



the Alembic



Chair's Corner



Transitions

I have just returned from Australia, where I had gone at the last minute to be with my mother during her final illness. This was certainly a traumatic transition in my life, and it has gotten me thinking about transitions in general. There are many transitions that we pass through on life's journey: Births, deaths, marriages, divorces, new jobs: all are transitions through which most of us pass in person or with our friends.

As chemists, we use the word "transition" routinely as part of our vocabulary. We use it in a variety of contexts: transition states, transition metals, transitions between energy levels to mention just three. Some transitions are smooth (the change in properties of the halogens as one descends the group, for example), while others -- overtly identical -- are abrupt (the change in physical and chemical properties between boron and aluminum). Some transitions (e.g.

the p-p* electronic transition) are "allowed," others (e.g. the n-p* transition) are "forbidden." When we speak of catalysts, it is almost always in terms of their effect on the energy of the transition state of the slowest step in the reaction or reaction sequence: catalysts provide an alternative pathway for a transformation that passes through a lower-energy transition state. Nevertheless, however we use it in our professional lives, a transition is still a change from one state to another.

Our own section has had its own transition as the office of Chair has passed from Jim Waelchli to me. This transition has been relatively smooth, thanks to a superb Executive Committee, but it has had its disjoint moments. Last month, a series of missed communications led to the cancellation of our October speaker. As Chair, it was my job to be on top of this kind of thing, and I simply dropped the ball.

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American Chemical Society

Central Wisconsin Section



"Patent System Update"

by
Tipton Randall

Thursday, November 16, 2000
8:00 PM Phillips Hall 007
UW - Eau Claire

Abstract

Patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets and technical knowhow all constitute intellectual property. The seminar concentrates on patents and their importance to inventors. A patent entitles the owner to prevent others from making, using or selling the invention covered by the claims of the patent. A utility patent can be issued to any person who invents a new, useful, and nonobvious (1) process, (2) machine, (3) manufactured article, (4) composition of matter, (5) computer program, (6) a method of doing business, or (7) any new and useful improvement to any of these types of inventions. A design patent is strictly directed to protecting the overall appearance of an invention. The bars to patent protection, and the process of preparing, filing and obtaining a patent are examined. The methods of obtaining patent coverage in foreign countries for U.S. citizens are covered.

The presentation of November 2 focuses on speeding up the patenting process for inventors and reviews some of the recent regulations and rule changes that are changing the whole patenting process in the United States. Finally, some of the important resources that are available over the internet for inventors are discussed.

Biographical Sketch

Tipton Randall graduated with a B.S. in chemistry from UW-Eau Claire (1966) and earned a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Purdue University (1971). After working as a chemist with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Animal Health Laboratory in Madison, WI for three years, he joined Zimpro, Inc. of Wausau, WI, an international wastewater engineering company. As a Senior Research Chemist he investigated wet oxidation treatment of hazardous and toxic wastes. He later served as Manager of Patent Affairs for Zimpro, Inc. and became a Registered Patent Agent in 1986. Since 1997 he has been in private practice as a Patent Agent working from Chippewa Falls, WI.

Dinner will be at 6:30 at Sweetwaters Restaurant in Eau Claire. Plan on drinks at Sweetwaters starting at 6:00 p.m. Contact Dave Lewis for reservations before November 16.

Year 2000 ACS Schedule

Month	Date	Speaker	Topic	Location	Host
November 2000	November 16	Tip Randall	Patent Systems Updates	Eau Claire	David Lewis
December 2000	December 6	Ronald Haas	Tour of Marshfield Clinic Laboratories	Marshfield	Ronald Haas

Chair's Corner continued

We will not have a similar falling through the cracks next year, since I intend to avoid the same transition (Chair to ex-Chair) this year.

We have just come through National Chemistry Week, and here we have been attempting to bring the public through another transition: from ignorance and fear of chemistry to some understanding -- through "Kitchen Chemistry" -- that chemists are not environment-destroying ogres practicing a black art. [Despite the fact, of course, that the term "chemistry" is ultimately derived from "Kemet" ("the black land"), the ancient Egyptians' name for their country, and it was therefore known for a while as the "Egyptian Art" or the "black art."] One can hope that we functioned as the catalysts to lower the energy of the transition state for that process of enlightenment.

As you read this, the nation itself will have passed through another transition: the election of a new President and Congress. Election season is, itself, a time when we decide the selection rules: which transitions will be "allowed" and which will be "forbidden." So it is with our local section. We have several positions open for election at this time, and I am now

asking you to stand for one of those open positions. Elsewhere in this Alembic, we have a call for nominations to the open positions -- please look over the list, and let us know which office you would be willing to fill in the next year.

Dave

ACS-CWS Web Page

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

or you can link there from the American Chemical Society home page - Local Sections. Contains the most up-to-date information about section activities.

Lifetimes in Chemistry

According to a newly released survey of ACS members, "Lifetimes in Chemistry: A Report on the American Chemical Society's Mature Career Chemist Study of Members Ages 50 Through 69," nearly three times as many women as men took a career hiatus of at least six months and for different reasons. The study said women most often reported the hiatus was for "family responsibilities," while men said they were "involuntarily terminated." Women also said the hiatus hurt their career while most men said it helped their career. To receive a free copy of the full report, please call ACS at 800-227-5558 or email career@acs.org.

Kids & Chemistry! A Great Combination!

Have you been asked by your child's teacher to come visit the class and do some hands-on chemistry? Would you like to organize a group of volunteers from your workplace and form a partnership with a local school in order to supplement their science curriculum? The Kids & Chemistry program of the ACS Education and International Activities Division offers workshops and resources to assist volunteer scientists interested in doing hands-on science activities with elementary school children. If you would like more information about the Kids & Chemistry program write to kids@acs.org or call 1-800-227-5558, extension 6249.

HELP!

The Central Wisconsin Section needs your help in finding people willing to carry on the work of the ACS at our local level.

We need nominations/volunteers to run for **offices** next year. We need a person to act as **Career Counselor** for the section. We need a person to act as **Media Relations Coordinator**. We need a person to act as **National Chemistry Week Coordinator** for the section. We need **nominations for section awards** for next year.

Please contact Dave Lewis or any other member of the Executive Committee.