Newsletter of the Central Wisconsin Section - American Chemical Society Volume 22 · No. 3 · April 15, 1998

the Alembic

Chair's Corner

Our March meeting in Eau Claire featured Dr. Ahmad Nevissi from the University of Washington. He spoke about radioactivity and the different forms of radioactive waste such as medical, research and reactor waste. It seems that disposal of long-lived waste is a political problem that takes many decades to be attacked. The effects of very low level waste on human health is unknown because of the uncertainties of taking health data obtained at high levels of radiation and extrapolating to very low levels. The long talk was followed by a lively question and answer session, which rather surprised me since we were running so late. After Ahmad gave our talk he traveled to other local sections in the area during a week when there was a big snowstorm. He reports that he was nevertheless able to make all of his assignments in our area!

Our April meeting this month has been arranged by Tom Zamis, and you will find details herein. The Awards Banquet-Spouses Night is set for Friday evening, May 8 at Sweetwaters Restaurant in Eau Claire, and Al Denio will be helping with the arrangements, which we are expecting will feature an excellent talk on the BIG picture. Tom Marty has been working on the section awards and will be coming up with some excellent choices. I'm sure you will find much of interest (as well as scrumptious things to eat and drink) at both these spring meetings.

Not all of the work of section members is reported in these columns, and I am as at fault as any in not reporting them. I'd like to remind you of the ACS Chemistry Olympiad which we have participated in for many years. Currently Laura Cole of UW-Stevens Point is handling the duties for the Olympiad, and we all owe her our gratitude for taking on this job.

I've received Dave Schumacher's new address from ACS. It is: Pracs Inst, P.O. Box 5316, Fargo, ND 58105-5316. Many of us remember Dave's tour as Chair of our section and his dedication to the section.

Bob

ACS - CWS Mini-Directory

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American Chemical Society

Central Wisconsin Section

"GENETIC ENGINEERING - IS IT A FIT SUBJECT FOR REAL CHEMISTS AND ENGINEERS?"

Dr. Peter J. Reilly
Iowa State University

Wednesday, April 22, 1998
8:00 P.M. Room A121, Science Building
UW - Stevens Point Campus

Abstract

Chemists and chemical engineers have been confronted in recent years with the news of major advances in genetic engineering, the manipulation of microbial, plant, and animal genetic material by recombinant DNA techniques. The properties and capabilities of cells and whole organisms can be changed radically by such techniques, which have made medical treatments more effective and (sometimes!) even cheaper, and have opened the possibilty of new chemical syntheses. A question arises: Can we tale part in this new and exciting area?

The answer is that this in fact is very feasible. Chemists have a great appreciation of how molecules work, which is necessary for an understanding of how cells and enzymes should behave after being subjected to mutagenesis. In addition, they have a superior feel for analytical techniques, which are central to all these advances. Chemical engineers have little difficulty picking up the ability to conduct biological research (certainly much less difficulty than biologists have picking up chemical engineering!). In addition, their ability to kinetically characterize the resulting microbial cells and enzymes that up to now are the chief products of genetic engineering research are equal or superior to that of any other discipline.

This talk is a simple explanation, using the enzyme glucoamylase as an example, of what can be done with genetic engineering, and where it is going to take us in the future.

About the Speaker

Peter J. Reilly, a New Jersey native, received an A.B. in chemistry in 1960 from Princeton University and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering in 1964 from the University of Pennsylvania, where he worked on the kinetics of the lactic acid and gluconic acid fermentations. He spent four years with DuPont's Organic Chemicals Department in Deepwater, New Jersey, six years at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and since 1974 has been at Iowa State University, where he is Professor of Chemical Engineering and, since May 1992, Anson Marston Distinguished Professor in Engineering. During the 1983-84 and 1992-93 academic years he was Invited Professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne. During the summers of 1988, 1989, and 1990 he was Visiting Scholar in Monterrey, Mexico, Braunschweig, Germany and Brisbane, Australia, respectively.

Dr. Reilly's research interests are in the areas of enzyme and carbohydrate technology and utilization of agricultural byproducts, specifically in the enzymatic hydrolysis of starch and cellulosics and in sugar chromatography. He coordinates Iowa State University's exchange programs with the University of Glasgow and with the University of Lausanne and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne.

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Dinner will be at Michelle's Restaurant, 513 Division St. (Business 51), adjacent to the UWSP campus (right next to Taco Bell). The social icebreaker will be from 6 to 6:30 and dinner will follow until 7:30. The all inclusive dinner (15$) will include a choice of one of four entrees, side dishes, coffee, milk, tax and tip. Reservations can be made by calling Tom Zamis (715) 346-3258 by 5 P.M. Monday April 20. The seminar room, A121 Science, is directly inside the main entrance to the Science Building, across from your parking in Visitor's Lot X on Fourth Ave., just one block south and three blocks east of Michelle's.

Letter from the Editor

Greetings from your *Alembic* editor.

I want to remind everyone again about our new ACS-CWS Web Page at :

http://chemdept.uwsp.edu/acscws/

or you can link there from the American Chemical Society home page - Local Sections. You should get the most up-to-date information about section activities on our page. There are also maps of all of the usual places where monthly meetings are held - so don't say you can't find us!

I have added a link on our Web page for *the Alembic*. It is listed there in pdf (portable document format) which is compact and will retain all of the graphics and formatting of the hard copy. These can be opened and read by a utility called Adobe Acrobat Reader that is freeware, and can be installed as a plug-in to your web browser.

Finally, I encourage all members to submit articles, letters, humor, announcements, comments - whatever - to me to include in the newsletter. Hope to hear from you!

Tom

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Chemistry Trivia

This American received a B.A. from the College of New Jersey and his M.D. from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. His signature appears on the Declaration of Independence. He was America's first Professor of Chemistry. Can you name him?

Answer to last month's trivia: Herbert Dow, founder of Dow Chemical Company

ACS-CWS CHAIR TO RETIRE

Retirement Celebration

Current ACS-CWS Chair Bob St. Louis has decided that he doesn't have enough time to fulfill his duties as Chair and as Professor of Chemistry. So, he has decided to retire from UWEC in order spend more time on Section activities.

The Chemistry Department of UW - Eau Claire has set a date of Tuesday, May 19 for the *Celebration of the Career of Dr. Robert St. Louis*. The banquet will be held at Sweetwaters at a cost of $18 per person which includes the cost of the meal and a contribution toward a gift. For reservations, contact Bob Eierman at (715)-836-5369.