

# KAS BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER OF THE KANSAS ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

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Vol. 29 No 2

October, 2004

## 137<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL KAS MEETING

Plans are underway for the 2005 meeting to be held at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas. The two day meeting is to take place on Friday and Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> which is a bit earlier than usual. Therefore, **abstract submittals will be needed not later than 1 February 2005. Check the KAS website for submission criteria and instructions.**

Potential student presenters need to be made aware that now is the time to start planning. Details will follow. **Early registration and luncheon/banquet reservations must be made no later than 4 March 2005. Luncheon and banquet tickets WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE at the door or at late registration.** Keep your eye on the KAS Web Page for up-to-date information about the meeting. The coordinator, Dr. Johanna Foster at JCCC will be appreciative of any help she can get to orchestrate this annual event. She may be contacted at <jfoster@jccc.net>.

### ***KAS FALL FIELD TRIP***

The annual Fall Field Trip was held in the area of Galena, Kansas on Saturday, 18 September 2004. A visit to the Mining Museum in Galena was followed by lunch at Schermerhorn Park. Following lunch was a tour of the Southeast Kansas Nature Center and vicinity. Like all KAS field trips, this was a carefully thought out and very well organized trip designed to delight and enhance ones appreciation and understanding of the natural history of Kansas and Jim Triplett deserves kudos for his effort. Alas, like so many such events, the trip was attended by about a half dozen members

including the organizers. Most KAS trips seem to attract little attendance. The efforts put into organizing such trips all too often seem to exceed the benefit received by small, limited audiences.

The officers would appreciate your input on this subject. What do you think about continuing the field trip program? Should they just be dropped from KAS activities except for those held in parallel with the annual meeting? E-Mail addresses are on the letterhead.

### **DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS PROGRAM**

Like the field trips, the KAS Distinguished Speakers Program has been virtually unused. This program of pro bono presentations by outstanding Kansas scientists who are recognized in their fields has existed for several years. Since very minimal usage has been made of the volunteer speakers, the KAS Council discussed the program and without voting, reached a consensus to discontinue the program. A substitute program of speakers to be posted on the Academy's website is being considered.

### **STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT DEADLINE EXTENDED**

If you received the mailed notice concerning the September field trip, you also received an announcement of the new KAS Student Research Grants which is repeated in this issue of the Bulletin. (See enclosed page.) Please note however, that the Council has extended the submission deadline by 30 days to 1 December 2004. Note also the fourth paragraph of the instructions. One of the required faculty letters accompanying the application must be from a KAS member. (It's not too late to join.)

**FATHER EUGENE DEHNER, O.S.B.,  
1914 – 2004 .**

KAS has learned that Reverend Eugene W. Dehner, O.S.B. died on September 7, 2004, at age 90. Father Dehner who established funding for the Dehner Award for the best student paper at KAS annual meetings was Professor Emeritus in biology at Benedictine College in Atchison. He was named Educator of the Year at Benedictine in 1983 and was secretary of the Kansas Ornithological Society, 1949-1954. Father Dehner earned his bachelor's degree in biology at St. Benedict's College and a master's and doctorate in biology at Cornell University, New York. He became a monk at St. Benedict's Abbey in 1935 and after theological studies there, was ordained a priest in 1940. He began his 38-year teaching career at Benedictine in 1946. He became a Kansas Academy of Science member in 1974.

**4-H-** Probably a good number of KAS members participated in 4-H activities during their youth. However, it surprises me that many people are unaware of the scientific activities offered by Kansas 4-H program. Specifically: geology, entomology, rocketry and electricity/electronics programs are offered for youth. Their efforts are displayed at annual county fairs and the Kansas State Fair both of which offer the traditional ribbon awards recognizing superior displays. The kids who make these projects are future scientists and perhaps even your replacement. This Bulletin editor knows at least three persons who went on and majored in geology after being introduced to it around age 10 in 4-H: One now a PhD geophysicist, one an MS candidate and one a new undergraduate at a Kansas universities. I have no idea of the numbers of biologists/entomologists or engineers whose fancy in their field is owed to 4-H but it must be substantial. If you are interested in helping with these 4-H programs, contact your local county agricultural agent and make your desire known. He or she will be delighted and you might even learn something new.

**KJAS-** Laura Ingram, a student at Shawnee Mission West High School was awarded top honors at the Kansas Junior Academy Meeting in May, 2003 and subsequently attended the national Junior Academy of Science meeting in Seattle. Her experience is related in the following report by Amy Strong, Kansas Junior Academy of Science Director and Kristopher Chapman, WSU student.

***GREAT PLAINS RESEARCH***

The *Bulletin* editor recently received a note from Robert Diffendal, editor of *Great Plains Research* and thought that KAS members may be interested. He states, "I have recently been named editor of *Great Plains Research*, a biannual, multidisciplinary, international journal of science published by the University of Nebraska Center for Great Plains Studies (CGPS). *Great Plains Research* publishes original research studies in the physical, biological and social science and in the history of science focused on the Great Plains area. All articles accepted for publication are peer reviewed. At this time, page charges are completely subsidized by the CPGS. Information on manuscript preparation and submittal can be found on our web site, <http://www.unl.edu/plains>.

Mr. Diffendal notes that he is aware of other journals of like nature [e.g. *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science*] but that other journals may not have the capacity to print every paper worthy of publication. In such an event, KAS members and their students should be aware of this alternate outlet. (Your Bulletin editor however suggests that *KAS Transactions* be considered first.)

TRANSACTIONS ON CD? Would you like to own a set of *KAS Transactions* complete from Volume 1 (1872)? If you've not read some of the early volumes, you're in for a surprise. First person reports by truly pioneer scientists and explorers.

This is possible if all issues were to be scanned to disk – a topic discussed by the Council for some time now. Cost of scanning is a problem to be dealt with but which

probably can be solved. A potentially bigger problem though may be finding a set of *Transactions* that can be disassembled for scanning. Do any of you readers have or know of a set or parts there of to donate for such a worthy cause? Contact us if so.

### **HERE WE GO AGAIN!**

Like the mythical hydra, the teaching of evolution in the schools has again raised its head. Just a few years past, KAS and many of the state's universities were involved in combating the opposition to teaching evolution in school science classes. This battle has been fought since Darwin introduced the concept and the opposition itself has evolved to cleverer arguments and more educated proponents to support its beliefs. KAS members are urged to become involved in local school board discussions, textbook selection committees and debates. If the battle between evolution and creationism is lost, perhaps we can expect alchemy, astrology and phrenology to again become popular majors in our academic system.

### **ELECTION TIME**

Does time really go as fast as it seems? It not only is time to elect national politicians to office but also time to elect KAS officers and council members. The big difference is there seems to be no shortage of people who want national and state political positions. Maybe money and power have something to do with it? The perks that accompany KAS office however only are title and the prestige of helping to steer one of the oldest scientific research organizations in the United States. A slate of nominees (except for vice-president) has been gathered and ballots will soon be in your hands. If you wish to be a candidate, make your desire known to James Taylor or Larry Skelton and get on the ballot. When you receive your ballot, complete it and return it!