significant losses in library subscriptions, and these are expected to accelerate as institutions switch to GSW. Will the new GSW income match lost institutional subscriptions? We don't know yet. As a whole, library budgets are a zero-sum game. The new costs associated with GSW draw on this money. I fear that most journals will see reduced income, and without reorganization some will be put out of business.

If, as scientists, we wish to influence these changes that impact us so directly, we need to maintain strong professional societies. At MSA, Executive Director Alex Speer has helped guide GSW from the start and

¹ "The revolution will not be televised, ... the revolution will be live."
Gil Scott-Heron 1974

serves on its board, and past president Doug Rumble has closely monitored GSW and reported on the progress. We think that GSW offers the best path forward, but we are watching the finances with trepidation. This revolution will be live, it will be difficult, and our societies must be prepared.

One significant way you can help strengthen your society is by donating your time and support. I am greatly encouraged by the generosity of MSA members and hope we can do more. A healthy endowment is the best insurance against changing times and dropping subscription revenues. If you already contribute to your favorite society, thank you; if not, please consider a donation now.

John Valley
valley@geology.wise.edu

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

- During its 2006 spring meeting, MSA Council voted to keep the 2007 professional member dues at \$55 and increase student dues to \$10. Member subscriptions to the paper copy of *American Mineralogist*, which includes online access, will now be differentiated between domestic and foreign member subscription rates to reflect actual costs of producing and mailing the paper journal. Member subscriptions will include a portion of first-copy costs as we shift some of that burden from institutional to individual subscribers. US-member subscriptions (paper and electronic) will be \$50, and foreign-member subscriptions will be \$60. Member web-access-only subscriptions will be \$25. The US institutional subscription price (paper and electronic) is \$725, and the foreign institutional subscription price will be \$750. Included with the institutional subscription are all the current-year issues of *Reviews in Mineralogy and Geochemistry* and *Elements*, as well as access to the electronic journal on the MSA website.
- Last year, members who renewed before December 31 received a \$5 discount in dues. This will change so that those who renew online before October 31 will receive that discount; this change better reflects the true cost savings for MSA.
- MSA 2006 membership renewals will start by October, with membership renewal notices sent electronically. This will be followed by electronic reminders, and a paper copy will be sent to those who do not renew online by the end of October.
- Members and Fellows who are in the senior, honorary, and life categories are also sent renewal notices. These individuals need not pay dues, but are sent notices because this is the best way to update our membership information, particularly mail and e-mail addresses.
- Members who subscribe to other journals through MSA—*Journal of Petrology*, *Physics and Chemistry of Minerals*, *Mineralogical Abstracts*, *Mineralogical Record*, or *Rocks & Minerals*—are encouraged to renew early. MSA needs to forward such renewals to those publishers before your subscription runs out.

J. Alex Speer
j_a_speer@minsocam.org



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Many members contribute to MSA each year by including a contribution with their dues. Depending on the wishes of the member, the money is deposited with the principal of the MSA Endowment, MSA Mineralogy/Petrology, MSA Outreach, or Edward H. Kraus Crystallographic Research Funds. The income of these four Funds are to support MSA's research grants in crystallography, mineralogy, and petrology; publishing of the *American Mineralogist*; the *American Mineralogist* Undergraduate Awards; the Mineralogical Society of America Award; the Distinguished Public Service Award, the Dana Medal, the Roebling Medal; the website, and the lectureship program.

Between 07/01/2005 and 5/31/2006, 511 MSA members and organizations contributed (\$26,828.11) to MSA Funds: Endowment (\$14,731.11), Kraus (\$1,973), Mineralogy/Petrology Fund (\$5,938), and Outreach (\$4,186). If you have not done so previously, you might want to consider contributing at the next opportunity. Here we want to extend our gratitude to the following individuals and organizations:

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