



# Geochemical Society

[www.geochemsoc.org](http://www.geochemsoc.org)



## GOLDSCHMIDT 2009 BLOGGERS

This year in Davos, you may notice a slight increase in the frequency of attendees pecking away at their laptops during talks. At first glance it may seem that they have given up on the current speaker in favor of checking their e-mails or putting in last-minute changes to their own slides, but reality is quite the opposite.

This year, some attendees will be taking very detailed notes about some talks because, in addition to all of the normal expectations and stress of attending our annual meeting, they will be contributing to the Geochemical Society's first-ever Goldschmidt Conference blog.

Before getting into the details of what this means, it must be acknowledged that a lot of us still don't quite know what to think of the word "blog" (a contraction of the term "web-log"). This is completely understandable considering "blogging" is most often associated with technology-enabled teenagers, celebrity gossip, or political punditry. But over the past few years, blogs have also become powerful scientific communication tools.

There is no standard template for a science blog. For his blog entitled *The Green Grok*, Bill Chamaeides (Dean of the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University and Goldschmidt 2009's "The Earth's Future" panel member) draws on years of experience to openly discuss issues related to sustainability, climate change, and the environment<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, many science blogs are run by science writers/journalists (they write your press releases, popular science articles, books, etc.) as additional outlets for writing about exciting research. From skeptic to student, science bloggers work collectively towards an important goal: increasing the public dialogue about science.

Our "live" conference blog will be written by not one, but a number of attendees with broad backgrounds and expertise—from graduate students to Geochemical Society President Martin Goldhaber. The blog will cover talks from a wide sampling of scientific themes, as well as events like field trips, poster sessions, award ceremonies, and pretty much anything related to Goldschmidt 2009. In the absence of web-casting from the conference (see Martin Goldhaber's letter on p. 48 of the February 2009 issue of *Elements*), the blog will be a less technically and financially challenging means for non-attending GS members to follow the week's events. Conference attendees might also find it useful to track the blog live from Davos.

Another objective of the blog will be to increase the visibility of the Society and attract new members. In the last issue of *Elements* (April 2009, p. 124), Martin Goldhaber mentioned some recent efforts to increase membership, especially among young researchers more likely to follow blogs and other web-based communication methods.

So this year at Goldschmidt, try not to instinctively sneer at graduate students typing on their laptop in the back of the room during a talk. Instead, find them during a break and tell them you appreciate their efforts. And while you're at it, maybe you should buy them a beer too (you're welcome, students). Finding time to write among other conference duties is not an easy task, but when the reason is to help communicate what we do at Goldschmidt and why it's important, I think we all can agree it's well worth the effort.

Please follow the progress of our conference blog at <http://geochemicalnews.wordpress.com/>.

**Nicholas Wigginton<sup>2</sup>**

1 The Green Grok: [www.nicholas.duke.edu/thegreengrok](http://www.nicholas.duke.edu/thegreengrok)

2 Nicholas Wigginton is the former editor of *Geochemical News*. He is currently an associate editor of *Science* and can be reached by e-mail at [nwiggint@aaas.org](mailto:nwiggint@aaas.org)

## CALL FOR 2010 AWARD NOMINATIONS

Once again it is time to ask for nominations for the Goldschmidt Medal, Clarke Medal, Patterson Medal, Treibs Medal, and GS/EAG Geochemical Fellow Awards. **October 31, 2009**, is the deadline for nominations to be considered for these awards. For information on nomination requirements, visit the Geochemical Society website at [www.geochemsoc.org/awards](http://www.geochemsoc.org/awards). Please take the time to highlight the accomplishments of your valued friends and colleagues by nominating them. With your help, we can ensure that all of geochemistry is recognized and all deserving geochemists are considered.

- The **V.M. Goldschmidt Medal** is awarded for major achievements in geochemistry or cosmochemistry, consisting of either a single outstanding contribution or a series of publications that have had great influence on the field.
- The **F.W. Clarke Medal** is awarded to an early-career scientist for a single outstanding contribution to geochemistry or cosmochemistry, published either as a single paper or a series of papers on a single topic.
- The **C.C. Patterson Medal** is awarded for a recent innovative breakthrough in environmental geochemistry of fundamental significance, published in a peer-reviewed journal.
- The **Alfred Treibs Medal** is awarded by the Organic Geochemistry Division for major achievements, over a period of years, in organic geochemistry.
- The **GS/EAG Geochemistry Fellow Award** is bestowed upon outstanding scientists who have, over some years, made a major contribution to the field of geochemistry.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

The Nominations Committee of the Geochemical Society is seeking nominees for vice-president and for three seats on the Board of Directors for terms beginning in 2010. The new vice-president will become president in 2012. The new board members will replace retiring directors Yaoling Niu, Seth (Swami) Krishnaswami, and Marilyn Fogel. One of these directors must reside outside of North America. Board members should be outstanding geochemists with a keen interest in the work of the Society and be willing to travel to the annual board meeting at the Goldschmidt Conference. The nominees for vice-president should have established reputations of leadership in geochemistry and be willing to devote considerable time and effort to the work of the Society.

Suggestions may be communicated by **July 31, 2009**, to any member of the 2010 Nominations Committee or to the GS business office. More information regarding the duties and responsibilities of board positions can be found on the Geochemical Society website.

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Read also Peter Deines' obituary on page 144.