

OSU's RICHARD BUNCE IS 2009 OKLAHOMA CHEMIST ...p. 5

Southwest

RETORT

**February
2010**

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77TH YEARS AGO IN THE SOUTHWEST RETORT

The ACS tour speaker for February is **Dr. G. F. Huff** of Callery Chemical Co. His tour topic will be "The Chemistry of the Boron Hydrides."

At TCU **Drs. W. H. Watson** and **J. E. Hodgkins** have received \$20,000 grants from the Welch Foundation. Dr. Watson will investigate the surface properties of semiconductors, while Dr. Hodgkins will continue his research on divalent carbon intermediates. Dr. Watson and **Mr. F. M. Lisle** recently presented papers at the Southwest Regional ACS Meeting in Baton Rouge. **Dr. Paul H. Emmett** of Johns Hopkins will give a talk at TCU on Feb. 2 sponsored by the Welch Foundation. His topic is "New Approaches to the Study of Contact Catalysts." TCU has received a \$91,400 grant from NSF to conduct a summer institute in science and mathematics.

The new wing of the chemistry building at the University of Texas (*now UT-Austin*) will be completed later this year. The air conditioned four story addition will contain a large instrument room, which will house, in addition to other apparatus, the projected nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer. Faculty members from the chemical engineering department who attended the national meeting of the AIChE in San Francisco were **Drs. John McKetta, W. A. Cunningham, E. H. Wissler, and David M. Himmelblau**. From the chemistry department, Chair **Norman Hackerman** gave a talk on "Solid Fluid Interactions" at the Jersey Production Research Laboratory in Tulsa, while **Dr. Roger Williams** gave a talk in Dallas on "People as Biological Individuals" at the

Magnolia Petroleum Co.'s Branch of the Research Society of America. **Dr. Royston M. Roberts** is spending a year doing research at the University of Zurich under a PRF Fellowship.

At Baylor **Dr. W. T. Gooch** is doing library research in connection with **Dr. E. Emmett Reid** of Johns Hopkins. Dr. Reid was head of the chemistry department at Baylor from 1901 to 1907 before leaving for Johns Hopkins. The material is being compiled for a book on syntheses of organosulfur compounds.

CHEM GEMS & JOWLES

A New Wrinkle: National Lab Day

Many scientists and educators are concerned that US students lag those in a number of other countries, at least as measured by international test scores. In an effort to improve that performance, a new alliance among a number of professional societies, foundations, and science-related entities in the government have come together to start National Lab Day (NLD).

This does not have to do with the National Laboratories (although a day for them wouldn't be a bad idea either). It is instead a "national barn raising" aimed at connecting science teachers with practicing scientists in an effort to increase student exposure to practical, hands-on science.

ACS and the National Science Teachers Association are the two professional groups driving NLD. The official day will be in the first week of

****Continued on Page 6****



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Editorial and Business Offices:

Editor: E. Thomas Strom, 1134 Medalist Dr., Dallas, TX 75232, 214-376-9602; FAX 817-272-3808; tomstrom@juno.com

Managing Editor: Mary Teasdale, PO Box 461051, Garland, TX 75046; 972-276-9376; owlcritic75@yahoo.com

Business Manager: Kirby Drake, 9715 Dartridge, Dallas, Texas, 75238-1827; 214-553-9810; kdrake@fulbright.com

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40 Zr 91.224	41 Nb 92.906	42 Mo 95.94	43 Tc (98)	44 Ru 101.07	45 Rh 101.07	46 Pd 106.42	47 Ag 107.87	48 Cd 112.411	49 In 114.818	50 Sn 118.71	51 Sb 121.76	52 Te 127.60	53 I 126.90
72 Hf 178.49	73 Ta 180.95	74 W 183.84	75 Re 186.207	76 Os 190.23	77 Ir 192.222	78 Pt 195.084	79 Au 196.967	80 Hg 200.59	81 Tl 204.383	82 Pb 207.2	83 Bi 208.98	84 Po (209)	85 At (210)
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02008

OSU's RICHARD BUNCE IS OKLAHOMA CHEMIST

Profile by E. Thomas Strom

The winner of the 2009 Oklahoma Chemist Award was Professor Richard Bunce of Oklahoma State University. With his emphasis on teaching and bringing undergraduates into chemical research, Bunce exemplifies the teacher-scholar that university faculty are supposed to be but often are not.

Like many chemists, Bunce had a Gilbert chemistry set in his youth. He liked chemistry in high school, so he fixed on chemistry as a major when he entered Marietta College in Ohio. An inspiring organic chemistry professor, Hans-Georg Gilde, led him into organic chemistry. Graduating *magda cum laude*, he attended the University of Wisconsin where he did a Ph.D. thesis in mechanistic and exploratory photochemistry under mentor Howard Zimmerman. There followed an NIH postdoctoral fellowship at UC-Berkeley under William G. Dauben, and in 1983 he

joined the faculty at Oklahoma State.

His emphasis on involving undergraduates in research started out as a matter of necessity. As a new assistant professor without start-up funds (back then start-up funds were rare), it was hard to compete for graduate students with older faculty who had funding.



Undergraduate researchers helped him get his research program underway. Later involving undergraduates in research became a calling. He works closely with undergraduates to familiarize them with advanced techniques, instrument operation, chemical literature, and safety procedures. Then gradually they are encouraged to become independent.

Of course, Bunce's research program also involves graduate students. He has a strong record of external funding, with grants obtained from PRF, DOE, NIH, UCER, UCWR, and OCAST plus grants from a number of

industries. His individual research efforts have brought in about \$500,000 in grants to OSU. He was named Outstanding Advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences in 2001 and 2006 and has been a finalist for the AMOCO Teaching Award.

Even though his Ph.D. research for Zimmerman was in photochemistry, it led him into organic synthesis. The starting materials needed usually involved syntheses of new compounds, and he would also have to prove the structure of many photoproducts by independent syntheses. Early in his career Bunce pondered the possibility of tandem syntheses in which a number of sequential reactions could be carried out in a single pot. This gradually led him into heterocyclic chemistry, as many of the reactions he envisioned seemed best suited for constructing heterocycles. His acceptance as a heterocyclic chemist seems validated by his being chosen recently for the Editorial Advisory Board for the journal *Heterocyclic Communications*.

Bunce has little time for hobbies. He enjoyed collecting rocks and minerals when he was younger, and he does enjoy cycling. *The Southwest Retort* congratulates Richard Bunce on joining the illustrious group of chemists, who have been selected as the Oklahoma Chemist.

****Continued from Page 2 ****

May. At the NLD website <http://www.nationallabday.org> teachers can sign up and enter a project they would like to do. Scientists of all kinds, and especially chemists, can also sign up at the same website, and the software will alert both teachers and scientists to opportunities for collaboration.

Despite its name, NLD is not about just one day. It's about creating

stronger bonds between scientists and teachers and projects that will last, engaging students year after year in hands-on science. And it's a great opportunity for ACS members to get involved in education in a small, manageable way. *Thanks to Dr. Bill Carroll for this information.*

Chemistry Olympiad. The local section exam will be given Saturday, Mar. 13, from 10 a.m. to noon at Collin County Community College's Preston Ridge Campus in Frisco. The exam will probably be in F-248. The national exam for high scorers in the local exam will be on Saturday, April 24, at the same location. For further information contact **Dr. Dawn Richardson**, Collin County Community College, Preston Ridge Campus, D215, Tel. 972-377-1633, E-mail drichardson@collin.edu.

ACT2 Biennial Conference June 28-July 1. The Associated Chemistry Teachers of Texas, ACT2, hosts a conference every other summer to allow a time for sharing and advancing ideas for quality chemical education in Texas. The upcoming conference will be held in Katy, TX, just west of Houston. If you haven't attended an ACT2 Conference before, this is your chance. If you have attended, then clearly you are looking forward with excitement to this one-of-a-kind conference.

Among the highlights are nationally known dynamic presenters, discounts for presenters, chemistry and art sessions, the George Hague Memorial ice cream social, the mole stroll, a banquet at the Swingin' Door, and a silent auction. Registration and presentation proposal forms are available in mid-January at the ACT2 website <http://statweb.org/ACT2/>.

Send material for this column to Mary

AROUND-the- AREA

South Plains Section

Texas Tech University. Welch Professor Bill Hase has his NSF grant on "Computer Simulation of Chemical Dynamics" renewed until Feb. 2013 in the amount of \$435,000. He has had this grant since 1975, and this is the 11th renewal. He gave a seminar at Baylor University on Oct. 30. Dr. **Dmitri Pappas** has received a \$99,851 grant from the Department of Homeland Security for "Photoacoustical Standoff Detection Using Atomic Vapor Filters." He has written titled *Practical Cell Analysis*, intended to merge the fields of analytical chemistry and cell biology. The book is published by Wiley and will appear in April, 2010.

Dr. **Michael Mayer** attended the NSF Young Investigator's Physical Organic Chemistry Workshop at UT-Austin Jan. 6-10. He gave an invited talk on "Molecular Fastenation."

Keoyeon Park, Dr. Li Yang, Dr. Jia-xu Zhang, and Dr. Yue Zhang gave poster presentations at the ACS SW Regional Meeting in Nov. in El Paso.

East Texas

East Texas. The speaker for the Feb. 4 section meeting at Panola College was Dr. **James Traynham** of LSU. His topic was "Chemical History Firsthand: Excerpts from the Oral History Program at the Chemical Heritage Foundation." Dr. Traynham, an expert on organic chemistry

nomenclature, also gave an additional talk prior to the meeting on the latest protocols on naming compounds. The next meeting will be Mar 4 at Stephen F. Austin State University featuring Dr. **Jeffrey Seeman**.

Heart o' Texas

Baylor University. Drs. **Kevin G. Pinney** and **Mary Lynn Trawick** are PI's on a two year, \$200,000 grant funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). The grant title is "Investigation of Highly Potent Benzosuberene Analogs as Novel Anticancer Agents." Drs. **Sayo O. Fakayode, Kenneth W. Busch,** and **Marianna A. Busch** are the authors of an article published 15 Dec., 2009 in the *Encyclopedia of Analytical Chemistry* on "Chemo-metric Approach to Chiral Recognition Using Molecular Spectroscopy."

A special seminar was given on Feb. 15 by Dr. **Gary Molander** of the University of Pennsylvania on "Organotrifluoroborates: Organoboron Reagents for the 21st Century." The speaker for the Feb. 18 W. Dial Black Family Lecture was Dr. **Mina J. Bissell** of the UC-Berkeley Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Her topic was "The Importance of Tumor Microenvironment in Initiation, Promotion, and Therapy of Cancer."

Dallas-Fort Worth

Meeting-in-Miniature. Undergraduate and graduate students are invited to present their research at the 43rd annual Meeting-in-Miniature held in the Conference Center at UT-Dallas on Saturday, April 17. The format will be oral presentations of 10-15 minutes.

There will be cash prizes give by the D-FW ACS section for the top papers in the graduate and undergraduate divisions as gauged by a panel of judges. ACS-style abstracts (maximum 150 words) are due not later than April 1.

For more information, please see the Meeting-in-Miniature website at http://www.utdallas.edu/chemistry/acs_mim.html or contact **Ms. Betty Maldonado** bmaldonado@utdallas.edu or at 972-883-2909, **Dr. Jung-Mo Ahn** jungmo.ahn@utdallas.edu, or **Dr. Steven Nielsen** steven.nielsen@utdallas.edu. Academic, industrial, or governmental chemists are encouraged to volunteer as judges or session chairs; please e-mail Jung-Mo or Steven if interested.

SMU. Dr. Ed Biehl is a co-PI on a \$4,000,000 NIH award titled "A Novel Monkey Model for Parkinson's Drug Discovery." The two-year program is a P2 grant involving chemists and biologists at Georgetown (**Howard Federoff**, PI and **Kathleen Maguire-Zeiss**), Johns Hopkins (**Ken Dawson, Valina Dawson**), University of San Francisco (**K. Bankiewicz**), and SMU's Ed Biehl).

A publication by **Dr. Brent Summerlin** appeared on the cover of the journal *Macromolecules*. Brent was also named to the Editorial Board of the new RSC journal *Polymer Chemistry*. During the fall he gave seminars at Case-Western Reserve, UT-Austin, and to the Dept. of Biomedical Engineering at UT-Arlington. He also gave a plenary lecture at the International Symposium on Stimuli-Responsive Materials at the University of Southern Mississippi. **Dr. John Buynak** gave a seminar at Case-Western Reserve Oct. 18 on "Design, Synthesis, and Evalua-

tion of Mechanism-Based Inhibitors of Beat-Lactamase." **Dr. Mike Lattman** presented a seminar at Oklahoma State Oct. 29 on "Main-Group Element Calixarenes: Fundamentals to Applications."

University of North Texas. Nobel Laureate Roald Hoffmann gave the Davidson Lecture Feb. 5 on the topic "All the Ways to Make a Bond." The preceding evening featured a reading of a new play by Hoffmann titled "Something That Belongs to You."

UT-Arlington. Dr. Martin Pomerantz presented a talk at Tarrant County Northwest Campus in Fort Worth on "Polythiophenes. LEDs and Model Compounds" and a seminar at UT-Arlington on "Studies of Polythiophenes and Bi- and Terthiophene Model Compounds." A new post-doc in the Pomerantz group is **Dr. Jin Wang**. She obtained her Ph.D. from Tohoku University and was a postdoctoral research associate at RIKEN in Japan.

ERRATA

In the January issue, the article on "The Era of Plastics" gave a timeline for Bakelite as follows: discovery, 1907; filing the patent, 2009; establishing General Bakelite Corp., 2010. This would imply that Leo Baekeland was a bad procrastinator, albeit a long-lived one. Obviously the last two dates should have been 1909 and 1910.

In that same article I had guessed that Carl Kaufmann had copyrighted his University of Delaware thesis because he was a writer. **Dr. Leon Doneski** has kindly informed me that it was the practice at the University of Delaware that all graduate theses be copyrighted.

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METROPLEX FEBRUARY SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Seminars are occasionally postponed or cancelled. Check departmental websites or call the department before attending.

UT-Arlington. **Mar. 5**, Malika Jeffries-El, Iowa State, "Design and Synthesis of Conjugated Polymers Based on Benzobisazoles." **Mar. 12**, Gerald Meyer, Johns Hopkins, "Photoinduced Electron Transfer in Molecular Solar Cells." **Mar. 26**, Thomas Puckette, Texas Eastman, "Halophosphite Ligands for the Rhodium Catalyzed Low-Pressure Hydroformylation Reaction." **April 9**, Ronald Breslow, Columbia, "The Origin of Homochirality in Amino Acids and Sugars on Prebiotic Earth." Seminars are normally at 2:30 p.m. in Room 114, Baker Chemical Research Building.

UT-Dallas. **Mar. 5**, Xiaohu Gao, University of Washington, "Multi-functional Nanoparticles for Molecular Imaging and Drug Delivery." **Mar. 12**, Paul Selvin, University of Illinois, "FIONA Looks at Individual Molecular Motors Walk and Run." **Mar. 19**, De-En Jiang, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, "From Gold Nanoclusters to Nanographenes: A Density Functional Theory Approach." **April 2**, Seth Rasmussen, North Dakota State University, TBA. Seminars are normally at 2 p.m., Room CN1.102 Conference Center.

SMU. **Mar. 5**, Paul F. Cook, University of Oklahoma, TBA. **Mar. 12**, Peter Wipf, University of Pittsburgh, TBA. **Mar. 19**, Harold

Isom, TriQuint Semiconductor, TBA. **April 9**, Janet Bluemel, Texas A&M, "Homogeneous Catalysts Immobilized on Silica by Optimized Linker Systems for Superior Lifetimes and Activities." Seminars are usually at 3 p.m. in Room 152 Fondren Science Bldg.

Texas Christian University. **Mar. 11**, Peter Wipf, University of Pittsburgh, TBA. **April 6**, Wes Borden, UNT, TBA. Seminars are normally at 11 a.m., Lecture Hall 4, Sid Richardson Science Bldg.

University of North Texas. **Mar. 5**, Chris Bardeen, UC-Riverside, "Time-Resolved Spectroscopy of Organic Semiconductors: From Exciton Delocalization to Exciton Fission." **Mar. 26**, Tim Short, SRI International, "In Situ Mass Spectrometry: Marine Applications and Extreme Miniaturization." **April 9**, Elki Kraka, SMU, "How Can We Control Chemical Reactions?" Seminars are normally at 3:30 p.m. in Room 106, Chemistry Bldg.

UT-Southwestern – Biochemistry. **Mar. 4**, Michael Botchan, UC-Berkeley, "Starting S Phase: How the MCM Helicase Gets Activated." **Mar. 11**, Charles Brenner, University of Iowa, "New Steps in NAD Metabolism: Regulation of Life, Death, and Aging." **Mar. 25**, David Rudner, Harvard, "Mechanism of DNA Segregation in Bacteria." **April 1**, Jon Ellman, UC-Berkeley, "New Strategies for Synthesis and Applications to Biology." Seminars are normally at 12 noon in Biochemistry Lecture Hall L4.176.

MARCH D-FW ACS MEETING TUESDAY MARCH 30, 2010 TROPHY CLUB COUNTRY CLUB

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"Taking it to the Streets: How We Get the Message Out about Chemistry"

William F. Carroll, Ph.D.

Past-President of the American Chemical Society

The issue never seems to change. For years, chemists-even ACS members-have lamented the poor "public perception of chemistry." If only the public understood more.... What can we do?

Goal 4 of the ACS strategic plan is: ACS will be a leader in communicating to the general public the nature and value of chemistry and related sciences. In this presentation, we will discuss how the Society reaches out to the national media about developments in chemistry, how local sections can engage local media, and most importantly how each of us can be a chemistry ambassador-communicating the benefits of chemistry on a one-to-one basis.

We are all agents of change-as individuals, as local section members and through the largest single-discipline scientific society in the world. Come and find out how. Be ready to make the most of the opportunities that are out there--whether it's National Lab Day, the International Year of Chemistry 2011, or simply your next neighborhood barbeque.

Social: 6-7pm Cash Bar; Dinner: 7-8 pm; Presentation: 8-9pm

Menu: Grilled Bottom Sirloin or Southwest Chicken, White Cheddar Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, Dessert, Iced Tea/Coffee. \$20, Students \$10. Students' meal discount available through the Generous Sponsorship of Dr. C.M. Hendrickson of Ar'kon Consultants. Venue made possible by Dr. S. Carson of Strategic Placements.

Reservations: info@acsdfw.org by Thursday, March 25th. Specify Chicken or Beef. More info: www.acsdfw.org or Dr. Denise Merkle (817) 921-0029. Members are responsible for reservations made but not kept.

Directions: <http://www.trophyclub-dallas.com>; 817.837.1900. From 35W : Exit onto 114 East: Take the Trophy Club Exit, make a Left to cross under the highway and go North. In ~0.7 miles, make a Right into the driveway of the Club. From 121/183: Take 121 North: Take the 114/William D. Tate Ave exit (Get into Left lane ASAP after exiting) and follow the signs to turn Left onto 114 W. Take the Trophy Club Drive exit and make a Right to go North. In ~0.7 miles, make a Right into the driveway of the Club. To take 377 : Go East on 114. Exit Trophy Club Drive and Go North ~0.7mi to the Club. To take 26 : Go West on 114. Exit Trophy Club Drive and Go North ~0.7mi to the Club. From Dallas & 114 West: Take the Trophy Club Dr. Exit and make a Right to go North. In ~0.7 miles, make a Right into the driveway of the Club.

SMITH NEW UTD WELCH PROFESSOR



The new Welch Professor at UTD will be renowned polymer chemist **Dennis W. Smith, Jr.**, who is currently on the faculty of Clemson University. Smith becomes the second Welch Professor at UTD. The other is **Ray Baughman**, who is also Director of the Alan G. MacDiarmid NanoTech Institute.

Smith is a native of Georgia, who was raised in Missouri, a graduate of Missouri State University, and holder of a Ph.D. from the University of Florida. Prior to joining the Clemson faculty in 1998, he worked for Dow Chemical Co. in Midland and Freeport. He also was Visiting Professor at the University of Heidelberg in 2001. Smith is past chair of the ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry and is the current editor of the journal *Polymer Bulletin*. He co-founded Tetramer Technologies, LLC, which employs 25 chemists and engineers in South Carolina. He is an expert on fluorine-containing polymers and renewable-resource and biodegradable materials.

The Southwest Retort welcomes Dennis Smith to the Metroplex. His appointment is a further demonstration of just how valuable the Welch Foundation has been to chemistry in Texas.