



The Clay Minerals Society

www.clays.org

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Paul Schroeder

I don't know about you, but it seems I can only communicate with my teenage kids when they are away if I send them a text message; likewise, they send me their news only via text messages. I tell them that someday a very smart person is going to invent a device that will record your voice, convert it to text (using some highly sophisticated recognition software and artificial intelligence), transmit the data, and convert the text message back to a sound that emulates your voice, thus eliminating the need to type messages and divert your eyes to read tiny printed texts. I say, "Really cool, huh?" They emphatically reply, "Yes!" I say, "It's already been discovered and it's called a phone! Try using it!"

In science, I call this discovery phenomenon "revol-looping," which is defined as coming up with a revolutionary idea after a long systematic research effort, only to realize that the idea has already been around for years. Not to be a hypocrite, I've done my fair share of revol-looping, which is why I tell my students that three days in the library is worth three months in the lab. The Clay Minerals Society provides a unique opportunity to minimize revol-looping in biological and physical sciences by virtue of our Source Clays Repository. Being clay scientists, we appreciate the amazing nanoarchitecture in clay mineral interlayers, tubes, and modulated structures, which are now being seen as analogs for synthetic nanomaterials. We also know clay minerals serve as essential components in natural microbiological systems that require some form of assistance by either pushing or pulling electrons, protons, and trace elements. As microbiology and nanotechnology rapidly expand, we need to keep a commensurate supply of clay mineral reference materials ready for the future. The Source Clay Minerals Committee does a fine job at keeping this resource alive. Special thanks go to pioneers Paul Kerr, George Brindley, Bill Moll, and Bill Johns for fostering the program, as well as to numerous other CMS members who have since championed the Source Clays effort.

CMS members can help maintain the repository. Here are few ways you can contribute: (1) Purchase and use the Source Clays for quality control in the lab, for teaching students, and in your personal research. (2) Promote the Source Clays to colleagues outside of clay science. Ask your neighboring microbiologist or nanotechnologist if they are using CMS Source Clays and give the link to our website. (3) Volunteer to help maintain the supply of CMS Source Clays. Supplies dwindle and periodically need to be replaced. Source Clays are natural materials; therefore, diligent site supervision is needed to direct sample collection and shipment to the Source Clay home, currently at Purdue University. Collection sites are often remote and may change with reclamation practices. If you are familiar with a source clay collection site or can think of a new one, then contact a Source Clay Committee member or contact me.

Along the lines of communication, have you heard the news? Someone invented this really clever device that transmits voice to voice so you can actually hear what the other person is saying. It's called the phone! Please feel free to use it with me, and I'll try to minimize my revol-looping. Cheers.

Paul Schroeder (schroe@uga.edu)
President, The Clay Minerals Society



CMS Workshop "Trace Elements and Clays: Occurrence, Analysis and Applications": 25 September

Technical sessions: 26–29 September

Field trips: 30 September

See the CMS website for more information: www.clays.org.

RECENT VOLUMES IN THE CMS WORKSHOP LECTURES SERIES

- Clays of Yellowstone National Park (2010)
- Carbon Stabilization by Clays in the Environment (2009)
- Clay-based Polymer Nano-composites (2007)
- Methods for Study of Microbe-Mineral Interactions (2006)
- The Application of Vibrational Spectroscopy to Clay Minerals and Layered Double Hydroxides (2005)
- Molecular Modeling of Clays and Clay Minerals (2003)
- Teaching Clay Science (2002)

