



The Clay Minerals Society

www.clays.org

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



My brother entered the United States Peace Corps back in the early 1980s with a newly minted forestry degree and the goal of helping reforestation efforts just south of the Sahara Desert in West Africa. He was stationed in the small village of Kaya, Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta), and the encroachment of the desert was stressing the local firewood supply. During a visit to see my brother, he told me that his mission was diverted because the trees could not

grow fast enough to meet demand in a changing environment. The new plan was a wood conservation effort aimed at getting remote villagers to use fuel-efficient cement-block stoves, instead of the traditional three-rock method. To this day I still kid him about his previous job as a door-to-door salesman who had to travel and convince family matriarchs into buying new kitchens. His plans changed, he made a difference, he's never regretted the experience, and he met wonderful people along the way. Are you wondering what this has got to do with you, the CMS mission, and your membership?

The operative theme here is how we deal with "change" and the question "What changes lie ahead for you and the CMS?" The recent gathering of the many affiliated societies at the annual Geological Society of America meeting generated lots of crosstalk between smaller societies (many having their newsletters here within *Elements*). What I am hearing, in one respect, is that the CMS does not need change and should remain vigilant as an independent international society striving to produce the highest-impact clay journal, clay conferences, clay workshops, clay student awards, a clay repository, and clay scientists. However, in other respects, like the encroaching Sahara Desert, there are forcing functions of which the CMS must be aware. These include the activities of large societies, like AGU, ACS, AAPG, AAAS, AGI, EGU, SSSA, SME, and GSA, in one of which you likely have membership. These well-oiled megagroups are imparting change to the way CMS operates. On the downside, there is the potential for duplication of our society activities, thus spreading resources thinly and leading to the syndrome of the little fish being eaten by the big fish. On the upside, new mechanisms to disseminate clay science exist and there are opportunities to reach non-clay scientists and the public. We do this by cosponsoring topical sessions and presenting talks with a clay science theme at these megameetings. Megasocieties have infrastructure (i.e. employees, web resources, and access to funding sources) that is far reaching. By adding our clay mineralogical expertise to these broader interests, we can make a difference.

My appeal is for you to keep the focus on the forefront of clay science, but as the small and large societies reshape their roles, consider how you might take your talents in clay science and parlay them within CMS and beyond at larger societal venues. I guarantee, your plan will change, you'll make a difference, you will not regret it, and you'll meet some great people along the way. Thanks, and let's look forward to the upcoming September meeting in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, which promises to be exciting and where we all like to be: on the leading edge of clay mineralogy.

Paul Schroeder, President; schroe@uga.edu

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR CMS AWARDS

The CMS gives four awards at its annual meetings. See the CMS website, www.clays.org, for a description of the awards and an overview of the nomination process. **The nomination deadline for the 2012 awards is 29 March 2011.**

CMS REPORT FROM THE 2010 ANNUAL GSA MEETING

CMS was represented at the recent Geological Society of America meeting by President Paul Schroeder and by the managing editor of *Clays and Clay Minerals*, Kevin Murphy. With the help of Dick Berry, they manned the booth throughout the meeting and, as always, this proved to be an enjoyable time. It's good to meet readers, members, librarians, industry consultants with an interest in the CMS and in our publications. Samples of Georgia kaolin, provided courtesy of the CMS, were a big hit with the passing traffic and competed well with the candy/bottle openers/dinosaur eggs available at other booths.

One of Kevin's roles at the conference was to attend a two-day meeting of the advisory board of the GeoScienceWorld (GSW) e-journal aggregate. This initiative includes *Clays and Clay Minerals* and involves some 38 other journals from not-for-profit publishers. The aggregate is now sold to 363 institutions worldwide. Not wishing to rest on their laurels, though, board members discussed at length how to improve the product, for example, by providing a new map search interface instead of the simple latitude/longitude approach currently employed. Also discussed were how social media might be used to our advantage and the issue of Open Access (the latter being related to new stipulations by funding agencies that require free public access to publications resulting from sponsored research). The new model may be that "page creation fees" should be included as a line item in funding requests to facilitate Open Access. Did you know that *Clays and Clay Minerals* already has page fees as an option? Finally, GSW's technical partner, HighWire Press, discussed new programs to provide additional means for the publishers (and GSW) to back up their content using the LOCKSS and CLOCKSS facilities.

GSW has become an integral part not only of our journal budgeting process but also of our readership. We use the GSW continuous-publication system to publish papers ahead of their appearance in print. The 363 institutions provide many readers, some of whom will not have consulted our journal before. Remember this when thinking about your next paper and where to publish it!

Regarding the technical program at GSA, it was exciting to see that the study of clays and clay minerals is still a basic underpinning to all of geoscience. The question "Were there clay minerals on Earth when it initially formed?" was making the headlines at keynote sessions. CMS stalwarts were present: to name two, Dave Bish lectured about clays on Mars and Lynda Williams about mechanisms by which Fe-bearing clays fight bacterial skin infections in humans. Many other CMS members gave presentations, and 84 abstracts in different aspects of clay minerals were published. Please read the adjacent President's Corner column about how CMS is making a difference, not only at GSA but at other larger scientific gatherings. CMS will be hosting a booth at the GSA meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, next year, so if you plan to attend, please take time to visit and help serve at the CMS booth. Any suggestions for the free clay sample give-away?

Kevin Murphy, Managing Editor, *Clays and Clay Minerals*
Paul Schroeder, President, The Clay Minerals Society

STUDENT TRAVEL AWARDS

The travel grant program is designed to provide partial financial support to help graduate students attend the annual meeting of the Clay Minerals Society and present the results of their research. All student members of the Clay Minerals Society are eligible for these travel grants. See the CMS website for more information: www.clays.org. **The application deadline is 12 June 2011.**