

Newsletter for the Kalamazoo Local Section of the American Chemical Society

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Chair's Comments

She blinded me with Science - which has shined bright enough in Kalamazoo this spring to inspire not just Thomas Dolby, but all of us. And KACS has been square in the middle of the action.

Poetry in motion – About 900 people joined in for the Kalamazoo March for Science on Earth Day (22 April). Doug Williams (KACS Alternate Counselor) was an invited speaker at the event, delivering very well received words that you can read in this newsletter.

Elements in harmony – Lydia Hines (KACS Councilor), Greg Johnson (WMU Chem Club President) and the WMU Chem Club ran two KACS Chemists Celebrate Earth Day events again this year. One at Celery Flats (15 April) and the other at the Kalamazoo Nature Center (22 April) attended by hundreds of enthusiastic families.

When I'm dancing close to her - In addition this year, KACS was a sponsor and exhibitor at the Kalamazoo Earth Day Celebration in Bronson Park, where Tom Runge, Doug Williams and Steve Secreast had a great time running a chem demo where we had people aged 7 – 70 doing chemistry.

Deep as any ocean – During April James Kiddle (KACS Education Committee) delivered the 36th annual KACS competitive chemistry exam to area high school students, the excellent results of which demonstrate that the future of chemistry in Kalamazoo is in very good hands.

I can smell the chemicals – this has truly been a bright spring for science and chemistry in Kalamazoo, and for KACS. I'm very much looking forward to our next events. Come on out and join the fun.



KACS is an AWARD WINNER!

The **Regional P3 Award** (Partners for Progress and Prosperity) was awarded to our Section and will be presented at the Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Fargo, ND, on June 29. The ACS website states the following about the P3 Award:

The purpose of the P3 award is to encourage and *recognize successful and exemplary partnerships* between industry, academia, government, small business and/or other organizations, including ACS local sections, ACS divisions, ACS international chapters, other societies or various entities domestic or overseas resulting in impactful outcomes in one or more of the following categories:

- Improving the public perception and appreciation for chemistry
- Promoting career advancement opportunities and/or supporting entrepreneurship in the chemistry enterprise
- Advancing advocacy efforts with government and other thought leaders
- Supporting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) education and/or research

Our thanks to Elke Schoffers for submitting the application!

KACS is a finalist for two more awards!

KACS made it to the finals for not just one, but two, 2016 ChemLuminary awards! The categories for the two awards are “Outstanding On-going NCW Event” and “Outstanding Performance by a Local Section (Medium Size).” Finalists will present a poster showcasing their event &/or section at a poster session on Tuesday August at the 254th ACS National Meeting in Washington, D.C. Winners will then be announced and the presentation of awards will occur later that same evening. The presentations will include awards given by 18 committees of the Society.

Our thanks to Brian Eklov, Past-Chairperson, for submitting the application!



Click [here](#) to learn more about ChemLuminary Awards

Multisection Mixer at CERM

The Midland, Kalamazoo, Western Michigan, and Detroit Local Sections invite you to a Multisection Mixer during the ACS Central Regional Meeting.

Friday June 9, 2014

4 – 6 pm

The Gallery at the Henry, CERM

Are you attending the ACS Central Regional Meeting running June 6-10 in Dearborn? If so, please plan on attending a multisection mixer at the meeting being presented jointly by the Midland, Kalamazoo, Western Michigan and Detroit local sections. This will be an opportunity to network and make new connections with other ACS section. Exchange ideas with other local section members and leaders. Perhaps those in attendance can leave with some ideas on how to create and plan new multi-section events!

Multisection RSVP: Steve Secrest, stevesecrest37@yahoo.com



Register for CERM: <http://acscerm2017.org/>

Great Lakes Region Meeting

The KACS local section is a member of the Great Lakes Region.

Please visit the region's new website to learn about our region.

<http://greatlakesregionacs.sites.acs.org>

At the new website you will find:

- Information regarding the 2017 Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Fargo, North Dakota June 27-30
- Details on four awards to be given at that GLR meeting
- Nomination requests for worthy award recipients



REPORT

KACS Award Gathering

Monday, May 8, offered inviting weather for our 44th celebration of our Section's Award Ceremony. Approximately 95 students, parents and friends gathered in the atrium of the Chemistry Building at WMU to celebrate the accomplishments of High School students and a teacher, College students, as well as to recognize service to the American Chemical Society and to the local section. Our Examination subcommittee chair, Dr. **James Kiddle**, was his typical efficient self in administering the requisite examinations and in making all the necessary arrangements for this gathering – the décor and food were much appreciated.

Our section chairman, **Steve Secreast**, introduced our two College awardees (one from Kalamazoo College and one from Western Michigan University) followed by our Outstanding Chemistry Students as nominated by each student's teacher (each of the 9 present received an Amazon Gift card and a certificate) and ended by naming and giving awards to the 21 winners of our competitive scholarship examination – we had a tie for first and fourth places and a 4-way tie for seventh place! The students were happy to let us know their future plans, most of which involved STEM study.

The teacher recognized was Ms. **Michelle Mason** from Portage Northern HS. The Section award for service went to **Mark Wolf** who has continued as our section webmaster despite his move to Chicago for graduate school; **Brian Eklov** received a *Salute to Excellence* plaque; and **Doug Williams** received the 2016 Volunteer award from the Committee on Community Activities for his major role in our 30th annual Museum Event.

It was very heartening also to recognize **3 60-year members of ACS - D. C. Wendt, Ray Judy, and Chuck C. Coverdale** - and **6 50-year members - John Engelmann, John Greenfield, Mike McCarville, Alan Sarapu, Lydia Hines, and Doug Morton** (in absentia); each of them received a certificate of appreciation from ACS for service to the Society.

This year's event was a wonderful reminder that the future of our science is in "good hands" and each attendee seemed to enjoy the opportunity to meet friends who come each year and to make new acquaintances.



Student awardees



***Sarah Glass, Kalamazoo College awardee
Jacob Kirkendall, Western Michigan University awardee***



Michelle Mason, Portage Northern Chem Teacher, Awardee



50-year members present

REPORT

Chemists Celebrate Earth Day

It seems like Chemistry outreach events come around quite often! Every Spring brings Earth Day, celebrated on April 22; the American Chemical Society participation, now in its 15th year, coincides with that day. Local Sections are asked to conduct outreach activities in their communities, and our Kalamazoo Section has done that for all but the first (pilot) year.

Each year we have offered activities and materials at the Kalamazoo Nature Center (KNC) during their Earth Day celebration; for two of the 14 years we had an additional outreach event at the Oshtemo Branch of the Kalamazoo Public Library, and for the last two years, when the Library has not held an Earth-Day theme event, we have cooperated with the Green-a-thon experience at the Celery Flats in Portage.

This year the theme of Chemist Celebrate Earth Day was “Chemistry helps feed the world”. Also this year our Section has been fortunate to have a group of Chemistry students at Western Michigan University who have taken a keen interest in reaching out to young people with experiments which would engage them. These demos were done at The Celery Flats on Saturday, April 15 and at The KNC on Saturday, April 22. They made chromatography flowers, and they worked with the patrons to identify starch in food-stuffs as well as other items in daily use; they also offered educational materials. Students who helped at the Kalamazoo Nature Center were Renae Mroczek, Megan Callaghan, Emily Hanners, Jessica Henderson, Erin Heath, Greg Johnson, Jake Kirkendall, Dyonna Almon, and DeJainara Davidson. Those who worked at the Celery Flats event were Herwin Crespo-Sandoval, Jerome Davis Jr., Erin Heath, Renae Mroczek, Greg Johnson and Jessica Henderson.

This year was unusual in that April 22 was also the day of a new activity, the March for Science, which in Kalamazoo ended at Bronson Park for the inaugural Kalamazoo Earth Day Celebration. The weather was perfect for the hundreds of attendees, who from 3-8 pm enjoyed music, food, science podium presentations and about 50 science-related exhibitors.

KACS was there as a sponsor/exhibitor. Tom Runge, Doug Williams and Steve Seceast ran our KACS booth, which centered on a participatory green chem demo where we had people convert iodide in aqueous solution to I_2 using just a 9-volt battery. Based on the volume of reagent we went through, we had at least 150 people try the demo. It was great fun watching people scoping us out as they walked by our booth, and then when we called them over and had them try it, seeing them really get into the whole thing. Was great too, seeing many people just wanting to talk about chemistry once we started speaking to them. We also had some giveaways that we handed out, the biggest hit being pocket periodic tables, which was cool to see.

We received many thanks from the celebration organizers, in part for being a sponsor, but more for being one of the few exhibitors providing a demo for people to try. Talking chemistry and science is fun, but actually doing it is much better. Doug took the photo below of Tom and Steve in our booth. Additional photos of the celebration are available on the Celebration's Facebook page at www.kalamazooearthday.org.



REPORT

March for Science

Over 800 people turned out in Kalamazoo on a beautiful sunny day to cheer the importance of science in government by gathering at the center of the WMU campus and walking to Bronson Park on the afternoon of Saturday, April 22. The [Kalamazoo event](#) was coordinated by ProKzoo with assistance from the Kalamazoo Nature Center. The American Chemical Society announced its support for the event a month earlier in [Chemical & Engineering News](#). Local section member Doug Williams spoke briefly to those gathered in Kalamazoo. His remarks are below.

It is a privilege to speak today on behalf of our local section – the Kalamazoo Section – of the American Chemical Society, the largest scientific society in the world. The ACS is supporting the national March for Science as a nonpartisan event to celebrate the contributions of science for improving the human condition and addressing the world’s most pressing challenges. ACS is pleased to join its support with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Geophysical Union, American Association of University Professors, California Academy of Sciences, New York Academy of Sciences, Society for Neuroscience, Sigma Xi, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. The March for Science coincides this year with the Chemists Celebrate Earth Day, a nationally coordinated annual program to recognize the importance of chemistry in understanding our planet and her ecosystems. Our local section is conducting outreach events today at the Kalamazoo Nature Center and Bronson Park. The theme of this year’s ACS outreach event is “Chemistry Helps Feed the World.” I encourage you to stop by our table in Bronson Park after the march.

Science is a means of knowing, a philosophy. The natural and physical sciences are the study of the material and energy universe that we occupy. This knowledge is gained by experiment and it is supported by repeatable and documented testing. The practice of science is often an individual endeavor but to be useful, results must be shared openly and critically.

So why are we here today? At this time in our nation's history, we are witnessing broad and politically significant rejection of scientific understanding – of earth's climate, of energy use, of water resources, of food, of public health. Individually, we may have strong feelings about the priorities and potential solutions to these issues. We won't resolve these differences quickly but to resolve them at all requires scientific understanding. In other words, ignorance is not a strategy. I repeat, ignorance is not a strategy.

I suggest to you today that responsible government has two compelling reasons to invest in science. The first and most obvious is to protect us. We need science to help us preserve our ecosystems, control diseases, keep us warm, feed us and reduce the harm of natural disasters. The second and, I believe, most important reason is to realize our potential. Science expands our capacity to live more fully, to imagine what is possible, to support an ever increasing human population on Earth sustainably and more equitably. In this way, science provides hope for the future, creative solutions and – yes – humility for our place in the universe. I believe that good government also has an interest in our collective humility. Scientific skepticism teaches humility and persistence. Many a beautiful theory has been crushed by ugly facts. We have often had to change our thinking about technologies that we thought were acceptable and safe. As examples, think of tetraethyl lead, chlorofluorocarbons, DDT, thalidomide, PCBs and, recently, nonbiodegradable microplastic particles in our lakes and oceans.

So, we must keep working at this. Our world is complex and science proves it again and again. Our pursuit of scientific understanding is filled with mistakes and false starts but this is exactly the point. The scientific method is self correcting for those who persist. Did I mention that ignorance is not a strategy?

Government has fundamental and compelling reasons to invest in science. Our best practices suggest the following principles for making these investments. Government should:

- 1. Openly share scientific findings.*
- 2. Subject such findings to peer review and require validation of methods and results.*
- 3. Strongly support science education and research, basic as well as applied.*

Scientific literacy is an asset to our nation, to our citizens. We ask our government to feed this literacy by example and commitment. Let's have a great march today and spread the message.

COUNCILOR REPORT
253rd ACS National Meeting
San Francisco, CA
April 2-6, 2017

Lydia E. M. Hines

- As has been the custom for the past several years, ACS hosted an Outreach Event just prior to the meeting in San Francisco , on April 1. It was my pleasure to help at that event where we saw many families come by to explore science topics and receive the plentiful materials our professional organization makes available.

- The Council selected Bonnie A. Charpentier and Willie E. May as candidates for 2018 President-Elect.

These two candidates, along with any candidates selected via petitions, will stand for election in the Fall 2017 National Election.

- Our Kalamazoo Section was recognized for its 75th anniversary

- The Council voted to set the member dues for 2018 at the fully escalated rate of \$171. This rate is established pursuant to an inflation-adjustment formula in the ACS Constitution and Bylaws.

- On the recommendation of the Committee on Local Section Activities, the Council approved a petition from the Santa Clara Valley Local Section in California to change the name of the section to the Silicon Valley Local Section.

- The Committee on Nominations and Elections (of which I am a member) solicits Councilors' input of qualified individuals for President-Elect and/or Directors for future consideration. Suggestions may be sent to nomelect@acs.org. This Committee works diligently to find excellent people to recommend for positions on committees and the Board. At this Spring meeting we deliberated for a minimum of 25 hours outside of the council meeting which, for committee members, starts at 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning J

- As of December 31, 2016, the ACS membership was 156,129, which is 0.5% less than on the same date in 2015. The number of new members who joined in 2016 is 23,700. The Society's overall retention rate is 83.5%. The Committee on Membership Affairs also reported that the number of international members has increased to 27,388, exceeding the committee's target by 5%. Retention of graduate students increased by 2% to 76.2%.
- Meeting Attendance: As of Tuesday, April 4: Total Attendance: 18,850

Special Discussion

The Council conducted a special discussion, "ACS Yesterday and Today: Paving the Way to Tomorrow," to gather input for the Joint Board-CPC Task Force on Governance Design. Forty Councilors approached the floor microphones to share observations, comments, and suggestions to assist the task force in identifying opportunities and issues for governance improvement. The task force offered three questions to guide the discussion: What should the Society and its governance do differently to achieve its objects? If you could change one thing about ACS governance, what would it be? What should the task force leave "as is"?

- The Board of Directors is developing a statement based on the Society's Core Value of diversity and inclusion in response to the repeal of the North Carolina law known as House Bill 2 ('bathroom bill') and similar proposed legislation in Texas, and is assembling a representative group of stakeholders to advise it on actions relating to the location of Society meetings.
- The Board passed a resolution expressing appreciation to Denise L. Creech for her 27 years of service in the Membership and Scientific Advancement Division, which she led as director for nearly 14 years.

Note: I appreciate the opportunity to serve our Section as your councilor and am always available to facilitate your contact with ACS. - *Lydia*

Job Posting

Bridge Organics, a contract research and chemical manufacturing company located in Vicksburg, MI, has an opening for a full-time EHS and Quality Specialist.

To see details for the position and candidate qualifications, as well as to submit a resume or application, navigate to the MichBio Career Center or the Bridge Organics website at www.BridgeOrganics.com

Visit our website www.kalamazooacs.org



Do you have questions, comments, or would like to contribute to this newsletter? Send an email to Christine Pruis, Communication Chair at ACSkzoo@gmail.com