

- A DEG grant program has been established that will allow affiliated societies to apply for reimbursement of costs up to \$300 that are incurred when the environmental speaker from the slate of the AAPG Distinguished Lecture Program is invited to speak to a local society.
- In the spirit of advancing "rational science for rational policy," DEG is sponsoring a conference to be held in Taos, New Mexico, in October 1998. The title of the conference is "Meeting Society's Resource and Environmental Requirements for the 21st Century."
- A DEG conference is proposed for the fall of 1999 on Coastal Wetlands and the Petroleum Industry. Shea Penland, DEG member at the University of New Orleans, is the Conference Chair.
- DEG has committed to encourage more research into geologic aspects of climate change science. A technical session on the geologic time/temperature record with invited papers is proposed for the 1999 Annual Meeting to be held in San Antonio, Texas, and a possible Hedberg Conference in 2000 is in the early stages of planning.
- The division has strengthened its involvement in AAPG committees that directly benefit the DEG mission. In 1997-1998, DEG liaisons were named to the AAPG Grants-in-Aid Committee and the AAPG in the 21st Century Committee. This proactive involvement in the Grants-in-Aid Committee led to an increase in graduate student funding of environmental research. The AAPG in the 21st Century Report recommendations to the AAPG Executive Committee include updated language in expressing a commitment to protection of the environment and to member programs that promote environmental protection. In 1998-1999, involvement in AAPG committees will increase even more in a continued commitment to integrate the influence of DEG's mission into existing AAPG member services.

In summary, DEG has entered a new phase of growth and energy from the members who so passionately volunteer their time and creativity in building DEG's future. The momentum from such efforts will bear fruit for years to come. It has been a rewarding

experience to be a part of this transition during my term this year.

Susan Chandler Kiser, President

Division of Professional Affairs

During the 1997-1998 year the Division of Professional Affairs has continued, as in past years, to expand its mission of promoting the development of professionalism in the practice of petroleum geology. The highlights of the DPA activities follow.

1. In July, DPA was a co-sponsor with GSA, AAPG, AIPG, and USGS of the Conference on Ethics in the Geosciences. This conference brought together leaders from throughout the geological profession in a five-day discussion on the status of ethics in professional practice. This dialogue produced a commonality of opinion in the need for increased awareness of ethical behavior. This was expressed through a list of values and virtues, drawn up by the attendees, which should be common to all geologists and their practice and provide the core for strengthening and building codes of ethics for the member societies of the AGI.
2. In September 1997, DPA and the AAPG House of Delegates formed the Joint Ad Hoc Committee on Ethics (JACE). This committee, organized as a follow-up to the Ethics Conference, had a number of charges, but the major purpose was to address the methods by which the awareness of geoscientists could be raised regarding ethical standards in the conduct of business. The committee will submit a report on June 30, but its work will continue into the 1998-1999 year.
3. In the spring of 1997, DPA began a widespread membership campaign. This should result in a net increase of approximately 100 members, thus stopping the slide in membership of the last few years. A lengthy discussion was held at the Advisory Board meeting in Salt Lake City regarding the Board of Certification review procedures and the definition of petroleum geologist in light of the work environment of today. Action

on these issues was tabled until the midyear meeting.

4. DPA continued to expand the role of the Governmental Affairs Committee with the second annual GAC Forum at the annual meeting and the formation of the Governmental Liaison Subcommittee. The latter will be involved in developing position papers on issues that impact the petroleum geologist. Once approved by AAPG, these papers will serve to advance the Association's official positions on these issues.
5. The DPA will finish the year in sound financial condition. Through the third quarter the net gain is \$39,000, and year-end cash balance will be approximately \$400,000. Changes in AAPG overhead charges have effected an increase in these figures through the third quarter.

New Advisory Board members will be James B. Bennett, Lee T. Billingsley, Dan J. Tearpock (Gulf Coast), Clyde F. Wootton (Mid-Continent) and Brian K. Powers (Southwest).

The 1998-1999 DPA Executive Committee will be Stephen A. Sonnenberg, president; Richard G. Green, vice president; Robert W. Sabaté, president-elect; Charles E. Mear, secretary; Debra Rutan, treasurer; and Robert T. Sellars, Jr., past president.

DPA will continue a concerted effort to bring AAPG members into certified status; to take a leadership role in the promotion and enhancement of ethical standards and professional business conduct; and to develop ways to increase benefits to DPA members.

Robert T. Sellars, Jr., President

Energy Minerals Division

Soon to be released through AAPG is the *Atlas of Coal Geology* on CD-ROM, a publication effort sponsored by EMD (Energy Minerals Division-AAPG) and TSOP (The Society for Organic Petrology, an affiliated society with AAPG) that has been

in progress for four years. Why is this an "event" for AAPG? Because it is the first all-digital (i.e., no paper copy or portion) publication to come through AAPG, unlike other digital data and publications available through AAPG Data Systems, which started out in paper form at least in part. CD-ROM, for those not familiar with that computer technology, stands for "compact disk-read-only memory," a now-common means of storing large volumes of digital information.

The *Atlas* is the first of what likely will be a growing number of all-digital publications to be produced by AAPG. Whether this will be an entirely new line of publications, separate from memoirs and special publications, still is under discussion at Headquarters. A preliminary version of the *Atlas* made its debut at the AAPG Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in May.

The *Atlas* is designed as a combination reference and learning resource for novice- through expert-level geoscientists in the energy industry and academia. This publication is the first in more than 30 years to fully and pictorially cover the topic of coal geology in all its aspects: coal deposition and sedimentary environments, structural geology, coal components, coal petrology, environmental aspects, and coal utilization (coal mining and coalbed methane).

Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Atlas* emphasize coal geology and coal petrology, respectively. The coal geology volume includes 393 images relating to megascopic and mesoscopic coal geology, exploration, mining, and coalbed methane (CBM). The coal petrology

volume includes 275 sets of images pertaining to microscopic examination of coals, including macerals and minerals in coals. Key-word search capabilities are built in using an index. All pictures are fully captioned.

Supporting and background text exceeds the equivalent of 200 printed pages! Reference lists are included to allow you to find additional information, and are linked from the citations in the text to allow easy searching. The *Atlas* consists of the following sections:

Volume 1—Coal Geology

- Overview of Coal Exploration
- Introduction to Coal Mining
- Overview of Coalbed Methane
- Coal Depositional Systems
- Paleochannels
- Splits, Partings, Rider Coals, and Subseams
- Sedimentary Intrusions
- Controls on Mining and CBM Development
- Stress Environment
- Folds and Inclined Beds
- Joints
- Cleats
- Slickensides in Coal-Bearing Strata
- Faults
- Igneous Intrusions and Extrusions
- Coal Seam Burns
- Weathering Environment and Coal Resource Utilization

Volume 2—Coal Petrology: An Introduction

- Origin of Coal
- Macerals
- Maceral Analysis
- Microlithotypes
- Lithotypes

- Minerals and Mineral Matter Coalification
- Vitrinite Reflectance
- Coal Utilization
- Combustion
- Metallurgical Coals
- International Classification

The development of digital publications is an important move by EMD and AAPG in general. Publishing costs continue to rise, and over the years color publication has become almost prohibitively expensive for a profusely illustrated document like the *Atlas*. In fact, if paper had been the only publication means available to EMD and TSOP, the *Atlas* probably could not have been produced, or at least not in color and with fewer examples, due to the large number of pictures involved and likely costs.

Another issue for digital publications is the ability to include animation, video, interactive GIS data and maps, and other digital technologies. You just can't do that with a paper book! Although such additional "high-tech" features are not included in the *Atlas*, the AAPG Publications Committee has such potential publications under consideration. The goal of this move toward more digital publications is to keep AAPG relevant to the geoscience community in an increasingly computerized world.

EMD and TSOP are proud to be the first out of the gate in this new form of AAPG publishing! We hope that it will set the baseline and standard for future AAPG publications.

Margaret Anne Rogers, President

Reports of the Sections

Eastern Section

The 26th Annual Meeting of the Eastern Section was held September 27–30, 1997, in Lexington, Kentucky. The theme for the meeting, "Technology To Win—Beating the Odds," was chosen to highlight the new technologies workshop being held at the meeting, and to play on Kentucky's rich heritage of horse racing.

The meeting was co-hosted by the Kentucky Society of Professional Geologists and the newly affiliated AAPG society, The Society for Organic

Petrology (TSOP). This meeting featured the largest technical program ever presented at an Eastern Section meeting—108 total papers presented in 14 technical sessions. Additionally, four technical workshops and three field trips were run as part of the meeting; 68 individuals took part in the workshops, and 60 people enjoyed the field trips. The exhibit area this year featured 26 commercial and nonprofit exhibitors.

For the second year, the Eastern Section offered a Deal Market at the annual meeting, where five prospect generators showed available prospects. Registration included 361 professionals,

27 students, 27 exhibitors, 33 spouses and guests, and 11 K–12 teachers for a total attendance of 465. Financial sponsorship was received from 18 companies and individuals, and was a key factor in the economic success of the meeting. The meeting was both a technical and financial success, recording a substantial profit for the Eastern Section and the co-hosts.

Honors and awards conferred at the 1997 Eastern Section annual meeting included the following:

- John T. Galey Memorial Award: Arthur M. Van Tyne
- Honorary Membership: Robert A. Trevail