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Mineralogical Society of America

FROM THE PRESIDENT



New Editor

I am excited to announce that Dana Griffen, a professor and associate dean at Brigham Young University, has agreed to succeed George Lager as an editor for *American Mineralogist*. As most of you know, Dana is a crystallographer whose research has illuminated the causes of anisotropy in garnets, the crystal chemistry of high-pressure amphiboles and complexly exsolved epidotes, and the formation of zeolites. He also has worked on the design of artificial neural networks for the analysis of X-ray powder diffraction data. Dana will offer expertise for the handling and evaluation of submissions with a crystallographic flavor, and we are all thrilled to have him join current editors Bob Dymek and Bryan Chakoumakos. Many thanks go to past president Barb Dutrow for spearheading this successful search.

I also thank outgoing editor George Lager for his outstanding service to MSA. George has worked as editor since the fall of 2005, and he has been scrupulously dedicated to his editorial responsibilities. There are few positions within MSA that are as labor intensive—and as important—as the editors of our flagship journal, and we owe them great gratitude for the time, patience, and thought that goes into this job.

Position Statements

In October 2007 the MSA Council approved a policy for the evaluation of position statements. At the June 2007 Council meeting, secretary emeritus George Harlow introduced a resolution concerning the preservation of historic mineral collections. We immediately realized that MSA had no guidelines for the evaluation of such resolutions. It may seem trivial when the issue involves the importance of saving our mineral and rock heritage—no one will object to that. But how should Council respond if a member

desires MSA endorsement of a statement involving asbestos regulations or nuclear waste hazards? If we are going to risk litigation for the sake of a scientific principle, we had better do it with our eyes wide open.

And so we did what MSA is expert at—we formed a committee, populated by George Harlow (chair—never, ever, suggest a new idea unless you are prepared for the inevitable outcome), Jeff Post, and me. George toiled over the summer, and he developed a very reasonable protocol that will govern the submission, evaluation, and adoption of MSA position statements. The highlights are as follows:

- Any member of MSA may propose a position statement.
- Upon approval by the Executive Committee, the statement will be posted on the MSA website for 3 months for commentary by anyone, MSA member or not.
- The Executive Committee will reconsider the statement in light of the public comments. If it

likes what it sees, it will forward the issue to the MSA Council for a vote. Otherwise, the Executive Committee can revisit the position statement in any of several ways.

- A position statement approved by the MSA Council becomes the organization's official stand on the issue of interest. Every 4 years, the Council will reassess the statement.

MSA already has received a position statement to review—from George Harlow on the preservation of natural history collections. As I write this letter, the statement is in the hands of the Executive Committee, but I hope that as you read this, it will

be posted on MSA's website and open for commentary. If you have an opinion on this statement, submit your thoughts (sorry, they can't be anonymous or profane).

Better yet, if you feel that MSA should take an official stand on an issue that it currently is ignoring, submit a position statement. Once approved, these statements then can be cited in letters to our Congressmen or in arguments with university administrators. They also help to focus our judgment on issues that matter to the general public. So think about it.

Peter Heaney
President

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Nominations must be received by June 1, 2008.

The **Roebling Medal** is MSA's highest award and is given for eminence as demonstrated by outstanding published original research in mineralogy.

The **Dana Medal** recognizes continued outstanding scientific contributions through original research in the mineralogical sciences by an individual in mid-career.

The **Mineralogical Society of America Award** is given for outstanding published contribution(s) prior to the awardee's 35th birthday or within 7 years of the PhD.

The **Distinguished Public Service Medal** is presented to an individual or organization who has provided outstanding contributions to public policy and awareness about mineralogical topics through science.

Society Fellowship is the recognition of a member's significant scientific contributions. Nomination is undertaken by one member with two members acting as cosponsors. Form required; contact committee chair or visit MSA home page.

Submission requirements and procedures are on MSA's home page: <http://www.minsocam.org/>

MSA 2008 ELECTIONS

The slate of candidates for the MSA Council elections is as follows:

PRESIDENT – **Nancy L. Ross**

VICE PRESIDENT (ONE TO BE SELECTED) – **John B. Brady – Craig E. Manning**

TREASURER (ONE TO BE SELECTED) – **Darrell J. Henry – Jo Laird**

COUNCILLORS (TWO TO BE SELECTED) – **John F. Rakovan – Penelope L. King – Marc M. Hirschmann – Mark Cloos**

Mickey Gunter continues in office as secretary. Continuing councillors will be **Klaus Mezger, Jean Morrison, Peter C. Burns, and Carol D. Frost**. Election materials will be available to MSA members in April, in time for the voting deadline of August 1, 2008.

IN MEMORIAM

DR. SANKAR P. DAS GUPTA
Senior Member 1965

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

Elsewhere on the MSA pages is the list of 2008 candidates running for MSA offices for terms starting in 2009. In addition to these races, there will be two proposed Bylaw changes on the ballot. One is a recommendation to increase the cost of life membership, the other on how vacancies that might occur in elected offices would be filled.

Life Membership

CURRENT

Article III. Membership, Section 9. "A single prepayment of an amount equaling twenty-five times the annual dues of a Fellow or Member of the Society shall be accepted as commutation for life. Such individuals shall be designated as Life Fellows or Life Members and shall enjoy the benefits of each respective membership category without payment of further annual dues."

PROPOSED CHANGE

Article III. Membership, Section 9. "A single prepayment of an amount equaling ~~twenty-five~~ fifty times the annual dues of a Fellow or Member of the Society shall be accepted as commutation for life. Such individuals shall be designated as Life Fellows or Life Members and shall enjoy the benefits of each respective membership category without payment of further annual dues."

RATIONALE

As noted at the 2007 business meeting, life-member dues of twenty-five times the annual dues do not cover the costs of the average tenure of a Life Member. By raising the rate to fifty times the annual dues, life memberships will, on average, cover the cost of the member's dues while they are living and provide MSA continuing income once they pass.

Vacancies

CURRENT

Article IV. Council and Officers, Section 4: "A vacancy occurring in any office between annual elections shall be filled until the next regularly scheduled election by any eligible member of the Society appointed by a two-thirds vote of the Council."

PROPOSED CHANGE

Article IV. Council and Officers, Section 4:

(A) A vacancy in the position of President shall be filled by the Vice President.

(B) A vacancy in the position of Vice President shall be filled by the runner-up in the immediate past election to that office. If that individual is unable to assume office, the position shall be filled by any eligible member of the Society elected by a two-thirds vote of the Council.

(C) A vacancy in the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, or Councilor shall be filled by any eligible member of the Society elected by a two-thirds vote of the Council.

(D) An individual elected by Council to fill a vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office, and until his or her successor is elected and qualified. The individual filling a vacancy is not precluded from running for that same office in the next election or considered to violate any term limits.

(E) In the event that an individual, between the time they are elected and the time their term in office is to begin, is unable to occupy that position, the runner-up in the election to that office shall assume office.

RATIONALE

The current section is simple, but could lead to unusual results. For example, it does not require that a Vice President necessarily steps in if there were a vacancy in the presidency, as most would expect. Filling vacancies only until the next election could disrupt the finely crafted staggered terms of MSA offices.

More on MSA

The secretary and treasurer reports that describe society activities of the past year are available on the MSA website by selecting "Officer Reports" under "The Society".

J. Alex Speer

MSA Executive Director
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INVITATION TO REQUEST A 2008–2009
MSA DISTINGUISHED LECTURER

The Mineralogical Society is again offering a program for the 2008–2009 academic year with the arrangement that the MSA will pay travel expenses of the Lecturers and the host institutions will be responsible for local expenses, including accommodation and meals. The program will include three Lecturers, one of whom resides in Europe. Depending on the response, one or more lecture tours will be arranged outside North America.

Names of the 2008–2009 Distinguished Lecturers and their lecture titles are not yet available, but will be posted soon on the MSA website. If your institution is interested in requesting the visit of an MSA Distinguished Lecturer, check the website for lecturers and titles and e-mail your request to the Lecture Program Administrator: *Dr. Cameron Davidson, Carleton College, Dept of Geology, 1 N College St, Northfield, MN 55057-0001, USA; e-mail: cdavidso@carleton.edu; tel.: (507) 646-7144; fax: (507) 646-4400.* The Lecture Program is designed to run from September 2008 through April 2009. Lecturer requests received by May 12, 2008, will be given priority. Late applications will be considered on a space-available basis. In making your request please include (1) airport proximity from, and travel time to, your institution; (2) the name of a contact person at your institution for the months of May and June (when Lecturer schedules will be assembled); (3) contact e-mail addresses and phone numbers; (4) flexibility on Lecturer preference; and (5) for schools outside the U.S., the starting and ending dates of academic terms. Because of travel and schedule constraints, it is normally not possible to satisfy requests for tightly constrained dates such as seminar days.



The Mineralogical Society of America

2009 Grants for
**RESEARCH IN CRYSTALLOGRAPHY,
MINERAL PHYSICS OR CHEMISTRY,
AND MINERALOGY**

from the Edward H. Kraus Crystallographic Research Fund
with contributions from MSA membership and friends

STUDENT RESEARCH IN MINERALOGY AND PETROLOGY

from an endowment created by MSA members

Selection is based on the qualifications of the applicant, the quality, innovativeness, and scientific significance of the research of a written proposal and the likelihood of success of the project. There are three US\$5000 grants with no restrictions on how the funds may be spent, as long as they are used in support of research. Application instructions and forms are available from the MSA home page, www.minsocam.org, or the MSA office. Completed applications must be received by June 1, 2008.

Mineralogical Society of America and Geochemical Society
2008 Short Course

Minerals, Inclusions & Volcanic Processes

13–14 December 2008

before the Fall AGU meeting in San Francisco, California, USA

SHORT COURSE ORGANIZERS:

Keith Putirka, California State University, Fresno, CA, and
Frank Tepley, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR

More information and registration forms will be available in the spring of 2008 on the MSA website.