

---

---

# ◆ The Bunsen Burner ◆

---

---

Fall 1999

## *Ready for another exciting year!*

The chemistry club executive board has been busy planning activities for the upcoming year! We started the semester with a few small activities, including a general meeting and a bowling excursion. Most recently, Dr. Bradley hosted the Halloween/Mole Day party in conjunction with chem club. Throughout the semester, Chemistry in the Schools (CITS), lead by Andrea Voges, has taken VU chemistry students to fifth grade classrooms around Valparaiso, and given us the chance to demonstrate cool experiments, and get the kids excited about science and especially chemistry.

Look for posters announcing upcoming meetings and events, and be sure to tell your friends to attend, even if they have not come to anything yet this semester. Chem club is a lot of fun; the more the merrier! And be sure to let an e-board member know of anything you would like to do. We're always looking for new ideas and need *your* help!

## **GENERAL MEETING**

**November 17th  
11:00am NSC 224**

**Free pizza  
and  
fun chem activity!**

## **Chemistry Club**

### **E-Board**

**1999-2000:**

**President:**

**Kate Johnson**

**Vice-President:**

**Andrea Voges**

**Secretary:**

**Karen Switek**

**Treasurer:**

**Corey Schuler**

**General E-Board:**

**Jessica**

**Amrozowicz**

**Chrissy Gnad**

**Heather Kerr**

**Pam Kreeger**

**Kate Reinicke**

**Advisor:**

**Dr. Engerer**

**Any ideas, questions,  
comments, concerns?**

**Please contact one of  
the people listed  
above!**

## *Chem club blown away by Dr. Bradley's chili*

Despite a scare in Dr. Bradley's kitchen while cooking his exothermic chili, the Halloween/Mole Day party was a great success! The hot pepper incident that nearly threw Dr. Bradley and his helper Andrea Voges through the wall made for excellent chili and funny stories to tell as well. With the chili all prepared without further incident, the party was held in the basement of Trinity Lutheran Church, to accommodate the growing chemistry club. Several members came in costume, who each received a test tube, the tiniest I have ever seen! First place went to Heather Kerr who came as a cat-ion, complete with ears, whiskers, a tail, and a couple large +', and I won second place for my  $\text{Cu}(\text{NH}_3)_6^{2+}$  ion costume. And if you're wondering how I managed this, just ask! After we were stuffed with delicious chili, hot apple cider, and cookies, and the costume judging was completed, the students started on their project for the night: decorating pumpkins as the professors. Some were definitely easier to recognize than others. Who can miss Dr. Bradley's bright red curly hair??? But can you imagine Dr. Engerer as a pumpkin? Well if you just can't picture it, stop by the stockroom, say hi to Mrs. Doneske, our new stockroom manager, and ask to see the pumpkin professors! See if you can guess which pumpkin represents each chemistry professor. Hurry, they won't last forever, and while you're there, remember to pick up your very own chem club t-shirt, "Top Ten Reasons I'm a Chem Major!"

*~Karen Switek*

## *Chemistry is fun!*

Let's face it, chemistry IS fun! Maybe not the night before a big exam, but the rest of the time, chemists find many ways to enjoy their work. How else could the American Chemical Society devote ALL of their Summer 1999 *Chemistry* newsletter to "Humor in Science"? Here is a compilation of some FUN CHEMISTRY....

A neuron took clothing to the dry cleaner and asked: "How much to clean and press?" The clerk replied: "Ha ha! For you — no charge!"

A chemist eyed bowls of chip dip at a party and asked the hostess: "How many atoms in a spoon of guacamole?" She answered: "Why, Avocado's number, of course!"

Q: Why did the white bear dissolve in water?

A: It was polar.

Q: H<sub>2</sub>O is water and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> is hydrogen peroxide. What is H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>?

A: Drinking.

Q: Why does hamburger have lower energy than steak?

A: Because it's in the ground state.

Q: What is Ba(Na)<sub>2</sub>?

A: Banana.

Q: What do you do when you find a dead chemist?

A: Barium.

Q: How many physical chemists does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Only one, but he will change it three times, plot a straight line through the data, and then extrapolate to zero concentration.

Q: What weapon can you make from the elements Potassium, Nickel, and Iron?

A: A KNiFe.

A small piece of sodium which lived in a test tube fell in love with the Bunsen burner. "Oh Bunsen, my flame. I melt whenever I see you . . .," the sodium pined. "It's just a phase you're going through," replied the Bunsen burner."

A green little chemist  
On a green little day  
Mixed some green little chemicals  
In a green little way.  
The green little grasses  
Now tenderly wave  
O'er the green little chemist's  
Green little grave.

Chemists are the "cleanest" people you'll ever meet... they wash their hands even *before* they go to the restroom!

"The following elements have been solved for: hydrogen. That's it."

~Mark Kerins

"You mean this stuff is in the book?"

~Jon Seremet

"Don't make me laugh or my chloroform will come out my nose!"

~Karen Switek

"I have two kids. Things happen."

~Dr. Bradley

"When something goes wrong in chemistry, you just pour it down the sink."

~Dr. Goyne

"What we can typically do is burn the stuff because we can always burn the stuff."

~Dr. Kosman

"It's a proven fact. You know what that means, don't you?"

~Dr. DeLassus

"Now you don't want to drop this thing; if you do it's like a bomb going off!"

~Dr. Cook

***"Excuse me -  
chemistry is  
not supposed  
to be this  
fun!"***

***~Dr. Engerer***

## *What I did on my summer vacation...*

Ever wonder what your classmates and professors were up to those three short months while most of us are so far away from Val-paraiso? Here's your chance to find out! In their own words...

During my summer vacation I watched paint dry at North Dakota State and had fun doing it! I also got the opportunity to live in "Fairgo" during the "warm" season. And finally, I got to smell like amine for three whole months — yea!

~Corey Schuler

I did a 10 week internship at Penn State with Jessica Amrozowicz. I worked under alumni Dr. John Golbeck on a project trying to determine the structure of proteins in Photosystem I. I learned a bit more what grad school will be like from the work I did and interacting with grad students, postdocs, and visiting professors. I learned that there is politics in every office or lab no matter where you go. I learned the worst Russian swear word there is. I learned to hone my sarcastic sense of humor even more. I learned that he who puts the pipette in the flame of a Bunsen burner is shunned for life (didn't happen to me, but the lab will never forget the kid who did that). And, most importantly, I learned that I want to go to grad school.

~Kate Reinicke

This summer I worked at Michigan State University in a Cancer and Stem Cell Research Lab. It was a stressful environment but there was cutting edge research being done and new discoveries were almost common place. I met scientists from Japan, Bulgaria, China, and Korea and worked beside graduate students, postdocs, and an undergrad or two. What I

learned: cell to cell communication has a tremendous impact on cancer, Thursday lunch must be eaten at Korea House, and when 250uL of reactant costs \$350 messing up is not recommended.

~Andrea Voges

I spent the summer working at FermiLab in Batavia, IL. Fermi is one of the largest particle accelerators, and I got the opportunity to explore one of its tunnels and learn a lot about both engineering and physics. Beyond the usual work stuff, I met a lot of really cool people and spent a time doing fun stuff like sand volleyball and hanging out with the engineering co-ops. I highly recommend working in a place like Fermi if you ever have the chance; it's a completely different setting than any university or industry that I can imagine.

~Pam Kreeger

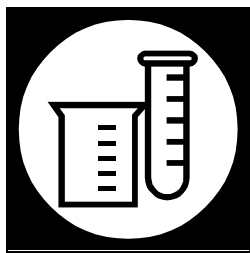
So what does a professor do during the summer, anyway? Two students worked on my research project this summer, Matt Beatty and Jon Seremet. You'll get a chance to hear about that in seminar. I spent a lot of time rewriting my general chemistry labs. We changed from Quattro Pro to Excel this year, and I also revised several experiments to use our new computer interface boxes. A few students used them last year, but now the whole lab has them. No more watching the clock and writing down a temperature every 15 seconds. All you sophomores, juniors, and seniors won't believe how easy the freshmen have it this year! I also hosted a workshop here this summer teaching chem profs from other departments how to use these interface boxes. You might have read about this in the campus newsletter. We even had a group here from University of Chicago. They're going to intro-

duce them in their honors class. (Of course, here at VU, we're using them for our regular class!) The last part of my summer was a family trip to California. It was very educational. We learned about bats in New Mexico (at the most awesome cave in the world — Carlsbad), observed many different kinds of cactus in the deserts of Arizona and California, saw mountains, forests (both redwoods and sequoias), canyons and valleys (Kings Canyon and Yosemite), cities (LA and SF) and irrigated farmland. In California, we spent quite a bit of time studying the chemistry of the different beaches in the state. (Like it says in the Beach Boys song, Kokomo, "Down by the sea, we'll perfect our chemistry . . .") Here's another chemistry related bit — we saw salt flats in New Mexico and in Utah. It's hard to describe how white the ground is. In Utah, it had rained quite a bit recently, and there was some standing water in some places on the salt flats, which gives them bright blue-green color. Also in Utah, we investigated the density of the Great Salt Lake by floating in it. All in all, 7000 miles in 25 days.

~Dr. Engerer

Last summer, I interned for a consultant firm for indoor air quality. The highlights included learning all the fun quirks of the business world (like including samples of candy in packages to clients), working with people all over the world, and becoming a member of exotic organizations like the International Fungi Association.

~Heather Kerr



The Bunsen Burner  
Neils Science Center  
Valparaiso University  
Valparaiso, IN 46383

### In This Issue...

Halloween/Mole Day Party, What I Did on My Summer Vacation, Chemistry IS Fun!

### *A message from our president*

Welcome back, everyone! Another year is upon us, and we're doing some very exciting things in Chemistry Club. For the first time, we participated in Homecoming, nominating Andrea Voges and Corey Schuler (two wonderful Chemists of the Future) for Homecoming Court, and splashing our slogan, "Burning Bright Into The Next Millenium," across the Jester's window and a delightfully charred banner. We also kicked off the sale of our fabulous new t-shirts, with the Chem Club benzene-ring logo on the front and the "Top 10 Reasons I'm a Chem Major" on the back. Highlights include: #7 Thrill of danger and threat of death, #5 Lab coats flatter my figure, and #2 Neils was my first choice for housing anyway. You'll have to buy the t-shirt to discover the number one reason to be a chem major!

They are on sale in the chemistry stockroom for \$10 (M, L, and XL) and \$12 (XXL). And of course, we all greatly enjoyed the Mole Day/Halloween celebration on October 23rd! A long-lived Chem Club tradition featuring Dr. Bradley's (in)famous Exothermic Chili, it's always a great time! This year, we even decorated pumpkins in the likenesses of the professors! But that's not all we're doing this year. Things to look forward to include the Regressive Dinner (think Progressive Dinner, then reverse it), the All-Neils All-Nighter, a grad school trip or two, and lots of smaller, fun activities like bowling and Molecular Monopoly nights.

We're going to have a great year, and I'm thrilled to be your president! Please always feel welcome to

join us at Executive Board meetings (after Chem Seminar in the study lounge) or send comments or suggestions at any time. Chem Club isn't just e-board; we all need to work together to make this group even better than the great group it already is!!

Best of luck this semester,

*Kate Johnson*

### *For more chemistry fun...*

<http://www.acs.org/jokes.html>  
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~jcdverha/scihum/webring.html>

Answers to **Zach's (In)famous Chemistry Crossword Puzzle** are posted on the chemistry bulletin board!