



# American Chemical Society

## Nebraska Section Newsletter

<http://www.nebraska.sites.acs.org/> (site under construction)

M A R / A P R 2 0 1 3

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## From the Throne

The names of the Local Section Officers are listed on the first page. Please send us your ideas for serving the needs of our industrial members, academic members, graduate students, and undergraduates. Some ideas are already listed in the "Opportunities Await" section.

In this issue, there are articles about...

Dr. Macduff Okuom Is the new Local Section Secretary

Dr. Frederick Mattes Is a 50-year Member

Revising Our Local Section Bylaws

Opportunities Await: Outreach Grants, Guest Speaker Reimbursement, and Travel Awards

April Speaker: Mark A. Griep at Nebraska Wesleyan University

From the Vault... The Local Section Chair's Gavel

Mark A. Griep, 2013 ACS Nebraska Section Chair and Chair-Elect [NEACSCChair@gmail.com](mailto:NEACSCChair@gmail.com)

## Dr. Macduff Okuom Is the New LS Secretary

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Macduff Okuom has accepted the position of Secretary of the Nebraska Local Section. Macduff is a postdoctoral fellow with the legendary Dr. Andrea Holmes at Doane College. He earned his undergraduate degree at Kenyatta University in Kenya, his MA at the Kean College of New Jersey, his MS working with the legendary Dr. Gerry Harbison at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and his PhD at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

Macduff joins us because the previous Secretary Dr. Abby Jackson has just accepted a position at Novartis in Lincoln. We wish her the best as she assumes her new position of responsibility although we also hope she will eventually rejoin the Board. For those who don't know her very well, Abby was one of the stars of the Chemistry graduate program at UNL where she earned her PhD working with the legendary Dr. Dave Hage. She has recently been doing postdoctoral work with legendary Dr. Andrea Holmes at Doane College.

Macduff Okuom is now eager to take on the position of Local Section Secretary. His duties are to communicate with our members. Send him a note of congratulations at [macduff.okuom@doane.edu](mailto:macduff.okuom@doane.edu)

## Dr. Frederick Mattes Is a 50-year Member

Congratulations are in order for Dr. Frederick Mattes, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at Hastings College. He reached 50 years of service in the American Chemical Society this year!

Fred joined the American Chemistry Society when he joined the Chemistry graduate program at Indiana University in 1963. His thesis concerned the use of radioisotopes in direct current polarography. In 1964, he married a young lady who worked in the chemistry library. They ate every lunch in the Chemistry building. For nine years and two children, Fred taught chemistry at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. In 1976, he accepted a position at Hastings College in Nebraska. He nourished a student interest in chemistry, science, and art for the next 28 years. Even though he's now "retired", he's been helping out at Hastings by teaching lab sections.

Let him know how much you've appreciated working with him the next time you see him. Congrats Fred!

## Revising our Local Section Bylaws

The last time we revised our bylaws was in April 1977, only two months before the first Star Wars movie created the Summer Blockbuster that changed the movie industry. Since today's Electronic era is different from the Disco Era, we need to revise our bylaws. For instance, our bylaws don't allow us to carry out electronic balloting. This is important because the Local Section Executive Board chose to remain functional by offering electronic balloting in the past two elections. We need to revise our bylaws so we become legal again. Our bylaws also say the Secretary and Treasurer must reside in Lincoln, which has not been the case for quite some time. This rule was created long before branch and electronic banking were as prevalent as they are today.

Here's the process we've been following to change our bylaws so far. In June 2012, Griep prepared the first draft of the bylaws revision. The Local Section Executive Board reviewed them and the proposed changes were submitted to the ACS Committee on Constitution and Bylaws in September. In December 2012, the ACS CCB responded with a wide range of required and recommended changes to bring us further into compliance. In addition, they gave us 18 months to vote on our changes (that is, by June 2014), after which we will have to begin the process anew. So here's where it gets sticky: to change our bylaws, we will need to conform our 1977 bylaws as reproduced here.

### BYLAW X—AMENDMENTS

Section 1. A proposed amendment to these bylaws must first be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee. If it is approved by a majority of the Executive Committee, the Secretary shall furnish all members of the Section with copies of the proposed amendment at the time when notice of the next meeting of the Section is given.

Section 2. At the first meeting of the Section after notice of the proposed amendment is given, the amendment may be adopted by two-thirds of the votes of the members present (see definition of quorum, under Meetings, these bylaws). The amendment shall become effective upon approval by the Council unless a later date is specified.

In May 2013, the Local Section Executive Board will meet again to discuss the proposed bylaws changes. If they approve, the proposal will be sent to all members of the Section with a note about the date of the bylaws meeting. Since I suspect few members will show up if the only object is to vote on bylaws, we need to couple it with a good meeting topic. If you have a whopper of a suggested topic or location, let me know. Note that our current bylaws can only be voted on by "the members present," which excludes absentee but probably not proxy votes. A proxy vote is when you give another member the power to vote on your behalf.

## Opportunities Await

**A. Outreach Grants:** Beginning in 2013, the Local Section is offering \$400 outreach grants to the Chemistry Clubs of the colleges and universities within our Local Section. Departments and Industries are eligible for \$600 outreach grants. The activities must relate to the ACS-sponsored Chemists Celebrate Earth Day (every April) and ACS-sponsored Nebraska Chemistry Week (in October). For those Chemistry Clubs without any ACS members, we will accept submissions from ACS member sponsors on their behalf. Submit your application to the Nebraska Local Section Chair Mark Griep at [NEACSChair@gmail.com](mailto:NEACSChair@gmail.com). The request includes:

1. Applicant's Name (must be a member of the Nebraska Local Section)
2. Email Address (for communication) and Mailing Address (to receive the check)
3. Institutional Affiliation (Chemistry Club at XYZ; Faculty Member at ABC; other)
4. Who is your outreach target (Middle School; High School; the Public; other)
5. What sorts of activities you will do (gather ideas from the ACS website or local section members)
6. Approximate Date of the Event
7. Location of the event (at JKL School; in the HYD Mall; other)
8. How will your outreach target learn about the event (we'll coordinate with teacher Smith; we'll contact Principal Gonzales; other)
9. Promise to have at least one planning meeting two days prior to the event to discuss the entire plan with all helpers. Discuss: Who will bring the materials; Who will do which activity (be sure to Practice the activity); Who will clean up [It helps to give helpers a T-shirt both as a gift and as a way to distinguish helpers from the participants during the event]
10. Within a few days after the event, send a thank you to all helpers. Remind them to put this volunteer activity on their resume. Within one month after the event, send a short summary to the Chair of the Nebraska Local Section (how many helpers, how many participants, any feedback or thoughts). These will be edited for publication in the Nebraska Local Section Newsletter.

**B. Guest Speakers:** As of 2012, the Local Section is offering up \$600 reimbursement for a presentation by a guest speaker to your academic department or industrial institution. The funds can be used to pay for speaker travel and room accommodation and/or nosh for those attending the presentation. Each department and institution can apply for funds once a year. Submit your application to the Nebraska Local Section Chair Mark Griep at [NEACSCChair@gmail.com](mailto:NEACSCChair@gmail.com) with:

1. Applicant's Name (must be a member of the Nebraska Local Section)
2. Email Address (for communication) and Mailing Address (to receive the check)
3. Academic Department or Institution
4. Name of guest, affiliation, and possible lecture title
5. Approximate Date and location of the Event so the Local Section can advertise it
6. Promise to send a short summary of the presentation to the Chair of the Nebraska Local Section (how many helpers, how many participants, any feedback or thoughts). These will be edited for publication in the Nebraska ACS Local Section Newsletter.

We will have a rolling deadline so you can submit any time you are ready.

**C. Undergraduate and Graduate Travel Awards:** As of 2012, the Local Section is offering travel awards to assist undergraduate chemistry majors and chemistry graduate students at the colleges and universities within our Local Section. The awards are for attendance at a regional or national ACS meeting to present research results. Submit your application to the Nebraska Local Section Chair Mark Griep at [NEACSCChair@gmail.com](mailto:NEACSCChair@gmail.com) with:

1. Applicant's name and contact information (must be a member of the Nebraska Local Section),
2. A brief summary of the proposed research presentation (poster or talk),
3. The regional or national ACS meeting and why you should attend,
4. A summary of other available travel funds, and
5. A proposed budget of \$350 or less.

We will have a rolling deadline so you can submit any time you are ready.

## April Speaker: Dr. Mark A. Griep

**Wednesday, April 9, 2013**

***Extraterrestrial Biochemistry and Chemistry in the Movies***

**Venue: Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln**

**Time: 5:00 pm; Olin Hall room 324**

Extraterrestrials loom large in the public's imagination so it is no wonder that over 300 movies feature aliens. In this talk, you'll learn what some of the top alien movies have to say about alien biochemistry. You'll also learn how some space movies anchor their stories on the real or imagined chemistry of our Moon or distant planets.

## From the Vault...The LS Chair's Gavel

As the seventh founded ACS local section, we have a long and illustrious history. We were the first local section to have a female member (Rachel Lloyd in 1895) and we were the first local section west of the Mississippi (Gilbert Lewis had to learn chemistry at Nebraska and then Harvard before he could get a job at Berkeley, where he helped found the California section). In the next few issues, we'll share a few of the Local Section's most treasured artifacts.

The first item from the vault is our gavel. Since 1910, the Chairs of the Nebraska Local Section have used it to bring our meetings to order. It is inscribed "Presented to the; Nebraska Section; American Chemical Society; by; H A Senter '93, President 1910-1911-1912; December 14, 1912".

Herbert Almon Senter was born 1896 in Burt County, Nebraska. He earned his chemistry bachelor's degree at the University of Nebraska in 1893. He wrote a 40-page thesis in 1893 titled "A comparison of the methods of soil analysis". Senter was one of the founding members of the Nebraska Local Section in 1895. He earned his PhD in 1896 at the University of Heidelberg and returned to Nebraska, where he became head of Chemistry Department at Omaha High School. He was the Nebraska Local Section Chair in 1910, 1911, and 1912. In 1913, he became Dean of Faculty at Omaha High School. In 1921, he formed the Omaha ACS Local Section.

If you have items relating to the Local Section history, send them to Mark A. Griep at [NEACSChair@gmail.com](mailto:NEACSChair@gmail.com)



The LS Chair's gavel.