



## Green Mountain Local Section of the American Chemical Society

e-mail: [GreenMntACS@yahoo.com](mailto:GreenMntACS@yahoo.com)

Green Mountain Section website:  
<http://membership.acs.org/g/greenmt>

### Officers 2012

Chair..... Heather Bean  
Chair-Elect..... Open  
Secretary..... Jody Chamberlain  
Treasurer..... Beth Medeiros  
Councilor..... Willem Leenstra  
Alternate Councilor..... Jeffrey Byers

### Committee Chairs

PR/Web Master..... Fiona Case  
Gov't Affairs..... Sarah Locknar  
Newsletter Editor... Willem Leenstra



### Upcoming Events

**May 10** – GMLS meeting topic  
“Doping in Sports” at Castleton  
State College

**Summer** – Tour of a local  
company (TBD)



ACS website: [www.Chemistry.org](http://www.Chemistry.org)

# GMLS April 2012 Newsletter

## “Visit to the State House”



**Date:** Friday, April 13, 2012  
7:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Where:** Vermont State House  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont

**Event:** Vermont Chemists in the “Card Room”

Abstract: Any organization may book the Card Room in the State House during the legislative session upon approval by the Sergeant at Arms. People may bring displays or other informational materials. The **ACS Green Mountain Local Section** is teaming up with the **Vermont State Science and Math Fair** to introduce ourselves to our Vermont state legislators and telling them about all of the exciting, innovative, and essential chemistry work that is occurring in our state, and supporting our local economy. Stay all day or just an hour - your presence is appreciated. Our goal is to illustrate how important chemistry and science education is to our state.





## GMLS Visits the Legislature

by Deb Gaynor

Your Government Affairs Committee visits with our Congressional representatives every year to keep them up to date on issues of interest to the ACS and our local section (see article later in this newsletter). This year, we are holding our first GMLS meeting of 2012 in the Card Room at the State House in Montpelier for an all-day event getting to know our state legislators a little better. We will be telling them who we are and what we do. The co-directors of the Vermont State Science and Math Fair (VSSMF) will be joining us there. Several of the top students from the VSSMF (next article) will be bringing their award-winning displays to showcase the success of this particular program under the umbrella of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The need to strengthen and expand these programs is part of our message.

We hope you will join us on April 13, 2012 in the Card Room from 7 am until closing (sometime in the early afternoon). This is a Friday, so come early to catch your representatives as they wind up a busy week late in the legislative session. The Card Room is on the second floor, in a large open area next to the entrance to the Cafeteria, so there will be a lot of traffic back and forth during the day. We will have materials about the ACS and our local section, as well as a series of "I am a Vermont Chemist" posters about who we are and where we work. The students will have their exhibits, and will be answering questions about them.

We encourage you to contact your local Representatives (<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/lms/legdir/districts.asp?Body=H&Session=2012>) and/or your respective Senators via (<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/lms/legdir/districts.asp?Body=S&Session=2012>) to let them know you are coming. You can invite them to stop by and chat, or have coffee or even lunch with you. They will appreciate your coming to Montpelier, and your interest in talking to them. If you can't make it on April 13<sup>th</sup>, you can still tell them about the event, and perhaps make a date to talk to you another time.

Whether or not you can stop by for a visit, we hope you will contribute to the profiles of Vermont chemists that we are posting - just a sentence or two about who you are and what you do (or did) for work, with a picture if you have one. These mini-profiles will be made into posters to share our stories with our legislators, to give them a sense of the diversity of careers Vermont

chemists enjoy. Regarding parking, please be aware that parking in Montpelier can be challenging. Be ready with sufficient change for the meters, and be prepared to walk several blocks to get to the State House.

## Vermont State Science and Mathematics Fair

Following a long-standing tradition, Norwich University once again hosted the Vermont State Science and Mathematics Fair On Saturday, March 31, 2012 was at. Heather Bean and Fiona Case represented our Green Mountain Section by reviewing numerous projects, and selecting the following three winners of an ACS award.

The first-place winner receives a \$100 gift card to Barnes & Noble, and a \$10,000/yr scholarship to Green Mountain College. The runners-up receive a \$50 gift card and a \$5,000/yr scholarship. Our ACS Green Mountain Section sponsors the gifts, while the scholarships are donated by Green Mountain College.

We heartily congratulate this year's winners on their accomplishments as young chemists! The winners and their project titles were:



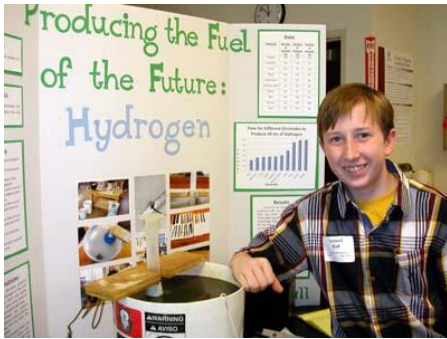
*Jenna Keith*

First Place Award was won by Jenna Keith who is in 11<sup>th</sup> grade at Rutland High School (supervised by her high school teacher Ann Marie Mahar). Jenna's project was titled "Temperature's Effect on Battery Life".



*Marlynn Serwili*

One of our Runner-Up Awards went to Marlynn Serwili, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at St. Francis Xavier School in Winooski (she was supervised by teacher Mary Ellen Varhue). Marlynn's project was focused on "Chemically Bright".



*Samuel Hall*

Samuel Hall is the other Runner-Up Award winner is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Weathersfield School (supervised by his teacher David Lambert) with his project "Producing the Fuel of the Future: Hydrogen".

### **Report from our Councilor, Willem Leenstra**



I attended the Council meeting at the Spring National Meeting held in San Diego, March 25-29, 2012. What follows are the highlights and the more interesting announcements from that meeting. If you would like a more complete report and/or a report of the proceedings of the Board of Directors, I would be happy to send it to you electronically; please contact me at my email address: [willem.leenstra@uvm.edu](mailto:willem.leenstra@uvm.edu).

#### **Election Results**

By electronic ballot, the Council selected Thomas J. Barton (Iowa State University) and Luis A. Echegoyen (University of Texas, El Paso) as candidates for 2013 President-Elect. These two candidates, along with any candidates selected via petitions, will stand for election in the Fall Election.

Two candidates for the position of District I Director (our District) have been selected from the list of nominees by the Councilors of District I. ACS members in District I will select our representative Director onto the ACS Board this fall as well.

#### **2013 Member Dues**

Council voted to set the member dues for 2013 at the level set by an inflation-adjustment formula, which resulted in an increase of \$3 to \$151.

#### **Project Seed**

As part of a regular performance review, the Council voted to continue the Committee on Project SEED (which sets policy for all Project SEED programs). Our Green Mountain Section has been a financial supporter of this program for a number of years. Prof. Rory Waterman of UVM has been instrumental in the management of the local Project SEED, arranging for the students' research placement as well as other associated logistics. Thanks for all your efforts, Rory.

#### **The Society's Finances**

Despite the sluggish economy, the Society ended 2010 with a net from operations of \$20.9 million (compared to the approved budget), emanating from a total revenue of \$472.0 million. This favorable result was attributable to a better-than-expected performance by the ACS Publications Division and careful management across the Society. While operating results were favorable, the unrestricted net assets actually declined from \$130.5 million to \$102.0 million because funds had to be moved to the Society's post-retirement benefits plan (to accommodate market losses suffered in recent years).

#### **San Diego Attendance**

At last count, the 2013 ACS Spring National Meeting had attracted 16,921 registrants, including 8,974 regular attendees and 5,742 students. San Diego is a "first-tier" city, and performed well as an attractive meeting site, as expected.



#### **Member Statistics**

Membership recruitment efforts continued to produce successful results in 2011. The Society ended 2011 with 164,215 Members; this is the highest number in Society history.

#### **Special Discussion Item**

A special discussion item was put on the Council agenda for this meeting. ACS President Bassam Shkhashiri presented and moderated a discussion on "What is your reaction to the proposed topics for the ACS Climate Science Toolkit?" President Shkhashiri's working group on ACS Climate Science has developed a preliminary web-based toolkit that ACS members can use as a resource for understanding and communicating basic climate science. Following the presentation, Councilors engaged in a robust discussion on the proposed toolkit, and offered numerous suggestions for consideration.

#### **Council Policy Committee**

As your Councilor, my current activity is to serve on the Council Policy Committee (CPC) to which I was elected by fellow Councilors two years ago. One major role of the CPC is to oversee the proceedings of the Council meeting. Within that rubric, CPC has crafted new guidelines that prescribe how voting is to take place with choices of voice vote, vote by hands, recorded vote by name, and the recently adopted electronic (clicker) vote.

On a more general note, CPC has been instrumental in crafting the new 2012 ACS Strategic Plan. As compared to the previous version, this new version is more streamlined (from 6 major goals to the current 4), and a more focused attention on education and on advancing chemists' careers. The full ACS Strategic Plan for 2012 and Beyond can be viewed at [strategy.acs.org](http://strategy.acs.org). The ACS continues to seek feedback on the Strategic Plan. If you have comments on it, or any other ACS issue, please contact me at [Willem.Leenstra@UVM.edu](mailto:Willem.Leenstra@UVM.edu).



## Report from the Government Affairs Committee

by Sarah Locknar

On March 9, the Government Affairs Committee (Deb Gaynor and Sarah Locknar) met separately with Tricia Coates from Representative Welch's office and with Chris Saunders from Senator Leahy's office to discuss the topics of science education funding and President Obama's current budget proposal. Deb and Sarah stressed the importance of science, technology, engineering and math in K-12 education and how it easily translates to other disciplines by developing critical thinking skills. The committee also emphasized the real lack of qualified scientists in the state. Both Deb and Sarah gave examples of not being able to fill positions because of the short supply of qualified candidates. Both meetings were upbeat, with the staffers in full agreement with our suggestions. We are lucky to have such strong supporters of STEM education in Washington!



If you'd like to become involved with the Government Affairs committee, please send an email to Sarah at [slocknar@greentechvt.com](mailto:slocknar@greentechvt.com).

## Silver Circle Group

At the Spring 2009 ACS National Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, the Senior Chemists Task Force was created to determine how ACS can best meet the needs of this growing population of members. Even before that date, senior chemists had informally been meeting as the "Silver Circle". As one of its accomplishments, the Task Force has developed starter kits with which local sections can create their own Silver Circles. Typically, potential members have valuable experiences in chemistry, which they are encouraged to share through outreach activities. Also, they have tend to have common interests or concerns that may be addressed in local Silver Circle committees.

In our Green Mountain Local Section, a considerable component of the membership fits the profile of the Silver Circle. Thankfully, one of our active members, Irving Goldman, has responded by taking charge of starting a GMLS Silver Circle. At our last Executive Committee meeting, Irv shared his idea of an initial Silver Circle activity: to put together a presentation that addresses the subject of "interdisciplinarity in the chemical/biological/medical sciences – then and now". Irv is looking for anyone wishing to contribute examples of their own. If you are interested in getting involved in the GMLS Silver Circle, or just start by contributing your thoughts to Irv's current project, please contact him at [irvsheilgold@comcast.net](mailto:irvsheilgold@comcast.net).

## GMLS Chair Receives an Award



Dr. Heather Bean has been named the Carol Basbaum Memorial Research Fellow by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. This award is given to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Research Fellowship applicant who receives the best priority score during the foundation's review of research proposals. Her proposal entitled "Volatile Biomarkers of *P. aeruginosa*. Adaptation to the CF Lung", focuses on identifying volatile chemical compounds that are produced by the bacterium *P. aeruginosa* as it mutates and adapts in chronic cystic fibrosis lung infections.

"It is truly an honor to be recognized nationally for this research," said Dr. Bean. "The long-term goal for this work is to detect *P. aeruginosa* volatiles with a breath test, enabling the patient's medical team to identify important bacterial phenotypes, such as antibiotic resistance, as they arise in the lung."

Dr. Bean joined the Laboratory of Prof. Jane Hill at the University of Vermont in 2009 as a Postdoctoral Researcher in the School of Engineering. She received her Ph.D. in Chemistry from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2008, and was a Postdoctoral Research Associate for the School Chemical Engineering at Texas A&M University prior to arriving at UVM.