

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By D. James Baker

AFTER RECOVERING from the successful but energy-draining meeting in Monterey, your Council and Meetings Committee have been active in planning the next Society activities. Just completed in March was a Congressional Forum co-sponsored by the Council on Ocean Affairs, a group that represents nearly fifty oceanographic institutions. The Forum provided those Society members who could attend with a first-hand discussion of the issues that the Congress is facing now. Members of the House and Senate and their staffs and representatives of the Agencies provided a realistic view of the tradeoffs and political issues involved with coming up with a federal spending plan that all can agree to. The process for fiscal year 1991 (beginning October 1990) began in January and will probably continue until the fall. The meeting was aimed at determining the most effective actions for the oceanographic community in helping to maintain a healthy science. After the Forum, the Society held its obligatory annual Business Meeting, which will be summarized in the next issue of the magazine.

The Meetings Committee and the Council deliberated at length on the site for the first regular scientific meeting to follow the Inaugural Meeting in Monterey. The criteria for the site were based largely on the format and style of the Inaugural meeting as well as results from answers to the questionnaire that were distributed at the meeting. After much discussion, exchange of teletext and several site visits, it was a clear consensus of the two groups that we should opt for St. Petersburg, Florida, in March 1991. The Oceanography Department of

the University of South Florida has agreed to be the local host. We think that the facilities and local environment will combine to produce that same sense of community that participants experienced in Monterey. We will be sending more information about the meeting to you in the coming months.

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Other items related to meetings: the Society was a co-sponsor of the AGU/ASLO meeting in New Orleans in February and had a booth there to provide information to interested oceanographers. Co-sponsorship of meetings was arranged for the Marine Technology Society meeting "MTS 90" in Washington, D.C., in September 1990; for the International Conference on the Role of the Polar Regions in Global Change to be held in Fairbanks, Alaska, in June 1990; and for the International Symposium on Assimilation of Meteorological and Oceanographical Observations to be

held in Clermont-Ferrand, France, in July 1990. Co-sponsorship allows attendance by Society members at the regular membership cost.

The Council is now debating the notion of publishing a monthly newsletter. Many have asked us if the Society could provide a timely way to distribute announcements and to provide a calendar of meetings and other events of interest. It appears that a newsletter of this type may well be feasible, and we will be looking at ways that this might be done over the next few months. We are currently planning to try it on electronic mail through Omnet as well as sending it in hard copy but would like some feedback on whether you think this is a good idea. Thoughts on content for such a newsletter would also be welcome.

For all of the reasons noted at the time the Society was founded, a membership that is fully international is our goal. Oceanography is global and international, and there are many ways in which the Society can serve the international community. This can be done either through cooperation with other ocean-related societies or through direct membership. We hope to do both and have been working to make our membership and publications as representative of the field as a whole as we can. A broad mailing of a recent issue of the magazine and membership application forms were sent to an international mailing list, and responses are beginning to come in.

We extend a special welcome to potential members outside the US. As above, your thoughts on how we can be effective in this way are welcome. □