

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By D. James Baker
Interim President

IN THIS ISSUE, we are providing the draft By-Laws for the Society (beginning on p. 43). You will have also received directly from Neil Andersen a letter asking for nominations for officers and council members so that elections can proceed apace. With these actions, we are now coming to grips with the formal organization of the Society. I thought it would be useful here to provide some background on these organizational matters and to review where we stand in operations.

To get the Society started, we have filed Articles of Incorporation which firmly establish us as a non-profit organization registered in the District of Columbia. But it is the By-Laws that determine how we operate in terms of governance, membership, and election and succession of officers and a governing body, the Council. And it is the elections that will establish an on-going set of officers and a Council who will carry out the wishes of the members.

To make up the draft By-Laws, the Interim Council spent a great deal of time going over by-laws and constitutions for existing societies, in particular the American Meteorological Society, the American Geophysical Union, the Marine Technology Society, and the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography. We also had extensive discussions with our legal counsel. In the end, we decided to follow closely the governance arrangements of the American Meteorological Society, since that seemed to fit our needs well.

The model is not complex, but provides for straightforward operations, and has proved successful in fifty years of AMS operations. As we have developed it, there is a governing Council and officers, with rotating terms. An Executive Officer, a permanent position, is responsible for day-to-day operations of the Society. Because of the need for continuity, we also see that the Director of Publications can serve as a continuing position. The Council includes both the officers and representation from the membership. Because of the broad disciplinary range of our members, we have

opted to ensure that each discipline is represented in the Council membership by earmarking Council seats by discipline in the elections, as you will have seen from the nomination letter.

We have carefully looked at the requirements for membership and have included a full set of categories that encompass the full range of interests. We have tried to incorporate students as full participants in the Society activities. Finally, there are various provisions that allow for establishment of committees, the holding of meetings, and changes of personnel. We have tried to keep it simple, consistent with legal requirements.

Thus the By-Laws are now presented to you, the membership. We welcome your comments, because this is your Society. Please read the By-Laws carefully, and send your comments to me at the Society address. We will collate all comments and provide a final version to the membership for approval by the newly elected Council at the Inaugural Meeting in Monterey in August.

Elections are of equal importance to the By-Laws because they determine the people who will carry the responsibility of the Society for the next two or three years. I hope that you responded with a good slate of candidates to the letter sent by Neil Andersen and his Nominating Committee.

In the last issue, I indicated that the Society might be involved in a number of educational issues. I am pleased to report that the Interim Council has agreed to submit a proposal for federal interagency support for students' attendance at the Inaugural Meeting, for the meeting of the Oceanographic Deans to be held later this year, and for publication of the first of a series of career booklets. With the support from this proposal and with membership income, we hope to have sufficient support for an office director so that our operations can be as smooth as possible.

We have also been approached by the Adult Learning Service of Public Broadcasting Services (PBS). They would like to

be involved in a joint venture to provide videos for use by universities in both regular and short courses. Ocean science is a good topic for such videos, and it appears that the Society would be a logical vehicle for identifying people and topics for the programs. We plan to prepare a joint proposal with PBS to prepare these videos. Any thoughts on specific topics and enthusiastic and knowledgeable oceanographers to be featured in the videos would be welcomed.

In order for the Society to succeed, we need to have a broad membership. We are nearing a total of 2,000, but there are many more ocean scientists in the U.S. who have not joined. If you are pleased with this magazine and like what you hear of future plans, please ask your colleagues to join the Society. If you are not pleased with any aspect of our operations to date, please let us know, and we will try to improve. One area of potential membership is the international community. We plan, with the help of an incoming office director, to contact a broad list of international oceanographers. We have members in many countries already, and the support has been good. We hope to increase it. One way to do this is to set up national chapters of the Society in various countries. We are exploring how this might be done.

As you may recall, we announced a logo contest in the first issue of the magazine. To date, we have received 27 entries from 16 contributors. The Interim Council is now evaluating the entries, and hopes to announce a winner shortly. We thank all those who participated.

Finally, a word about personnel. As usual, we are strongly supported in our activities by volunteer efforts. The members of the Interim Council and the members of the meetings and program committee in particular have spent long hours making sure that all the details of the Society operations and planning for the Inaugural Meeting are being followed up. We gratefully acknowledge the continuing volunteer efforts of those who help in Washington, including Rebecca Grimes, Alison Burns, and Doris Rucker. Martha Cutosky, who also helped in the Washington office, has moved to a new position, and we thank her for her assistance. We have received valuable advice from the American Meteorological Society. All of these efforts make the Society work.

As I stated in the last issue, please come by and see us if you're in the neighborhood of our office on Massachusetts Avenue. □