

Annual Meeting—A Potpourri

Because the AAAS is an umbrella association encompassing most disciplines, its Annual Meeting seems to be a potpourri of science and technology. The latest meeting, held recently in Washington, D.C., was no exception. In addition to the diversity of subjects explored throughout the week, there often were incongruous juxtapositions of people, demonstrations, and events—little asides one sees but must hurry past.

While a paper on "The Limits of Nepotism" was being presented in one room, next door the topic was "Lab Workers' Hazards in Dealing with DNA"; "Physical and Mental Health Effects of Job Loss" was next door to "An Insect's Naked-Eye View of the World"; and "Economic Effects of Corrosion" was next to "The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence."

In a session on "The Civil Rights of the Handicapped," the audience listened attentively as speakers reviewed federal mandates to ensure equal opportunity for handicapped people. As if in testimony to the ability and interest of handicapped individuals to participate in educational events, wheelchairs, seeing-eye dogs, and "signers"—interpreters for the deaf—were much in evidence during this session and many others. Adjacent to the main registration area of the Sheraton-Park, the now-traditional Resource Center provided hospitality for handicapped meeting participants seeking and trading information.

The "Tools of Science" exposition in the exhibit hall of the Sheraton-Park Hotel housed 80 booths. This exhibition, like the meeting itself, represented an amalgam of interests. Highly technical exhibits such as an SAS-2 High Energy Gamma Ray telescope from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration competed for crowds with a display of the history of writing instruments. This latter exhibit featured antique to modern fountain pens and pencils and was put together by the National Science Foundation.

At the booth set up by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agri-

cultural Research Center, a new USDA device was used to demonstrate the fat content of different grades of ground beef from a local grocery chain. Providing a contrast was the next booth, which featured "Science Books from the Soviet Union." An arresting display of hypergraphic art, including rotating, three-dimensional sculptures which are viewed through colored filters, shadow sculptures, and serigraphs, brightened the exhibit hall and provided many visitors with their first look at these relatively new art forms.

Walking through the lobbies of the two meeting hotels, the Sheraton-Park and the Shoreham Americana, it was hard to tell anything out of the ordinary was going on most of the week. The large Sheraton-Park lobby was basically quiet. In contrast, the meeting registration areas were constantly alive early in the week with information seekers and registrants.

Following the tradition established at recent AAAS meetings, a few special interest groups set up tables in the hallways, but the mood was one of relatively quiet protest. A person who worked at one table complained that all she heard were queries regarding the location of the rest rooms. A panelist in the "Sociobiology" session was doused with water, and anti-nuclear placards and a heated rebuttal marked one of the public lectures. In general, however, audiences made it clear they had come to hear the speakers, and whether they agreed or disagreed, they wanted no disruptions.

Hundreds of reporters covered the meeting throughout the week. Some 30

press conferences were organized for the sessions and reporters scrambled to get private interviews with scientists, many of whom have become popular translators of science to the public. Stacks of scientific papers were carted away, for the expressed purpose of increasing the "public understanding of science." Climate, sociobiology, low-level radiation, DNA research, whistle-blowing, frontiers of astronomy, and scores of other topics were widely covered by the media in newspaper, radio, and television accounts.

In short, the 1978 AAAS Meeting did seem to provide "something for everyone." For the lay people who wandered through the exhibit hall, the high school students who served as session aides, the public which came to learn about whales or physics, the administrators and science policy-makers, as well as the "real" science practitioners, science and technology were made readily available—under one roof.

It made for an interesting week.

JOAN WRATHER
Executive Office

Moratorium on Nomination of AAAS Fellows

Should the rank of Fellow in the AAAS be continued? For decades, opinion within the Board and Council has been divided on this question. Proponents consider conferral of fellowship an appropriate way of recognizing members for work that is scientifically distinguished or socially highly significant. Opponents say fellowship is a hollow honor that has no place in a democratic organization such as the AAAS. Moreover, they criticize the selection criteria and the nomination procedures, and point to the uneven participation of the Sections in the nomination process. In 1977, seven of the 21 Sections did not submit nominations.

At a meeting on 16 February, the Council decided to put the question to the membership by straw ballot at the time of the 1978 election. If a clear majority votes for continuation of the fellowship program, Council will take up suggestions for improving the nomination process. If a clear majority votes

Retired?

AAAS offers a special dues rate of \$21 for retired members. For details, write or call AAAS, Membership Recruitment Office, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 (telephone 202/467-4460).

Future Directions Report Available

A progress report of the AAAS Committee on Future Directions was presented to the Council at the Annual Meeting in February by Leonard Rieser, Committee chairman. The report summarizes the Committee's recent recommendations in the areas of the Association's international commitment, AAAS future directions in science education, AAAS activities at the local level, and AAAS response to the state of basic research. Copies of the report are available from AAAS at no cost. Copies of the Committee's 1977 interim report also are available. Write to Committee on Future Directions, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

against the further election of Fellows, Council will consider instituting steps to have the constitution amended accordingly.

In the meantime, Council has declared a temporary moratorium on the further nomination and election of Fellows. The Association must therefore withdraw the invitation to submit fellowship nominations for 1978 which was published in the 3 February 1978 issue of *Science*, page 522.

WILLIAM D. CAREY
Executive Officer

AAAS Cross Country

The AAAS **Southwestern and Rocky Mountain (SWARM) Division** will hold a joint annual meeting with the New Mexico Academy of Science, 26-29 April, at the Albuquerque Hilton. Hosted by the University of New Mexico (UNM), the meeting will feature a symposium arranged by Douglas Brookins of the UNM Geology Department, entitled "Southwestern Energy: Prospects and Problems." The John Wesley Powell Memorial Lecture, "The Meaning of Ice Age Extinction," will be delivered on Thursday evening, 27 April, by Paul S. Martin of the University of Arizona. "National Testing: Production and Efficiency" will be the topic of another session, during which a panel of four experts will discuss national educational testing issues. Contributed papers will be presented beginning on Thursday evening, all day Friday, and Saturday morning. SWARM's annual banquet will be held Friday evening. For programs and other information, contact Max P. Dunford, Department of Biology, Box 3AF, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003 (telephone 505/646-3924).

* * *

The 59th annual meeting of the AAAS **Pacific Division** is scheduled for 13-17

June at the University of Washington, Seattle. In addition to a symposium sponsored by the Pacific Division on "Fossil Fuels for the Future: Prospects and Problems," a dozen scientific societies will sponsor sessions on subjects ranging from climate change to plant physiology to the history of technology and technology policy. In addition, Pacific Division Sections G (Biological Sciences), K (Social and Economic Sciences), and W (Atmospheric and Hydro-spheric Sciences) will sponsor sessions. Pacific Division president Mildred Mathias will deliver a keynote address on "The Importance of Diversity" on Wednesday, 14 June, during an open session of the meeting. For more information, contact Richard B. Walker, Department of Botany, AK-10, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195 (telephone 206/543-9120).

* * *

"Alaska Fisheries: 200 Years and 200 Miles of Change" is the theme of the AAAS **Alaska Division's** annual meeting, scheduled for 15-17 August 1978 on the University of Alaska campus in Fairbanks. The meeting will focus on utilization of Alaska's renewable marine resources and will include symposia on topics such as fisheries of the future and marine mammals as a traditional resource. Technical paper sessions will be held during the afternoons. The conference coordinators have issued a call for papers in life sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences. Titles and abstracts should be submitted by 1 May and final manuscripts must be sent by 15 July to Donald H. Rosenberg, Conference Chairman, Alaska Sea Grant Program, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

* * *

Topics ranging from lasers and light to cervical cancer mortality are included in the ongoing Friday Evening Lecture Series sponsored by the **Atlanta Area AAAS** and the Fernbank Science Center

in Atlanta. The remaining spring lectures will be:

7 April—"Nuclear Power Issues," by Peter Fong, Physics Department, Emory University

14 April—"Economic Aspects of Oceanography," by Patricia Warthan, Science Department, Towers High School, DeKalb County

21 April—"Planting Annuals," by Suzanne Ingram, Fernbank Science Center

28 April—"Has Pap Smear Screening Lowered Mortality Due to Cervical Cancer?," by Roger Rochat, Family Planning Evaluation Division, Center for Disease Control

5 May—"Electron Microscopy Lab Open House," by Patricianne Hurd, Fernbank Science Center

12 May—"Lasers and Light," by Harold Tiller, Earth Sciences Department, Fernbank Science Center

19 May—"Model-Making," by Muzelle A. Funderburk and Judith D. Henson, Fernbank Science Center

On 25-26 May, a special program will be offered on "Film as a Research Tool in the Natural Sciences." The presentation will be hosted by Goothard Wolf, who developed the *Scientific Film Encyclopedia*. Examples of the research film genre will be included in the program, as well as discussion of film as a didactic and scientific research medium.

For more information on the lectures, write to the Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Drive, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30307.

For the Library

The following two articles are available free of charge from the AAAS-American Bar Association National Conference of Lawyers and Scientists: "Coping with Technology Through the Legal Process," David L. Bazelon, *Cornell Law Review*, June 1977, page 817; and "Science and Law—Toward a Happier Marriage," Howard T. Markey, *Journal of the Patent Office Society*, June 1977, page 343. Order from the Office of Special Programs, at the AAAS address.

For more information about the activities and publications described in "AAAS News," write to the appropriate office, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, unless otherwise indicated.