

AESE 2007 Annual Meeting: “Global Perspectives” in Calgary

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The Association of Earth Science Editors (AESE) met in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, on 4-7 September. The theme of the meeting was “Global Perspectives”. AESE President Fred Spilhaus opened the meeting by reminiscing about the changes in the organization since its founding in 1968. He noted that the big topic at the first meeting was copyright, a topic that editors are still struggling with, but in the intervening years there has been a revolution in how we communicate science.

After an icebreaker on Tuesday evening, Technical Session I, “Dual Grounding: Working in Two Languages”, began on Wednesday, 5 September. It was chaired by Thomas Overton, of the Geological Institute of America, who delivered the session’s first talk, “Dealing with the Second-Language Author”. He recommended providing clear and consistently enforced author guidelines; restructuring the review process so that the science is evaluated first, to determine whether it is worthwhile to make the manuscript comprehensible; encouraging authors to collaborate with native English-speakers; and, as a last resort, asking authors to write in their native language and then having the manuscripts professionally translated. Hellen Martinez, of ETS Translation Solutions, said that translators of earth-science texts should be able to process information and convert the concepts, not simply the words. Common mistakes are being too literal and borrowing English words when translating materials into other languages. Friesens Corp’s Jim Beckel offered a method for “Saving Printing Costs on Multilanguage Color Books”. He recommended setting up the digital files so that

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the color illustrations are on one layer and the variable black text on the other.

Technical Session II, “Across the Miles: Public Outreach”, was chaired by Karen MacFarlane, of the Northwest Territories Geoscience Office. Claudette Cloutier encouraged editors to make the most of libraries, such as her own Gallagher Library of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Calgary, by examining the different roles of libraries, libraries’ services and expertise, and the collections (public and hidden) that can be of assistance. William Underwood, of the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG), gave an overview of the SEG Geoscience Center. The center, at SEG headquarters in Tulsa, Oklahoma, educates students, teachers, and their families about the geosciences and their applications in petroleum exploration, mining, and the environment. Susan Henley, also of SEG, was coauthor.

Several speakers discussed earth-science outreach in scouting programs. Gary Robinson, of Prism Seismic, described the three geology recognitions offered by the Boy Scouts of America: the Cub Scout geology academic belt loop and pin, the Webelos geologist pin, and the Boy Scout geology merit badge. Robinson also made a presentation for Clare Marshall, of Dinosaur Ridge in Morrison, Colorado, about the opportunity for outreach in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program of the Girl Scouts of the USA. Monica Easton, of the Ontario Geological Survey, made a presentation for Brian Berdusco, of the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, on how the Crown Land Automated Internet Mapping System (CLAIMaps) has been used by Scouts Canada for a specialty badge in digital prospecting. Easton also made a presentation for Deborah Stephenson, of 1st Val Caron Brownies, on “Geology and the Girl Guides of Canada”.

Godfrey Nowlan, of the Geological

Survey of Canada (GSC), outlined the progress of *Four Billion Years and Counting: Canada’s Geological Heritage*, a multi-author publication that will be one of Canada’s primary contributions to the International Year of Planet Earth. Underwood spoke again, this time on “Geoscience Education at Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics [OSSM]: A Pioneering Program”. He has recently embarked on a new career, teaching exploration geosciences as the Chesapeake Energy chair in geosciences at OSSM. Nowlan also gave a second talk, specifically about the International Year of Planet Earth. Rick Green discussed the activities of the Canmore Museum and Geoscience Centre on behalf of his coauthors, Ian Schofield, Lindsay Walker, Gerry Ward, Mary-Beth Laviolette, Edward van Vliet, Dale Simpson, Chas Yonge, Jim Ridley, and Scott MacPherson. The center’s mission is to preserve the rich coal-mining and railroad history of the Canmore, Alberta, area. Session II came to an end with Karen MacFarlane delivering a presentation for Geoffrey Camphire, of the American Geological Institute, on AGI’s Earth Science Week.

Technical Session III, chaired by Carole Ziegler, of Southwestern College in Chula Vista, California, and the San Diego Association of Geologists (SDAG), was called “Earth Editing: Producing Guidebooks and Publications for the Earth Science Enthusiast”. Ziegler discussed the trials and tribulations of publishing the field guide for the San Diego Association of Geologists’ yearly field trip. Her coauthor was Philip Farquharson, also of Southwestern College and SDAG. Lowell Lindsay, of Sunbelt Publications, presented *Fossil Treasures of the Anza-Borrego Desert: A Case Study in Partnership Publishing*. The award-winning book was the result of a partnership between California State Parks, the Anza-Borrego Foundation and

Institute, and Sunbelt Publications. Ziegler then went over lessons learned from publishing her guidebook, and Lindsay handed out a summary of budgeting issues regarding *Fossil Treasures*.

Wednesday's activities came to a close with "Worldwide Outlook: International Union of Geological Sciences [IUGS]", Technical Session IV, chaired by the ubiquitous Godfrey Nowlan. Nowlan delivered the first talk of the session, an overview of IUGS's activities and publications. Susana Damborenea, of the Museo de Ciencias Naturales in La Plata, Argentina, discussed the challenges of journal publishing in South America. She said that much South American science is effectively lost because local journals are usually regarded as obscure, having difficult access and low visibility. Tim Partridge, of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, said the situation is similar in Africa. Many African earth scientists elect to publish in highly ranked international journals, but these vehicles remain inaccessible to a large number of local scientists, who are unable to meet their demanding editorial requirements.

Thursday began with Technical Session V, "Core Samples: Scientists Writing, Reviewing, and Editing Geoscience Publications". Session Chair Diane Lane, a freelance technical editor, explained that scientists sometimes inadvertently become writers through the necessity of preparing textbooks for classes they are teaching or by involvement in their jobs or in professional societies. Laurence Lines, of the University of Calgary, and Rachel Newrick, of Nexen Inc, described the development of *Fundamentals of Geophysical Interpretation*, the textbook for a one-semester senior undergraduate course in geophysics. Published by the Society of Exploration Geophysicists, the textbook was a response to the demand for an affordable single textbook to replace multiple expensive textbooks and supplementary photocopied notes. Satinder Chopra, of Arcis Corp, told the story of his development as a writer in "My Forays into Technical Writing".

Technical Session VI, "Around the World: Use of Offshore Vendors", was chaired by Michael Phillippe, of Aries Systems Corp. Jon Olsen, of the Geological Society of America (GSA), explained that GSA once outsourced all production-related tasks for its journals and books, but improvements in desktop-publishing software have allowed it to move much production in house. Besides financial benefits, staff productivity has improved, production time has been reduced, and it is now able to post articles online 4 to 6 months before they are printed. Judy Holoziak, of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), described the reverse scenario. AGU chose an offshore vendor for composition services and discovered unexpected benefits. It allowed AGU to focus on its core competences and extended its working day because of the difference in time zones. Guy Dresser, of Allen Press, represented the middle ground in this debate. Allen Press outsources some of its publications but retains local control over its flagship publications.

Lane also chaired Technical Session VII, "Down to Earth: Cutting Costs in Production and Printing". Michael Phillippe, Mark McCombs (of The Covington Group), Linda Guay (of GSC), and Meg Smath (of the Kentucky Geological Survey) made up a panel representing both the public and private sectors and shared what they had learned about controlling production and printing costs.

Easton was back to chair Technical Session VIII, "Nuances of Nomenclature: Stratigraphic Lexicons". She delivered an introduction to stratigraphic lexicons, collections of geoscience language related to classification and naming of stratigraphic and other units. Peter Davenport, of GSC, described "WEBLEX: An Online Lexicon of Published Geologic Names for Canada" on behalf of his GSC coauthors, HP Tzeng, GKC Lai, and DW Leopard. GSC decided on an online lexicon because of the difficulty of updating a hard-copy publication. A Web interface allows contributors to submit entries online. That model

allows GSC to assemble information, organize it, provide access, and maintain the database. Easton then discussed the Ontario Geological Survey's participation in WEBLEX in "Planning a Stratigraphic Lexicon for Ontario". Because there is no complete lexicon of stratigraphic names for Ontario and because some of its most senior scientists are approaching retirement age, the time was right to consider such a project. The project has received preliminary approval and will require establishing a provincial stratigraphic review committee.

Easton also chaired Technical Session IX, "Charging Ahead: Innovations in Publishing". She asked the audience whether they remembered when we merely printed journals and books on paper, and she noted that recent advances in computer technology have revolutionized publishing, allowing XML tagging and publication online in advance of or in place of print publication. Glenda de Luna and Elisa Kapitan-White, of Schlumberger, described Schlumberger's decision to publish first on the Web and second in print. That required development of a Web editorial style guide. Larry Bowlds discussed "The Early Release on the Internet of Accepted Manuscripts at *Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research*". It was part of a long-term strategy to increase dissemination of published research. Jonathan Sears, of AGU, gave an overview of how AGU has "biblioenabled" its online repository through application of a consistent XML article structure containing tagged elements or fields that identify key components of an article. It facilitates storage and linking of elements in a relational metadata database and allows such by-products as automatically generated tables of contents and indexes, reference-checking and linking to full-text articles, daily publishing, and a streamlined workflow. The final talk of the meeting was delivered by Easton, "For Discussion: The Open Peer-Review Trial at *Nature: A Bystander's Overview*". The traditional peer-review process was compared with posting of manuscripts on the *Nature* Web site for

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comment by the scientific community at large. After a 3-month evaluation period, *Nature* decided not to continue with open peer review, because it did not ultimately affect the acceptance-rejection decision.

Incoming AESE Vice President Tom Overton summed up the meeting and offered some thoughts on looking ahead. Other meeting activities were the annual business meeting and luncheon on Thursday and the awards banquet on Thursday evening. Andrew Neuman, the acting director of the Royal Tyrrell

Museum, was guest speaker at the banquet and provided a sneak preview of our field trip to the museum on Friday. The field trip included a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum and dinner at the Canmore Opera House in Calgary's Heritage Park.

The 2008 meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Institute of Professional Geologists in Flagstaff, Arizona, on 20-25 September. Visit www.aese.org to learn more about the organization. 