



Mineralogical Society of America

www.minsocam.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Teaching Mineralogy



John Brady

According to the MSA Bylaws, "The object of the Society shall be the advancement of mineralogy, crystallography, geochemistry, and petrology, and the promotion of their use in other sciences, industry, education, and the arts." Like many MSA members, I am particularly involved in the education part of this mission. During my years as a professor at a liberal arts college, I have learned that teaching mineralogy is both a challenging and a rewarding job (Brady 1995). It is also an important job, as the future of MSA is influenced by our success in the classroom.

Mineralogy and the other MSA fields are dynamic sciences that evolve over time with new discoveries, technology, scientific priorities, funding opportunities, personnel, and politics. As with all teaching, mineralogy instruction lags behind advances in the discipline due to pedagogical inertia, the lack of availability of new instruments for classroom use, and the time needed to develop new instructional materials. I believe that teachers of mineralogy must be especially vigilant in staying current and in making our courses relevant to all geoscientists, because we have lost ground in the past in spite of the fundamental role of mineralogy in understanding geologic problems. In these economically tight times, we must be proactive and imaginative in promoting our discipline among our students and scientific colleagues.

Increased attention has been given to pedagogy in the Earth sciences in recent years, through topical sessions at meetings, workshops on teaching, and programs in Earth science teaching at some universities. MSA has supported these efforts through sales of *Teaching Mineralogy* (now available online, along with other resources, thanks to Dave Mogk at http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/mineralogy/table_contents).

html), through the publication of *Mineralogy and Optical Mineralogy* (by Darby Dyar and Mickey Gunter with Dennis Tasa), and through creation of "Mineralogy 4 Kids" (by Vicki Harder and Nancy McMillan) and "Collector's Corner" and "Ask-a-Mineralogist" (by David von Bargen) on the MSA website. Three-quarters of the hits on the MSA website connect to these last three areas. A total of 2848 copies of *Mineralogy and Optical Mineralogy* have been sold since its introduction in late 2007. Clearly these activities are important for MSA. I think we should do more of them.

We should seize the opportunity presented by the ongoing technological revolution to publish electronically teaching materials and textbooks that are engaging, interactive, and current. "Mineralogy 4 Kids" should be an evolving resource, updated and modified as needed by an editor or working group. We should encourage MSA members to think about how their research results (concepts, data, images, animations) might be used in the classroom, made available through MSA, and help teachers put them to use. As a Society, we should look for ways to incorporate mineralogy into other geology classes ("mineralogy across the curriculum"). And we should seek opportunities to educate the public and policy makers on the value of mineralogy to society in issues such as the epidemiology of asbestiform minerals and the search for natural resources. The "advancement of mineralogy, crystallography, geochemistry, and petrology" requires our attention and is a good use of our time.

All too quickly, a year has gone by and this is my last *Elements* letter. I want to thank everyone who gave me the opportunity to be an MSA officer. The other officers, Council members, committee members, MSA staff, and especially Alex Speer have made this a very pleasant job. As I pass the gavel to our new president, Dave Bish, I am confident that MSA is thriving. With your continued support, MSA will remain strong.

John Brady (jbrady@smith.edu), 2010 MSA President

Brady JB (1995) Confessions of a mineralogy professor. *Geotimes* 40(9): 4

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

- Results of the 2010 election: The 2011 president of the Society is David L. Bish and the vice-president is Michael F. Hochella. Darrell J. Henry was reelected to another term as treasurer, and Mickey Gunter, secretary, remains in office. The new councilors are Pamela C. Burnley and Guy L. Hovis. They join continuing councilors Wendy A. Bohrsen, Sumit Chakraborty, Peter C. Burns, and Carol D. Frost.
- MSA Council approved posting preprints of papers in press in the *American Mineralogist* on the MSA website at the time of their acceptance. At the moment the preprints are accessible to MSA members with journal subscriptions or to institutions that directly subscribe through MSA, unless the manuscript is an open access document. These preprints are the unedited manuscripts accepted for publication. They will undergo copyediting, layout, and review of the proof before being published, so always consult the final, published document as well.
- Looking ahead, the 2011 short course Applied Mineralogy of Cement and Concrete (Maarten Broekmans, organizer) will be held at the 10th International Congress for Applied Mineralogy (ICAM), Trondheim, Norway, 1–5 August 2011. The meeting abstract deadline is 15 November 2010 (www.icam2011.org).

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*Mineralogical Society of America
and Geochemical Society*

Short Course Announcement

DIFFUSION IN MINERALS AND MELTS

December 11–12, 2010

Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa

Napa, CA, USA

(before Fall AGU Meeting)

Convenors

Youxue Zhang

University of Michigan

Daniele Cherniak

Rensselaer Polytechnic
Institute

The short course will focus on diffusion of all elements in minerals and melts at high to moderate temperatures. Topics include: theoretical background on diffusion, experimental methods and analytical techniques in diffusion studies, and summary and assessment of diffusion data in minerals and melts.

More information and registration: www.minsocam.org

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY *Cont'd from page 336*

- MSA members were contacted electronically in September to renew their membership for 2011. Members who renew and pay online before 31 October will receive a \$5 dues discount; the discount reflects cost savings to MSA from members who renew early online. There will be several electronic reminders before a paper copy is sent during November 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 sent renewal notices. They need not pay dues, but are sent notices as the best way to prompt an update of membership information, particularly postal and e-mail addresses.
- Members qualify for Senior Member or Senior Fellow status if they have reached the age of 65, have retired from fulltime professional employment, and have been a member of the Society for at least 30 years. Senior Members and Fellows retain all benefits of MSA membership (receiving *Elements*, voting, getting reduced rates on MSA products, etc.), but need not pay dues. They can subscribe to the paper or electronic version of *American Mineralogist* or other journals, purchase Society publications, and attend short courses all at member rates. If you are interested in senior status, select Senior Member or Fellow dues on your next renewal and tell us in the text box that you would like to become a Senior Member.
- If you subscribe to other journals through MSA—*Journal of Petrology*, *Physics and Chemistry of Minerals, Rocks & Minerals*, or *Gems & Gemology*—please renew early. MSA needs to forward your renewal to the publishers before your subscription runs out.
 - You can now order through MSA print copies of numbers in the GRS GemResearch Swisslab publication *Contributions to Gemology*. These contain a wealth of information on the localities, mines, geology, and physical and chemical properties of a variety of gem materials. Many of these publications are available at no cost online as well. Descriptions are on the MSA website.

J. Alex Speer
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**AMERICAN MINERALOGIST
UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS**

The Society welcomes the exceptional students listed below to the program's honor roll and wishes to thank the sponsors for enabling the Mineralogical Society of America to join in recognizing them. MSA's American Mineralogist Undergraduate (AMU) Award is for students who have shown an outstanding interest and ability in mineralogy, petrology, crystallography, and geochemistry. Each student is presented a certificate at an awards ceremony at his or her university or college and receives an MSA student membership and a Reviews in Mineralogy or Monograph volume chosen by the sponsor, student, or both.

Past AMU awardees are listed on the MSA website, as well as instructions on how MSA members can nominate their students for the award.

Hehewutei Amakali

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Sponsored by Dr. Sarah Carmichael

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there is a place for you in MSA.

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