

AAAS NEWS & NOTES

edited by DIANA PARSELL

Seattle Set to Host 1997 Annual Meeting

AAAS has been holding national meetings since its founding in 1848, but it has not gathered in Seattle for nearly half a century. Some people there think it's about time, given the region's high-tech success.



Proud Seattle. Pacific Northwest city touts its high-tech growth.

"Seattle surprises some people because a couple of companies and industries dominate the visibility," said William Stafford, executive director of the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle. "If you mentioned it 5 years ago, most people would know Boeing is here, but today we have hundreds of aerospace firms. And Microsoft is only one of over 1000 software companies here." Other major science and technology areas in the region, he noted, are wireless communications, biomedical research and health care, and environmental industries.

Those achievements will offer a fitting backdrop as several thousand delegates gather in Seattle 13 to 18 February for the 1997 AAAS Annual Meeting and Science Innovation Exposition (AMSIE'97). Program director Mike Strauss said AAAS selected the site years ago as part of a plan to hold the annual meeting in growing regional cities around the country as well as in large metropolitan areas.

Stafford said, "The AAAS meeting is considered extremely important to the city because of what the Association represents. From our perspective, attention on the Seattle area will be worldwide." In turn, he thinks Seattle's

considerable global trade could benefit AAAS by drawing greater numbers of overseas registrants. "A lot of international meetings take place here because it's a good meeting ground between Asia and Europe," he said. "We get a lot of science delegations traveling through because of Boeing and Microsoft."

AAAS has organized a "host committee" to strengthen local involvement. "It's been done at other meetings, and we felt it was an appropriate way to have people in the region understand more about AAAS and the meeting," said Bill Grinstein, associate director of external relations for Battelle Memorial Institute's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, who heads the committee.

Battelle, which operates the Northwest facility for the U.S. Department of Energy, is a major sponsor of AMSIE'97. Another key partner is the University of Washington (UW), which has world-class programs in biomedical research and computer science, among other areas, and ranks second in the amount of federal research dollars to

public universities.

Strauss said the host committee's work and discussions with regional leaders have been important in shaping the 1997 meeting. Some highlights follow: ■ A number of sessions particularly relevant to the region's business community will be clustered around Local Industry Day, Monday, 17 February. Microsoft chief Bill Gates has been invited to speak. Five half-day sessions will examine issues involved in moving from basic research to the global marketplace.

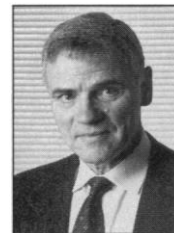
■ For the first time, the AAAS Forum for School Science is incorporated into the annual meeting. It will feature 2 days of presentations and workshops for teachers on ways of implementing inquiry-based methods into science instruction.

■ Leroy Hood, a renowned UW researcher in genetics and biotechnology, will deliver the keynote address. Other prominent people invited to speak include Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway, an expert in sustainable development, and John Gibbons, science adviser to President Clinton. Strauss said

organizers are working to set up a panel of science and technology ministers from several countries.

■ Expanded public lectures and events are planned. "We're looking for more opportunities to bring the science of the meeting to the general public," Strauss said. "We don't want to water down the general meeting, but to repackage the excitement of those sessions into a format that will be interesting" to non-specialists. As one example, he cited the efforts of UW's John Delaney, who hopes to arrange a video "virtual field trip" for the public related to two meeting sessions on hydrothermal vents and forms of life that dwell there.

Strauss said the meeting program for 1997 is especially strong in astronomy, marine



Leroy Hood

ecology, the environment, genetics and human health, anthropology, linguistics, and information science. A 2-day special seminar will provide an overview of the latest knowledge about planets and the recent NASA discoveries that

suggest past life on Mars. Science Innovation includes presentations by leading researchers on computing, sonoluminescence, microtechnologies, advances in genetics, the cell cycle, and other topics.

For AMSIE'97 program and registration information, visit the AAAS site at <http://www.aaas.org/meetings/meetings.htm> on the World Wide Web.

1995 Annual Report

The AAAS 1995 Annual Report has been published and can be read at <http://www.aaas.org/communications/report.htm> on the AAAS Web site. Because the report is posted as PDF (portable document format) files, the Adobe Acrobat™ browser is required to access it. If necessary, you can follow instructions at the site to download the free software.

Call for Council Resolutions

The next meeting of the AAAS Council will take place during the annual meeting at the Sheraton Seattle in Seattle, Washington, on 16 February 1997. Individuals or organizations wishing to present proposals or resolutions for possible consideration by the Council should submit them in written form to AAAS Executive Officer Richard S. Nicholson by 4 November 1996.

Items should be consistent with AAAS's objectives and be appropriate for consideration by the Council. Resolutions should be in the traditional format, beginning with "Whereas" statements and ending with "Therefore let it be resolved."

The Committee on Council Affairs will hold its open hearing on submitted items at 2:30 p.m. on 15 February 1997. Late proposals or resolutions delivered to the AAAS Executive Officer in advance of the 15 February meeting will be considered provided that they deal with urgent matters and are accompanied by a written explanation of why they were not submitted by the November deadline.

Summaries of the Council meeting agenda will be available during the annual meeting both at the AAAS information desk and in the AAAS headquarters office. A copy of the full agenda also will be available for inspection in the headquarters office.

Expanded Online Services to Debut

AAAS and Science are implementing a number of new online capabilities. "AAAS News & Notes" interviewed Membership Director Michael P. Spinella to find out what's in store.

What changes are planned, and what's the timetable?

The most significant change will come this fall when we put full *Science* text online. We'll start with the research papers, and news will be added later. The material will be posted on the day of publication. We'll have access control by 1 January. We're also looking at introducing new services associated with the online product. Some will come by 1 January, in tandem with access control.

Who will have access, and what will it cost?

Now through 1997, users will have to be a member and receive the printed product to be eligible for full online services. Members will have to pay an additional fee for access to material "behind the wall," probably \$12 a year.

What exactly will be posted?

Material behind the wall will include the full text of scientific papers and news articles, abstracts of scientific papers, special features and forums—basically anything with substantive content. Some of the things in front of the wall are the table of contents, "This Week in *Science*," classified ads, the Electronic Marketplace, and summaries of news articles.

Users will have to register to see material in front of the wall—it's not anonymous. The reason is that a significant percentage of people who visit the site now indicate they're not

presently members. Registration helps us, when they visit the site a lot, to know what to do to invite them to become members.

How will these new services benefit members and readers?

The added value for users as this service grows is searchability, because it becomes, in effect, a huge research database. More information alone may not be added value, but the ability to sort through that information is.

Another added value to anything online is interactivity—the potential to respond to authors or even to the readers. This contributes to a more unified scientific community, when scientists can communicate instantly with each other.

Who's doing the work?

Our own staff is taking on a tremendous amount of added responsibility, doing a lot of the work on top of their current jobs. We're using some vendors for various functions.... We envision technical partners and content partners. Right now we're farther along with establishing technical partnerships. We're also looking at potential partners for content, who could provide things like access to databases that contain original papers cited by authors in *Science*.

How do these services compare with what others are doing?

We compare well with the competition. We have a rich Web site, and it's growing. It's pretty user friendly, and getting better.

There's a huge scramble in the entire publishing industry—in some ways led by scientific publishing—to find out how to develop services that are use-

ful and user-friendly. Nobody knows yet the best way to do this.... And how do you make a business out of all this, especially regarding advertising?

AAAS's revenue base is equally membership and advertising driven. We're looking at how to maintain these revenue streams online. Different models are being tested for selling ads, subscriptions, and editorial content.... We're not yet locked into any one path. Online service will help us appeal to a new range of constituents. But it also could detract if too much is free so there's no incentive to pay for membership. We're walking a fine line.

How do you know what members and readers want?

We get a lot of feedback from the "Science Online" Guest Book, and the editors really pore over the comments. The advice is helping us sharpen the content and the presentation of it.

But we also have to assess

what members—not just current Web users—need. We did a computer usage survey of membership a few months ago. We found a high percentage—86%—use computers every day...but only 34% use computers to access online journals. So the principal use is scientific applications. That's not surprising, but it's something we need to know as we work to develop a product that benefits members and hopefully attracts new ones.

How does all this fit with membership goals?

Younger members and international members are two high-growth segments, and the Web presence presents an excellent way to serve these new constituents. Younger members are more accustomed to using computers to get the information they want. And now that we're global, online service allows us to get more information out more quickly than we can by mail.



Spinella: "Nobody knows yet the best way" to provide online services.

New Dues Rates for 1997

The AAAS Board of Directors approved a dues increase for 1997. The Board authorizes increases to cover two kinds of expenses: unavoidable costs associated with running AAAS and publishing *Science*, and new expenses that add value to membership. Paper increases, more research and news pages in *Science*, and more electronic access enhancement to *Science* are examples of the kinds of new expenses the Board anticipated in setting the 1997 dues rates. Overall, these dues increases are expected to provide AAAS with a 3% increase in total dues revenue in 1997.

The new rates, effective for membership or subscription terms beginning after 31 December 1996, are:

Regular members:	\$105
Postdocs and K-12 teachers:	\$82
Emeritus members who receive <i>Science</i> :	\$65
Students:	\$58
Patrons:	\$250
Corporate:	\$1000
Spouses and supporting and emeritus members who do not receive <i>Science</i> :	\$42
Libraries and institutions:	\$260

These prices are for membership dues only and do not include postage for international members.

All members whose membership expires in 1997 will be advised of the new rates on their renewal notices.

Member dues and voluntary contributions form the critical financial base for a wide range of AAAS activities. For more information, contact the AAAS Membership Office at 202-326-6417.