

THIS ISSUE

This Medical Mineralogy issue provides illuminating perspectives on the diverse roles of minerals, both natural and unnatural, in the human body. In addition we gain insight into the properties of minerals as they affect biomolecules in soils. Fascinating science!

THREE YEARS OLD ALREADY

With this issue, we close our third year of publication. We are pleased with the recognition *Elements* has received in this short span of time, and we are committed to further improvements. As we reach this milestone, we thank all the guest editors and authors who have contributed their time and energy (see list on this page) since volume 1, number 1. Without them, *Elements* would not be here.

When Ian Parsons steps down at the end of 2007, the original team of principal editors will have been entirely replaced. A special thanks to Rod Ewing, Michael Hochella, and Ian Parsons who took the concept of a multi-society thematic magazine and made it into reality.

Our advertising revenue increased markedly in 2007, with the August issue bringing in the most advertising revenue so far. This has allowed us to increase the number of pages per issue from 64 to 72 in 2007.

ONLINE ACCESS

One thing we had not planned for is that you, the readers, would clamor for electronic access to *Elements*. Since the magazine's launch, we have posted a single pdf file of every issue with a delay. Initially the delay was one issue. Last year, the Executive Committee asked that the delay be extended to two issues. However, we kept getting requests from libraries stating,

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option of taking a "bio" specialization as an alternative to a largely physical science-based foundation. Through our deliberations, we need to listen to the students, too. Our current undergraduates at RPI have made it clear that they consider Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to be the most important course in their entire undergraduate program, because this course above all others makes them employable at the BS level. Is GIS fundamental in the traditional sense? probably not; is it important? definitely!

Today there is probably no standard answer to the question of what constitutes an ideal undergraduate geology curriculum. Geoscience departments—especially small ones—should develop curricula that they can deliver effectively given the expertise of the faculty. Emphasis should be placed on critical thinking, acquisition of basic skills, honing those skills on modern applications, and appreciation of the breadth and depth of modern geoscience.

The *Elements* editors try to highlight frontier areas and interfaces of MPG science, including developments in pedagogy (see volume 3, number 2). At the same time, however, we appreciate the need for our science to remain firmly based in the fundamentals of our fields. Sometimes this is a difficult fence to walk. I personally regret the loss from our education programs of skills that I still find valuable (e.g. optical mineralogy), but I think it is crucial to embrace what we have gained in recent decades so we can convey the essence of our fields to our students in the most effective way possible—even if curricula are not standardized across all geoscience departments.

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¹ Bruce Watson was the principal editor in charge of this issue.

very rightly so, that because they subscribe to *Elements*, there should be no delay for them to access the content. This spurred the development of a new webpage with gate access. Subscribers to *American Mineralogist* already have access to this improved web access (<http://www.elements-magazine.org/archives/index.html>). We thank Seth Davies of the Geochemical Society for making a pdf file of each article available for posting. We are working on ways to give all our members access to this site within the next few months.

GEOSCIENCEWORLD

As mentioned in the previous issue, *Elements* became the 35th journal to join GeoScience-World on December 6. Take the opportunity to check it out during the two-month free viewing period, which will last until the beginning of February 2008. GSW will provide searchable html and pdf files, cross-reference linking, etc. for the thematic articles and pdf files for all non-thematic content.

COLOR OR COLOUR?

This is a reminder that both American and British English and style are used in *Elements*. We just try to be consistent within a given contribution. It is a bit of an editorial challenge because no bell rings when the word colour, for example, appears in an American-style text.

UNSUNG HEROES

Lots of people read *Elements*, but some read it more than others. Take our talented copy editor, Thomas Clark, for example; he spends 60 to 70 hours per issue poring over every article and proof. We are grateful for his immense volunteer contribution. We also thank Dolores Durant, our volunteer proofreader: she typically finds things everyone else has overlooked. Their work contributes to a high-quality product.

**2005–2007
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