



the Alembic

Chair's Corner

As **National Chemistry Week** (Nov 1-7) approaches we are all dusting off and sprucing up our chemistry demonstrations, eagerly anticipating the opportunity to display some of the nearly magical changes we call chemical. I hope you have planned at least one effort for that time slot. If not, please call me or Iona Lin to volunteer. She has reminded me that I goofed on her Email address and phone on p.1 of the October newsletter; it should be illi@ltus.com (for Lignotech U.S.) and her office phone number should be 355-3672.

Marv Lang has arranged the next meeting on November 6 at UW-SP. He and Don Showalter will be presenting their **FAMOUS DEMO SHOW**, which has been such a hit both here and abroad. There will be no organized dinner for this meeting, but naturally we'll also be busy that day and evening getting our own chemicals together for Saturday's expositions.

For December's program I am hoping to have a plant tour. If there is a good one that you would

like, please let me know. We will also be planning to have the ballot for 1999 officers and Lang's report on the Boston ACS meeting in the December Alembic. Chair-Elect Gary McCauley has recently been finalizing choices for 1999 tour speakers, and we may also get a preview in the newsletter of what goodies he has planned.

We had a most enjoyable dinner and program at Wausau Insurance earlier this month (October). There was a tremendous selection of desserts too! Many thanks to Jim Waelchli for making arrangements! Attila Pavlath was there with his wife, and gave the program. He is a longtime acquaintance of Marv Lang who champions the Local Sections of ACS and does all he can to encourage them. A highlighted remark in our last Alembic urged all former officers of our Section to attend the program.

(continued on page 3)

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American Chemical Society

Central Wisconsin Section



"NATIONAL CHEMISTRY WEEK: Demonstrations With A Theme"

PRESENTERS: C. Marvin Lang, Donald L. Showalter & Gary J. Shulfer
Department of Chemistry
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

*** * * ABSTRACT * * ***

November 1-7, 1998 has been designated "National Chemistry Week" by the American Chemical Society and its 185 local sections scattered around the USA. 1998 marks the 11th Anniversary of "Celebrate of Chemistry" conducted by academia, industry, government, and allied fields recognizing their significant contributions to the American-way of life. As part of the Central Wisconsin Section's celebration, a chemical demonstration program will be conducted at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point by Section members Marv Lang, Don Showalter and Gary Shulfer. They will present a series of chemical demonstrations that are fun to watch, but are not merely entertainment. The purpose of their presentation is to show that a dramatic demonstration makes the observer pay closer attention and graphically illustrates an otherwise abstract theory. The observer can more easily remember the theory after he/she has seen it explicitly performed. In this way, Lang, Showalter and Shulfer will show that you can learn a lot of chemistry and have fun at the same time. Perhaps, in some small way the "fear factor" associated with chemistry will be diminished.

This presentation will be suitable to all age groups, from 7 to 70 and will be open to the public-at-large. The only requirement for attendance is that you have an inquiring mind and like to have fun. So, bring the kids, grandkids, bring even the grandparents and spend an evening celebrating chemistry.

*** * * BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION * * ***

Marv Lang, Don Showalter and Gary Shulfer have presented demonstration programs and conducted science workshops across the country and literally around the world; from Hawaii to Florida, from Connecticut to California, in England and Finland. Last March six days were spent at Walt Disney World's EPCOT Center doing multiple programs on a daily basis as part of "Science Jam 98". Marv and Don are Professors of Chemistry at UWSP; Gary is an Academic Staff Instructional Specialist at UWSP. Together, they have nearly 75 years collegiate teaching experience.

*** * * LOGISTICS * * ***

What: "NATIONAL CHEMISTRY WEEK: Demonstrations With A Theme"

When: Friday Evening, November 6, 1997; 7:00 pm

Where: D-101 Science Building; UWSP Campus; Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Why: To celebrate the chemical sciences



Letter from the Editor

Hello Chemists,

I hope everyone enjoyed a festive Mole Day from 6:02 AM to 6:02 PM on 10/23 and will be pondering activities for National Chemistry Week.

From my "random information and musings" department, I have to comment that recently I was fortunate to learn a lot about the paper industry (and industry in general) from a couple of sources, and maybe some of you are interested in this information.

The first was a seminar I attended at UWSP by Dr. Donald Dimmel of the Institute of Paper Science and Technology in Atlanta (formerly in Appleton?). Perhaps some of you knew Don when he lived in the area? Anyway, the talk was on the "Evolution of Odorless Pulping" which described research he is conducting on the inclusion of anthraquinones in the kraft process. I learned about the chemistry involved in getting the *primary stuff* needed to make paper - the cellulose. What I found interesting was the mechanistic role that these quinones played in increasing cellulose yield and increasing the rate of lignin breakdown, and the similarity to the redox functioning of riboflavin and ubiquinones in biochemistry.

The second source has to do with the *other stuff* generated in the pulping process. Jim Adams trusted me with his personal copy of a book he just wrote for Norway on the topic of the history of the lignin industry in Rothschild - from the inception of the Marathon Paper Company to the present. It is an engaging account of the people, economics, chemistry and products related to the *other stuff*. I would never have thought that a seemingly intractable by-product and potential pollutant could be utilized in a myriad of products such as vanilla flavoring, cements, dyes, drilling muds, and animal feed! Thanks Jim.

As always, to keep up with the information and events in the Central Wisconsin Section, check out the Web page or attend a monthly meeting. Also, please send me your own opinions, musings and information.

Tom

CHAIR (cont. from page 1)

It turned out that this was so that Attila could present them with framed personalized citations expressing appreciation for their past efforts for the Section, which he did with elan at the conclusion of his talk. His talk on organic fluorine chemistry was interesting too. He mentioned that most of the known reactions for halogenating organic molecules do not work with fluorine, and some specialized reactions that do work were mentioned. His development of glow discharge techniques for fluorinating the surfaces of organic polymers was presented; unfortunately this work has not yet been utilized commercially yet. Maybe in the future!

There was an unusual "invocation" at the beginning of our awards banquet last Spring, which some of you may remember. It was an anonymous "psalm" that I'd borrowed from Judy Q's bulletin board in the Chemistry Department at UW-EC. I am now making it available to editor Tom Zamis, for this or a future issue of the Alembic. Enjoy.

At the end of my last column I left you with a query relevant to the month's program: what musician synthesized the first organic fluorine compound? The answer is the great Russian organic chemist and composer, Borodin. Now, what was the compound Borodin made, and what reaction did he use to synthesize it?

Bob



ACS-CWS Web Page



<http://chemdept.uwsp.edu/acscws/>

or you can link there from the American Chemical Society home page - Local Sections. Contains the most up-to-date information about section activities. Maps of all of the usual places where monthly meetings are held are there.

There is a link on our Web page for the Alembic. It is listed there in pdf (portable document format). These can be opened and read by a utility called Adobe Acrobat Reader that is freeware, and can be installed as a plug-in to your web browser.

Psalm Of The Lab

The lab is my jeopardy,
I cannot breathe.
It maketh me to lie down with nausea.
It eateth my clothes with strong acid.
It destroyeth my soles.
It leadeth me in the paths of science for its own sake.
Yea, though I walk thru the welter and stinks and smells,
I will fear no chemical.
For it is with me.
It provideth a bench for me in the presence of phosgene.
It loadth my day with toil.
My beaker runneth over.
Surely bad tastes and odors shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I shall "smell" in the house of science forever.

The American Chemical Society Announces A Call For Nominations For The 1999 Regional Awards In High School Chemistry Teaching

A nominee must be actively engaged in the teaching of chemistry in a high school (grades 9 through 12). Nominations can be made by any individual, except a member of the award committee or a currently enrolled student of the nominee. Local sections of the Society may nominate the recipients of section awards for high school teaching as well. Nominations due December 1, 1998.

For more information and an application form, please contact Cheryl Brown at c_brown@acs.org or the American Chemical Society, 1155 Sixteenth St. NW; Washington, DC 20036 800/227-5558 ext. 6022

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