
◆ The Bunsen Burner ◆

Spring 1998

Chemistry Club Says Goodbye to Old Faces and Welcomes New Ones

As the year ends, it once again is time to elect new officers of chemistry club, say goodbye to graduating seniors heading off to the "real" world of work or graduate school (SEE SARAH GIVES..., p. 3), and prepare to welcome a new class of incoming freshman in the fall. This spring, however, will be somewhat special, as we are temporarily losing our current advisor, Dr. Bradley (SEE DR. BRADLEY BIDS..., p. 2). Since he will be on Sabbatical at Abbot Laboratories and unable to serve as advisor for chemistry club for the 1998-1999 school year, we are excited to welcome Dr. Arnoys, who seems enthusiastic about becoming more involved in this organization.

In addition to a new advisor, officers for the upcoming year were elected at the April 1st general meeting:

President: Chris Schering
Vice-president: Karen Switek
Secretary: Andrea Voges
Treasurer: Zach Matson

In addition to those specific positions, general members of the executive board who volunteered their services include: Jessica Amrozowicz, Nicole Beauvais, Jennifer Bender, Michelle Boswell, Nate Bowling, Kenny Cutler, Kate Johnson, Heather Kerr, Pam Kreeger, Chandra Mathew, Tricia Murphy, Jennie Nieto, Kate Reinicke, and Allison Wegman. We are excited to have such an extended interest in chemistry club, and will begin working next fall to plan the semester's events. Look for announcements in August!

ALL-SCIENCE PICNIC COMING TO KIRCHHOFF PARK MAY 2ND

Summer Activities Schedule

In case you haven't noticed, there will be a LOT of us chemistry people here this summer! So, thanks to Kate Johnson's brilliant brainstorm, and some planning, chemistry club will be sponsoring a regular Wednesday night function starting May 20th, as well as two Saturday events. All science majors, summer science students, and current chemistry club members as well as professors are encouraged to attend. Friends are also welcome. Tentative dates and events are listed here, and will also be posted at the All-Science Picnic. More concrete information, schedule changes, reminders, and sign-up sheets will be posted on the "Alkynes of Nus" bulletin board all summer. Any questions? Contact Kate at 465-1427 for details. Hope to see you there!

- 5/20:** *Pasta Get-Together* fairly informal: dried pasta, jarred sauce, garlic bread, salad, at Kate's (354 Worcester Dr., Apt. 3B)
- 5/27:** *Bowling at Inman's*
- 6/3:** *Molecular Monopoly and Elemento*
- 6/6:** *Saturday Trip to Chicago OR Indiana Dunes* lunch, shopping, Museum of Science and Industry OR beach
- 6/10:** *Pool Party OR Miniature Golf* at Andover Court OR Hollywood Park
- 6/17:** *Dairy Queen and Valplayso*
- 6/24:** *Volleyball* at Kate's or Kirchhoff Park
- 7/1:** *Movie Night* one action, one mushy? (start thinking!)
- 7/4:** *Fourth of July Cookout and Fireworks* (veggie) burgers, hot dogs, sides, dessert, and live or televised fireworks in the park
- 7/8:** *Trivial Pursuit Tournament*
- 7/15:** *Potluck* cook something, bring it to Kate's
- 7/22:** *Cupcake Chemistry Night* "A night to remind us that you aren't a true chem club member until your sense of humor is properly warped." *The Man in the White Suit*, a comedy about a polymer chemist c. 1954, *Weird Science*, informal competition for worst chemistry joke, and colloid cupcakes

COME AND JOIN THE CHEMICAL FUN!!!

University of Chicago Trip a Success

We had a lot of fun at the University of Chicago on Saturday, April 4th. A total of ten people went, a very good showing. We left at 8:30 AM in two vehicles. Yes, it did seem a bit early for a Saturday morning, but we are chemists and can endure the hazards of the trade! Besides, it was a beautiful day for a drive in the city.

We arrived at Ida Noyes Hall for an architectural tour of the campus. There are many interesting facts about the history of the university and campus which Joel, our tour guide, pointed out. However, we had to leave the tour early to meet with Professor David Lynn, biochemistry and organic chemistry, at 11:00 AM.

Lynn was very helpful in answering our questions about graduate school. Kate Reinicke kept him busy with questions about the admissions process, curriculum, research, and other basic and helpful information. Following this beneficial meeting, a graduate student gave us a tour of the chemistry facilities in Seerle Hall, the chemistry building.

Dr. Bradley Bids Farewell

As most of you are aware, I will be on sabbatical leave next year. I look forward to my time at Abbott Laboratories, and expect to return with many new ideas for my research.

This does not mean I will not continue as advisor for chemistry club. I have enjoyed my years as advisor, working with you to make chemistry club an exciting and fruitful activity. Veggie burgers aside, I will miss our activities next year (especially the chili dinner), and look forward to being a part of chemistry club in the future.

I also want to thank you all for your help with the regressive dinner. The assistance in cleaning up and the many "Thank You"s we heard made this program a bit less of a job. I would encourage all members to offer their help next year in advance; Help setting up tables, chairs, place settings, and house cleaning before and after would all make the faculty much more at ease when trying to feed over forty people.

Also, remember we are the host club next year for the spring All-Science Picnic.

Keep the programs going, and good luck in your classes (especially Quant. and Instrumental...)!
~Dr. Bradley, Chemistry Club Advisor

We even got to see Dr. Kosman's and Dr. Engerer's theses in the chemistry library. We basically only read the acknowledgements, but it was still interesting to see something they wrote in school!

After the tour, we met Beatrice Lin, another graduate student, and four of her fellow students to eat lunch. The university paid for all sixteen of our meals at Medici's, a restaurant near campus. During the meal, we socialized with the grad students as well as learned what graduate school was like from their perspectives. Each student was very willing to answer our questions and explain their research project.

WARNING!!! Do not EVER ask a graduate student or a chemistry professor about his or her research unless you REALLY want to know and have a good half hour or more to listen! We learned this the hard way while speaking with Professor Richard Stephen Berry, an experimental and theoretical chemist.

His research, like all of those about which we heard, sounded very interesting, but for all of us, excluding Dr. Kosman, it was beyond most of our basic understanding. Unless, of course you have taken physical chemistry, then it was baby talk! Well, not quite, but Mark and Chris did understand some of what Berry was saying. For the rest of the group, his pictures of the experiments were colorful and interesting artwork. After his explanation of his work, Berry also gave a brief tour of his laboratory to the group. After seeing Berry's lab our VU chemistry club was also taken on a tour of Professor William Dean Wulff's and Professor Milan Mrksich's labs. Wulff and his students are working on organic synthesis dealing with chiral molecules, while Mrksich and his graduate students are examining proteins attached to monolayers of gold.

By this time, it was 5:00 PM and the band was ready to head back to beautiful Valparaiso. We all had a lot of fun and hope to visit a different school next year. Let next year's executive board know which schools you might be interested in seeing. If you want to hear more about the trip to University of Chicago, talk to the people who went: Jessica Amrozowicz, Nate Bowling, Karyn Greig, Mark Kerins, Pam Kreeger, Karl Luhrs, Kate Reinicke, Chris Schering, Karen Switek, and Dr. Kosman.

WARNING!

Do not ever ask a graduate student or a chemistry professor about his or her research...

Strange Words Heard in Neils Science Center...

Can you identify the origin of these quotes?

- (a) "In a billionth of a second, you still go pretty far at the speed of light."
 (b) "Focus all the hostilities toward the front of the room!"
 (c) "Beware of sticks in fields."
 (d) "It's not magic; it's molecules!"
 (e) "Chemistry should be limited to small molecules."
 (f) "On a scale from one to ten..."
 (g) "But, you want **MORE!!!**"
 (h) "If you get boron hydride into open air it bursts into flames. And that's cool enough, but it gives GREEN flames!"
 (i) "P-chem teaches you everything you learned in general chemistry is a lie."
 (j) "I'm just trying to get through the day without killing someone or crying."
 (k) "Whoosh!"
 (l) "You can go to a party and not expect them to have chips, but if they do, then you're happy. But even if they don't have chips, you're still happy."
 (m) "I figured out how children disappear from playgrounds — they get onto merry-go-rounds and end up with destructive interference on their wave functions."

Solutions listed below.

Sarah Gives the Scoop on Grad Schools

So...I know you're wondering: who is ever going to inform me about this grad school thing? Well, I am here to tell you my perspective.

The GRE (Graduate Record Examination?):

This is the equivalent to the SAT for Grad School. I believe it is practically the same test under a different name except that it has three parts: verbal, analytical, and quantitative. You should register for the general GRE in September of your senior year. We also have the pleasure of taking the Chemistry GRE which is not required by all grad schools but is always *highly* recommended. I suggest taking the Chem GRE in December so that you have had almost an entire semester of Inorganic completed. I (unlike many others) also suggest reviewing for these exams. Review books are available.

Picking a Grad School: Hmm... Difficult.

If you know which field you prefer, this is much easier. Dr. Kosman has a book which you should peruse that lists all the schools, the professors, and their research and current publications. You must find schools which have three or more professors doing what looks to be interesting research. Don't pick a school just on location or reputation although these may be important when making a final decision after acceptance. Note: Check out web pages. Also, pick just as many schools as *you* feel are necessary. I applied to three. VU is well respected throughout the chem grad programs, so luckily we start with an advantage.

Applying: Some applications may be due as early as December. Please check the application requirements on the web by early December because some schools have special scholarships or stipends which are only available to those who apply early.

Money: You should not attend a program if you have to pay \$1. All schools should offer you a stipend to cover living expenses **and** pay for tuition.

Acceptance: Most schools will inform you of their decision by early March. You must make your final decisions by April 15th. Grad schools are cool because they pay for you to come and visit them. At this point in time, they have decided that they really want

you to attend their program and they will wine (actually usually beer) and dine you and try to convince you to accept their offer.

Decision-making: This is **so** tough. Pick a school where you feel you can get a solid education and where you feel comfortable. You *must* find a research advisor that fits your style and personality and that you will be happy working under for the next five years.

Etc.: Grad school is most likely your last chance to enjoy life before "the real world" attacks you. I am attending UNC - Chapel Hill to focus in polymer synthesis and to prepare myself for the future, but also to have an awesome experience (i.e. the beach is 2.5 hours away). I encourage you to do the same.

BEST OF LUCK.

Always use upperclassmen for input.

~Sarah Folk

Chemistry in the Schools (CITS)

Thank you to everyone who helped with the demos this past year!! This outreach program to the 5th grade classes in the area would not have been possible without you! Our latest demos were:

April 14th - Saylor Elementary

April 21st - Chrisman Elementary

Thank you to Jennie Nieto who arranged these demos in Portage! We will need someone to take charge of CITS for next fall. This duty includes: arranging visits, preparing all chemicals, finding VU students to entertain and inform the 5th graders, and also training anyone who has not helped out in the past. Be thinking about this for Fall 1998.



“The Bunsen Burner”
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In This Issue...

Summer Activities Schedule, Recap of the Year's Events, New Officers Elected for 1998-1999

“One of the Most Successful Years...”

It's that time when yet another school year is rapidly reaching a close. Reflecting back upon it, I'd have to say that this has been one of the most successful years ever in VU chemistry's club history.

Our outreach to the community program, Chemistry in the Schools (SEE *CHEMISTRY...*, p. 3), reached more students than ever before thanks to the efforts of all of you who signed up to participate, to Chris Schering for organizing the groups, and to Sarah Folk and Jennie Nieto who coordinated the trips. We have had several significant social events as a group, including a Halloween party, the All-Science All Nighter in Neils, the Regressive Dinner, a bowling night, and a number of pizza parties that have helped all chemistry majors and minors to have the opportunity to get to know each other as friends rather than merely as classroom acquaintances. Mole Day was revived and was a prosperous and fun event, as well as a helpful fundraiser for the club. In addition, we organized a successful trip to the University of Chicago's graduate school of chemistry (SEE *UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO...*, p. 2).

Chemistry club as grown consistently from the time I was a freshman here. Four years ago, executive board

was limited to five or six hard core chemists that ended up electing themselves from within their own clique to e-board positions every year, CITS was contained to a couple times a semester, and the participation in social activities was much lower. Now it seems that we are in the position of having to limit the number of people who can be on executive board because of overwhelming interest, we have run out of local schools to attend for CITS and are now looking outside of Valparaiso for more, and we are forcing professors to consider larger spaces to host regressive dinners and parties because their homes are no longer large enough to accommodate us all!

Next year, chemistry club will have a lot of potential (ϵ°). I have confidence that next year's executive board will produce just as successful a program for chemistry people as this year, if not better. Don't hesitate to respond to any of the emails that you receive with further suggestions. Look for potential fundraisers and think of social activities you would like to do. The more input and participation chemistry club gets, the better it will be! Best of luck in the years to come.

~Erik Gustafson, self-proclaimed,
“The Lame-Duck President / All Around Old Person”