

GeoBioChatter

Newsletter of the Geobiology & Geomicrobiology Division of the GSA

Volume 1, Issue 1

November 2008

Chair's Corner

Welcome to the first Division newsletter! I have the honour of serving our GSA Division as chair for the coming 2 years, and would like to thank you for your votes and support! I will do my best to fulfill your expectations as well as I can.

We have a lot of plans for the future, but let me first introduce our new team: Frank Corsetti, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, is our new Vice-Chair. James Schiffbauer, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, serves as Secretary, and Wenying Wu, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, as Treasurer. We can proudly present also a new web-master, Kurt Risser, JFC, and our first newsletter editor, Chris Rowan, University of Edinburgh.

However, we cannot run the division all by ourselves. We need the input from all members: that is, you! Volunteer contributions are one way that members can work to strengthen the society and to promote geobiology and geomicro-

biology. The membership report for the 2007 calendar year shows 335 members, 128 of whom are student members. So we are growing, and if everyone pitches in, we can only move forward. There are plenty of opportunities right away:

Firstly, volunteers are needed for the Nomination Committee. The members of this committee search for the next members of the management board (vice chair, secretary and treasurer). If you would like to volunteer, please drop me an e-mail (nnoffkeATodu.edu), so we can prepare the election.

Secondly, we are searching for a new division logo. Our hope is for a logo, designed preferentially by a student member, which is not only eye-catching, but most importantly encompasses the research themes of the division. Just send your ideas as attached jpg-files to me – the winning entry will receive a cash prize of \$75!

We also would like to introduce honorary memberships, in recognition of special services to the geobiological and

geomicrobiological society. These could include a free membership in our division, plus a commemorative plaque. Suggestions for honorary members will be accepted at any time - just send me a name and a rationale for why this person should receive this status.

In a similar vein, I would also like to call for volunteers for our Awards Committee. Task will be to decide on the best poster presented at the Annual GSA Meetings. We would need three people for this great job! Make sure though you will be in Portland 2009. Again, just drop me a note, and we can prepare the election.

Finally, in an effort to expand our impact, we are looking to exchange information and members with other organizations with overlapping and closely related interests, such as SEPM, IAS, ASM, and AGU's biogeosciences.

Harry Edenborn has already volunteered to represent us at the ASM, and our thanks go to him for his support! If any of our members out there reading this newsletter could serve as a liaison to any of the listed societies, or other relevant organizations, please let us know. We'd greatly appreciate your help!

Since promoting the GBGM division is the foremost priority of the new board, we would like to call upon all of you – the current members – to advertise for us! Please let your colleagues and students know about the division, about our goals, and about our new activities, and more importantly – encourage them to join if they aren't already members!

Here's to a good year for the division – and you'll be seeing our name at the 2009 Portland meeting.

– Nora Noffke

We need a logo!

Students, please send in your suggestions for a catchy logo that represents our disciplines very well!

75 \$ *are waiting for the winner!*

Submit by January 30th!!

The next issue of BioGeoChatter will be published in the first half of 2009. Contributions from members are encouraged and should be directed to the Editor, Chris Rowan, at c.j.rowan@gmail.com.

Call for volunteers for the Nomination Committee

If you would like to serve on this important committee, please send an e-mail to Nora (nnoffke@odu.edu) by **January 30th**.

Call for volunteers for our Award Committee

We would like to support our most talented members, so please volunteer for this committee! Drop a note to Nora by **January 30th**.

Our new Team:

Chair

Nora Noffke
Old Dominion University,
Norfolk
nnoffkeATodu.edu



Vice-Chair

Frank Corsetti
University of Southern
California, Los Angeles



Secretary

James Schiffbauer
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg



Treasurer

Wenyng Wu,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, DC



Webmaster

Kurt Risser JFC



Newsletter Editor

Chris Rowan
University of Edinburgh,
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GBGM Division Annual Business Meeting Report - GSA 2008 Annual Meeting, Houston

Ushering in a new year for the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division of the Geological Society of America, we held our annual business meeting on October 6th at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas, during the GSA Joint Meeting. Although the attendance of the division meeting was low (even with free food!), the attendees and new board members discussed plans that have set the bar high for the next year. On that note, the first call of business at the meeting was to introduce the newly elected board members.

As of the end of August, the treasurer's report shows a balance of nearly \$10,000, which is integral to our proposed expansion of activities and awards, as described in more detail throughout this business report and newsletter.

The brainstorming side of the meeting was highly productive. As a new board of officers, we have suggested a number of activities that should not only promote our name amongst GSA members, but also bring in more members to the division. We are planning to expand our presence at sectional meetings, hopefully sponsor both poster and themed topical sessions at next year's GSA meeting in Portland, Oregon, and possibly even put together a Pardee Keynote Symposium – so keep your ears and eyes open for announcements closer to the abstract submission deadline for the next meeting. And perhaps more importantly, we'd love to hear your ideas and input for sessions – refer to the call for submissions on page 6 of this newsletter for more details.

Speaking of the 2009 GSA Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon, since our finances look to be doing well, we have discussed the possibility of "best in show" awards for outstanding posters falling under the geobiology/geomicrobiology umbrella presented at the Portland meeting. The poster awards are proposed to be a good chunk of change – up to \$250 for first place and \$100 for second place, plus student memberships if the presenters are not current GBGM members! As these awards are still in the planning stages, stay tuned for more information from us nearer to the Portland meeting.

Jim Schiffbauer

For the latest news of your division's activities, go to
www.geosociety.org/sectdiv/gbgi/



Pieter Visscher a bit doubtful...

*Impressions
from our Division
Reception
GSA Houston
2008*



... a well deserved beer after a hard day's work!



The Big Dig.....



Those two guys just try to look serious

... and still scientific discussions!



GSA Technical Program 2009

Call for Proposals – Technical Sessions, Pardee Keynote Symposia, Short Courses, Field Trips

GSA 2009 Annual Meeting – Portland, Oregon, 18-21 October

Submit your proposals online. Proposal forms for Pardee symposia and technical sessions are available at <http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/2009/>. The deadline for Pardee symposia and technical session proposals is **Tuesday, 6 January 2009**.

GSA staff contact for guidelines on submitting a Short Course Proposal is Jennifer Nocerino (jnocerino@geosociety.org or +1-303-357-1036). Also see www.geosociety.org/meetings/2009/scProposals/. The deadline for short course proposals is **Tuesday, 2 December 2008**.

GSA staff contact for Field Trip Proposals is Eric Nocerino (enocerino@geosociety.org or +1-303-357-1060). The field trip proposal form is online at <http://gsa.confex.com/gsa/2009AM/fieldtrip.htm>. The deadline for field trip proposals is **Tuesday, 2 December 2008**.

To avoid any overlapping sessions, please contact Stuart Birnbaum sbirnbaum@utsa.edu before you submit.

In sad news, two division members have passed since last year's meeting:

Ludwig J. Frank, II of Auburn, WA, on April 8th, 2008

Malcolm C. McKenna of Boulder, CO, on March 3rd, 2008.