Mineralogical Society of America

www.minsocam.org

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Geological Society of America Meeting in Denver (USA) this Fall was my first in-person scientific conference since 2019. Like many of you, during the past couple of years, opportunities to participate at in-person and hybrid meetings were complicated by changing and unpredictable travel restrictions, frustrating and confusing health guidelines, and rising costs. But, if I am honest, there was also a certain degree of relief, even serenity, at having a break from the preparation, time, cost, travel hassles, and resulting stress associated with attending multiple scientific meetings per year. Many colleagues commented that one thing they did not miss during the pandemic was traveling to conferences. During the pandemic, virtual conferences offered a safe and convenient connection to the scientific world. Information was presented, and if one assumes that all those signed on for a session were actually listening, some of it was even being received. But after a couple such meetings, the novelty wore off and they felt somehow unsatisfying. They permitted me to check the participation box for my annual review, but did not provide the emotional and intellectual recharge of an in-person conference. As we all know, the formal sessions are only part of the reason we attend conferences, the added value is the networking, serendipitous meetings and hallway conversations, and titillating scientific discussions over lunches, and dinners, and during other social activities. I also missed seeing my friends and colleagues!

Although MSA does not sponsor a stand-alone meeting (a subject much discussed during my 45 years with MSA), it has its "annual meeting" as part of the GSA conference. The long-term cooperative arrangement as a GSA-affiliated society (this "close affiliation" was approved in 1920) provides opportunities to sponsor sessions, special programs, and workshops. MSA council meetings coincide with GSA, and we round out our footprint by hosting our award luncheon, presidential address, and ever popular reception. It is where we annually plant our MSA "flag".

This year's GSA meeting offered the first real opportunity to overcome the inertia of "staying home" and to re-engage in person. The travel restrictions were lifted, although hassles remained, and even my home institution said it was OK once again to venture out—albeit carefully. GSA was challenged to plan a hybrid conference for an unknown number of in-person attendees, while still making it possible for others to participate virtually. Likewise, MSA was challenged to continue certain beloved traditions but also embrace opportunities afforded by a new meeting format and innovative communication technologies.

By most measures, the 2022 GSA meeting was a great success, with over 5300 registered and 4900 in-person participants. It was exciting to see colleagues again in 3D (there was a general agreement that no one had aged during the pandemic) and to participate in a real science conference. For many of us, who perhaps had been jaded over the years by what seemed to be an ever-growing number of conferences, this GSA meeting was a reminder of the excitement of such gatherings and the sense of invigoration when sharing your science with enthusiastic colleagues. There was almost a sense of giddiness among the meeting goers.

I was especially impressed by, and proud of, the strong showing by MSA at GSA, especially considering the need to plan within an evolving GSA meeting format. My congratulations to Ann Benbow, the MSA staff, and our meeting coordinator Phil Brown. The 19 MSA-sponsored technical sessions included in-person and virtual talks in economic geology, mineralogy and crystallography, soils and paleosols, carbonates and sediments, and gemological research (with GIA). The session that was organized by and highlighted work from early career members elegantly showed the range of exciting research topics represented in MSA. The crowded room was energized by the quality of their work and enthusiasm with which it was presented. MSA also hosted a session that presented outstanding talks by the three MSA award winners and was capped by Pamela Burnley's presidential address.

One of my fondest early career MSA memories is of attending the awards luncheon. I can't say that the food was memorable, but meeting many of my scientific icons certainly was. It was a unique multigenerational assemblage of colleagues and peers, and MSA members. From those receiving awards, we were made privy to what sparked their interest in science or to the secrets of their success. Almost universally, they emphasized the importance of collaborators and family, and their sincere appreciation for being honored by their MSA colleagues. It was a reminder of how events such as these, and societies such as MSA, help connect us to our broader scientific family and roots. I have always left MSA luncheons feeling inspired, and this year when we honored our Roebling, Dana Medal, and MSA Award recipients was no exception. One of my goals for next year's MSA at luncheon GSA is to have even more colleagues, especially among our early career members, share this special MSA experience. Perhaps some of you might invite a younger colleague or student to lunch at next year's meeting.

From the positive feedback I have received, one of the most enjoyable events at this year's GSA meeting was the reception jointly sponsored by MSA and the Gemological Institute of America. There was a capacity crowd of over 100 student and early to late career MSA members and GIA guests, meeting and catching up and enjoying the plentiful refreshments. We are grateful for the generous support from GIA, and perhaps for the beginning of a new tradition.

I look forward to building on MSA's success at GSA, with an even greater and more dynamic presence next year—more technical sessions, an even better reception, and yes, a bigger awards lunch. I welcome your ideas and participation in helping to plan MSA at GSA 2023 in Pittsburgh!

Jeffrey Post
2023 President, Mineralogical Society of America

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

Renewals

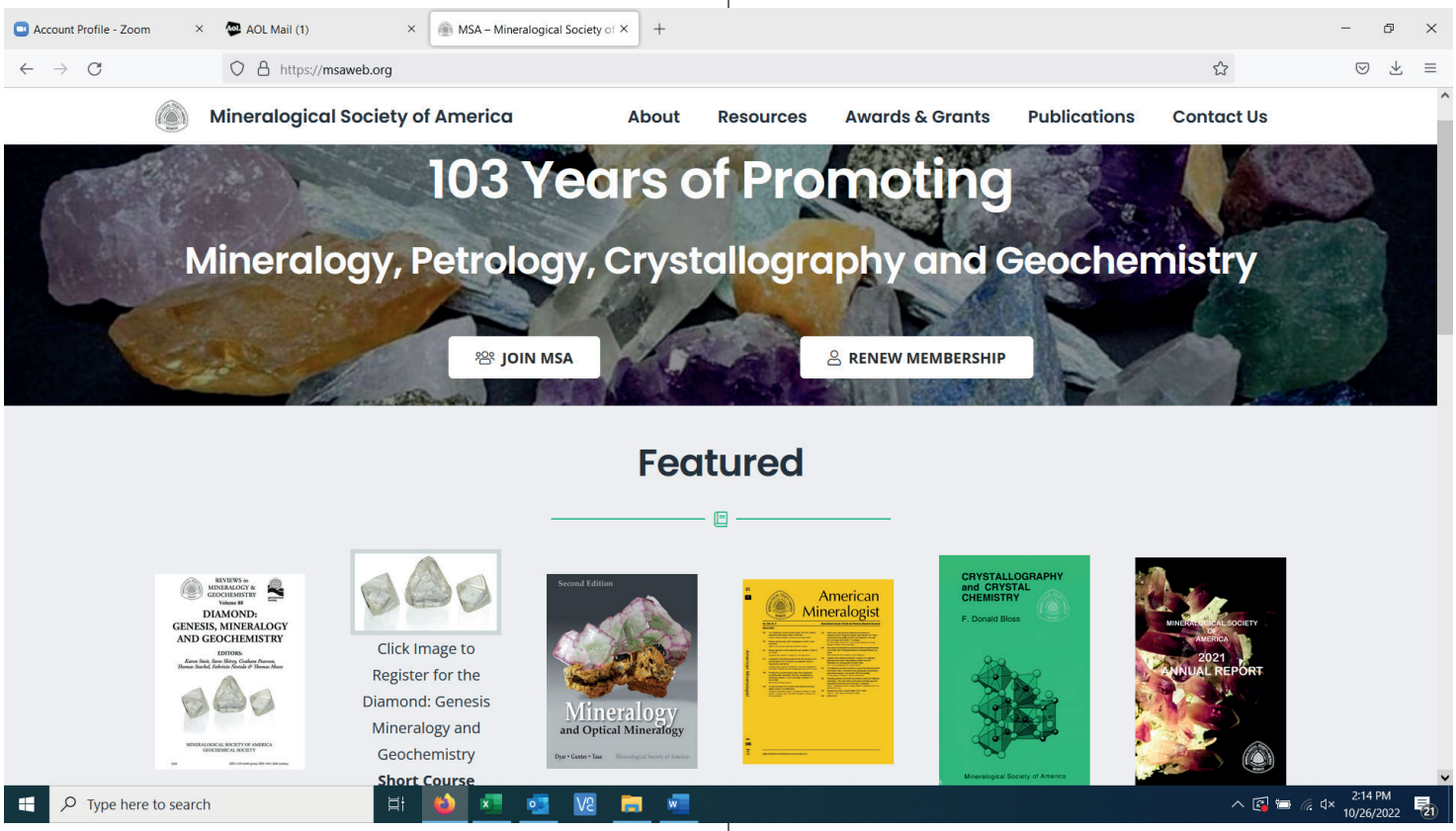
The membership renewal process is well underway at MSA, so please visit the website and renew for 2023 at your earliest convenience. Regular membership is $85; Early Career is $45; and Student membership is $20. There is also a Sustaining Member category of $235 ($85 for membership and $150 as a contribution toward MSA's programs).

Subscriptions

This is also the time of year for institutions and individuals to subscribe to MSA's publications for 2023. Subscription renewal notices have been sent out. If you or your institution have not received yours, please contact the MSA Business Office at business@minsocam.org.

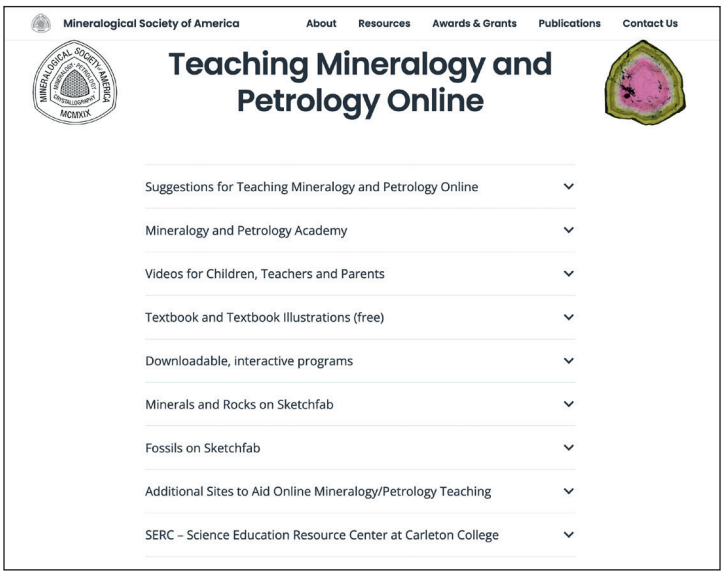
Annual Fund – MSA Forward

MSA is launching its *MSA Forward* Annual Fund to support our efforts to communicate most effectively to our membership and the wider public. These efforts include our new website, e-commerce system, mentorship platform, and much more. To make a tax-deductible gift to the Fund, members can contact Ann Benbow, MSA Executive Director, at abenbow@minsocam.org.



NEW MSA WEBSITE!

MSA is delighted to announce the launch of its new website: www.msaweb.org. The new and attractive design makes it easier to find MSA's many publications, programs, and services. Parts of the site are for members only, but much of the information is open to everyone. The Handbook of Mineralogy section has been completely redesigned and continues to be constantly updated. There are also quick links to such educational offerings as the Min4Kids website and Minerals Day. Please visit the website soon and send any comments and suggestions to Ann Benbow at abenbow@minsocam.org. We see the website redesign as an evolving process, and we want our membership to participate in that evolution.



2023 MSA FELLOWS

MSA would like to congratulate the new Fellows for 2023. They are:

Razvan Caracas, Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris, France
Aaron Cavosie, Curtin University, Australia
Bethany Ehlmann, California Institute of Technology, USA
Guilherme Gualda, Vanderbilt University, USA
Horst Marschall, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Germany
Boriana Mihailova, University of Hamburg, Germany
Mainak Mookherjee, Florida State University, USA
Kathryn Nagy, University of Illinois – Chicago, USA
John Parise, State University of New York – Stony Brook, USA
Naotaka Tomioka, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology, Japan