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Société canadienne de chimie



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Chemical Education Division

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Chemical Education Division, 91st. Conference of the Canadian Chemistry Society, Edmonton, AB, Monday May 26th, 2008.

Present: Noel George (chair), Anne Johnson (secretary), Kathy Darvesh (past-chair), Pippa Lock (member-at-large), François Gauvin (CCC National Coordinator), Margaret-Ann Armour, Maggie Austen, Sharon Brewer, Robert Burk, Catherine Filteau, Jean-Marc Gauthier, Morton Hoffman, Glen Loppnow, Peter Mahaffy, Marlene Olsavsky, Brian Rempel, Frances Sutherland

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was presented.

2. Minutes of the meeting of Monday, May 28, 2007

Motion to approve the minutes: F. Gauvin; seconded by K. Darvesh.

There were no comments or corrections.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Report on the CED Program for the CSC 2008 Meeting (Edmonton) – P. Mahaffy & F. Sutherland on behalf of G Loppnow.

Glen Loppnow and Peter Mahaffy contacted Frances Sutherland as coordinator of C3 to work closely together to make a seamless transition between the two conferences. This year we have tried a different format (soapbox) for some of the CED symposia. The Harris workshop (at U of A; by invitation only) went well. The cooperation between CED and the C3 organizers was profitable this year and this good relationship should be continued for future conferences.

K. Darvesh inquired how CED finds out who the winners of the UG poster competitions are so that the awards can be delivered appropriately on Wednesday morning. N. George replied that he and G. Loppnow would be meeting after the judging of the posters to determine who the winners are.

4. Report on the CED Program for the CSC 2009 Meeting (Hamilton) – P. Lock

P. Lock presented a list of proposed symposia for the meeting next year. The symposia organizers so far have been selected from people who made suggestions, but there is still a need for additional organizers.

M. Austen mentioned that at York University there is a push towards expression of learning objectives. Ontario (and other interested) chemical educators could work together to establish uniform and consistent learning objectives instead of working in isolation.

K. Darvesh expressed an appreciation for the lack of overlap in CED sessions this year. This may be the reason for a more engaged audience this year.

5. Reg Friesen Award – N. George

There are two awards available. First place is \$750; second place is \$350. This year there are two students eligible for these awards. It is typically difficult to get students to give oral presentations and to self-identify (so they can be considered). Lack of student participation in the Chem Ed symposia could be related to a lack of awareness of the diverse array of topics that would qualify as Chem Ed.

6. Report of the Treasurer – N. George on behalf of K. Kawulka

Our finances are in good shape. There is some confusion regarding what the conference will pay for and what the CE division pays for with respect to the cheques that are given as awards for the undergraduate student poster competitions. This is being sorted out with assistance from CIC head office.

We have decided that in addition to a cheque, we should hand out certificates and/or letters for student award winners. This will begin this year and continued in the future. Most divisions have two awards; however, Inorganic has four because of an additional donor.

We are on track to deliver the Reg Friesen Awards at the Awards Ceremony on Wednesday morning.

Our major activity this year was transferring the Chem Ed division banking from TD Canada Trust to the Bank of Nova Scotia. The transfer involved an incredible amount of paperwork.

D. Ford stepped down last year and has been helping K. Kawulka get started and has explained a lot to the executive members. The Chem Ed are really quite a collegial bunch of people.

7. Report of the Nominating Committee – K. Darvesh

The following slate was presented for 2007-2008:

Past Chair	Kathy Darvesh (continuing)
Chair:	Noel George (continuing)
Vice Chair	Dietmar Kennepohl (continuing)
Secretary	Glen Loppnow
Treasurer	Karen Kawulka (continuing)
Member at large	Pippa Lock (continuing)
Member at large	Cecilia Kutas (continuing)

Most positions are two-year terms. The treasurer position is a long-term position because of the steep learning curve and specialized knowledge. Anne Johnson is stepping down as secretary; G. Loppnow will replace her at next year's meeting. A round of applause was given to A. Johnson for a good job taking the minutes.

The Women's dinner is tomorrow evening. We are at room capacity (34). Margaret-Ann Armour has coordinated the venue for this dinner.

8. Report of the CSC Education and Student Affairs Director – N. George for G. Greidanus-Strom, A. Campbell & G. Thirlwall

Noel thanked the organizers for their exceptional job with this year's CED symposia.

This year's awards:

CIC Award for Chemical Education: Geoffrey Rayner-Canham

Clara Benson Award: Cornelia Bohne

CCUCC Doctoral Award: Vivian Yip

The CIC representatives from head office attended three of the four regional undergraduate conferences. It is very difficult for us to give the Chem Ed awards at these conferences because very few, if any, students give presentations on Chem Ed work. We have increased the value of the awards to \$500 to try to lure more students. There are promotion issues at play here: supervisors need to be made aware that students not doing fourth year research projects could be involved in these conferences in other ways, including Chem Ed. Conference announcements come late, and often do not mention the availability of Chem Ed awards. The student organizers are normally involved for short periods of time (no continuity from one year to the next) and therefore there is little communication between successive organizing committees.

9. Report of the Coordinator of the Canadian Chemistry Contest – F. Gauvin

This is a preliminary report; all the data has not been analyzed yet. This has been a transition year for François (his first year as Coordinator), and therefore he is learning on the job. In addition he experienced difficulties due to his role as temporary regional coordinator for Manitoba and the Atlantic Region as well as his new duties at the University of Manitoba.

The participation rate was lower this year than in the previous year. There were several factors that may have contributed to the lower participation rate, including the death of the Atlantic Regional Coordinator.

The national average was increased, at 12.22/25. Less than 3000 schools were notified of the contest, about 137 participated. This is approximately a 4% participation rate. François will be looking into why this rate is low. The average number of students participating is about five per school. This is appropriate; however, some schools do not have any students in the contest, while for others the entire class participates. The contest is not meant to be a class exercise. The data for participation and scores on the contest are shown in the table below.

Region	Schools Notified	Schools Participating (% of notified)	Students Participating (avg per school)	Average Score on Part A (/25)
BC/YK	428	17 (4%)	116 (7)	14.9
AB/NWT	280	9 (3%)	84 (9)	15.45
MB/SK	678	14 (2%)	95 (7)	10.9
ON	960	39 (4%)	143 (4)	13.25
QC	660	37 (6%)	150 (4)	10.13
Atlantic	150	21 (14%)	117 (6)	8.7
Canada-Wide	3156	137 (4.3%)	705 (5)	12.22

F. Gauvin is working towards setting up an on-line registration system for teachers. This could have additional benefits in terms of gathering statistics on who is participating, how many students are participating, where they are from, and how they do. In addition, the on-line registration and distribution of materials should be less expensive and more efficient than the mail. Often mail and email is not getting through to the teachers, especially if they have left their previous school. Increased communication and coaching may help to increase participation rates.

We need to celebrate the winners. At the moment there is very little public announcement of who these are. The local newspapers could be contacted by the CSC to make these announcements. This will be good for the students, their teachers, their schools, and for the CSC (publicity).

Leslie Barton continued to help with the CCC as National Examiner. Eventually she will want to step down and a new National Examiner will be needed.

P. Lock mentioned that in Ontario the CCC this year coincided with Earth Day activities, which would have lowered the participation rates. Overlap with other events and activities must be avoided.

K. Darvesh stated that she is convinced that this is a very important exam; it is a feeder for the Canadian Chemistry Olympiad selection process, and in addition, it is a way that we as chemists can let the provincial Ministries of Education know what we think is important for students to learn in high school chemistry.

F. Gauvin replied that we should be more proactive on the issues of what is taught in high school chemistry. If the Ministries are not coming to us, we should go to them.

Report of the Chair – N. George

There was not much to report. This was his first year (of a two year term) as Chair of CED. He received much advice from K. Darvesh, G. Thirlwall and D. Ford (past-treasurer).

The treasurer position is different from the others in that there is a very steep learning curve. D. Ford was very helpful to him (N. George) and to the new treasurer (K. Kawulka) in explaining how the finances are set up.

Mostly the CED chair acts as a liaison. During the year, it is very quiet, but as the conference approaches, the position becomes quite busy. As Chair, he sat on a number of awards committees, including the selection for the Alfred Bader Scholarship (excellence in an organic chemistry or biochemistry undergraduate thesis project), and the CSC Chemical Education Award. Geoff Rayner-Canham was selected as the recipient of the CIC Chemical Education Award this year; his was a very impressive dossier.

The chair communicates with the executive via email, and trains the vice-chair to prepare him for becoming chair. Our current vice-chair, Dietmar Kennepohl, is on sabbatical in Germany.

10. Report of the Vice-Chair – N. George for D. Kennepohl

Dietmar is still on sabbatical in Germany. The only real task of the vice-chair is to read email and keep the web site current. D. Kennepohl will be visiting a colleague who is involved in the Chemical Education Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry in the UK. We have asked him to go on a fact-finding mission regarding administration

of the UK Chemistry Olympiad so that we can compare how the RSC supports their Olympiad candidates, and how the Olympiad is related to the RSC.

11. Items for Information – N. George

a. Upcoming Conferences

The CSC will be held in Hamilton in 2009, Toronto in 2010, and Montreal in 2011. Other upcoming conferences include 2008 BCCE (Indiana University, July 2008), 20th ICCE (Mauritius, August 2008). The 2010 ICCE will be in Taiwan.

b. CED Related Awards at the 2008 conference

- i) CIC Award for Chemical Education: Geoffrey Rayner-Canham
- ii) Clara Benson Award: Cornelia Bohne
- iii) CED Student Travel Award: Leanne Tran
- iv) Reg Friesen Awards: TBD (2 students are eligible at this conference)

12. Other Business

There were no new items of business.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Johnson
Secretary