

MIDWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CHEMISTRY TEACHERS
IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

August 10, 1972

TO : MACTLAC members in good standing

FROM: : Office of the Secretary-Treasurer
Wabash College
Crawfordsville, Indiana 47933

SUBJECT : 1971-72 MACTLAC report

THE SAINT OLAF MACTLAC MEETING - - OCTOBER 8 and 9, 1971

The Saint Olaf Chemistry Department, in conjunction with the Carleton College chemistry staff, combined a well-planned program with the fine Saint Olaf meeting facilities and food service to host an excellent MACTLAC meeting. The meeting had an auspicious start Thursday evening when a Northfield grain elevator fire disrupted the Saint Olaf electrical service. As a result, George Hardgrove (Saint Olaf), meeting program chairman, put his finishing touches on the meeting by the light of a Meeker burner.

Dr. Wayne Meinke, Chief of the National Bureau of Standards Analytical Chemistry Division, opened the meeting with a synopsis of the services rendered by the NBS. His outline of the many painstaking steps followed in establishing trace metal standards (in orchard leaf and beef liver matrices) was of great interest, even to the non-analytical chemists.

The annual discussion groups considered: Methodology in Science Teaching - A Demonstration of a Teaching Booth for General Chemistry; Non-majors Course in Chemistry; Laboratory Exercises in Stoichiometry; Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy; Sources and Uses of Computer Programs for Chemistry; and The Fiscal Problems of Chemistry Departments - How to Live Within Tight Budgets.

A return to the old tradition of requesting possible discussion topics at the first general meeting yielded the meeting's two most popular sessions. Truman Jordan led one of these groups in a discussion of his student led introductory chemistry classes. A second spontaneous group struggled with appropriate reactions to the many strains, primarily financial, facing MACTLAC institutions.

For many, Joe Danforth's (Grinnell) non-lecture presentation, "It's a Whole New Ball Game", was the meeting highlight. Joe's "talk" opened with a slide of those attending the 1952 Monmouth College gathering of midwestern liberal arts chemistry teachers. Joe used this slide to point out that 20 years ago most MACTLAC departments drew their strength from an individual. He then adopted the Harry Lewis model to summarize the intervening decades by examining MACTLAC institutions in terms of their Ph.D. productivity. This led to a spirited audience participation discussion of the meaning of the trends and shifts in his Ph.D. productivity indices.

The sense of the Saint Olaf meeting is hard to quantify. The old enthusiasm for meeting friends and sharing ideas was definitely there, but there seemed to be a sense of change in the air. It was obvious that chemistry in MACTLAC institutions is becoming "a while new ball game", but the rules of the game and who the players will be are not yet clear.

CHEMICAL ABSTRACTS

The consistent small college displeasure with the Chemical Abstracts pricing structure surfaced at the Saint Olaf MACTLAC meeting in the form of a motion from the Luther College Chemistry Department. A portion of this motion updated Addison Ault's (Cornell) table (page 2 of August 24, 1970 issue of Chemical and Engineering News) which illustrates the dramatic price increase in a Chemical Abstracts subscription. In 1956 a college or university paid \$80 for its Chemical Abstracts. In 1972 the "same" subscription will cost \$1900! The essence of the Luther College motion, which MACTLAC passed unanimously, is "....Unless the American Chemical Society has no interest in the survival of chemical training in the liberal arts colleges, the relative costs of Chemical Abstracts to different types of users must be reconsidered..." A letter informing Chemical Abstracts of this motion is currently being drafted. Subsequent support, in the form of a letter to Chemical Abstracts, will be requested in a letter to be sent to all MACTLAC department chairmen. In the past similar individual appeals have had little impact. Perhaps the time has come for each institution to seriously examine the cost effectiveness of its Chemical Abstracts subscription. At Wabash College the Chemical Abstracts subscription represents 10% of the total College periodicals budget. Your suggestions as to the content of my letter to Chemical Abstracts are welcome.

THE JOB SQUEEZE

The elimination of teaching positions is yet another ramification of the financial pressure facing many MACTLAC institutions. Many formal and informal conversations at the Saint Olaf meeting focused on a concern for those people displaced by situations beyond their control. In a partial response to the problem the Executive Council moved to reorient the MACTLAC Teacher Placement Service toward a more active solicitation of positions available information in MACTLAC institutions. The names of those displaced from their current positions would then be forwarded to departments having openings.

MACTLAC'S TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY

The 1970 Executive Council voted to hold the 1972 annual meeting at Monmouth College in recognition of that institution's role in the birth of MACTLAC. At the 1971 Executive Council meeting Quentin Petersen, Monmouth Chemistry Department Chairman, expressed his concern that the recent Monmouth chemistry staff reduction from five to three would make it very difficult for them to host an effective meeting. Quentin also reported that Knox College had volunteered to replace Monmouth as the 1972 host. For pragmatic reasons the 1972 meeting was shifted to Knox.

THE 1972 MACTLAC MEETING WILL BE HELD OCTOBER 14, 15 AT KNOX COLLEGE (GALESBURG, ILL.). Leeland Harris is in charge of the meeting program and arrangements. I URGE YOU TO CONTACT DR. HARRIS IF YOU HAVE A DISCUSSION TOPIC OR A SPEAKER YOU FEEL SHOULD BE ON THE PROGRAM. Every attempt is made to have the MACTLAC meeting serve the needs of the membership, but membership input into the meeting program is the only way this can happen.

THE DEPAUW MACTLAC MEETING

The 1973 MACTLAC meeting is scheduled for DePauw University (Greencastle, Indiana). This will give everyone an opportunity to visit DePauw's recently completed physical science facility.

NEW OFFICERS

The officers elected for the current year are:

President: William Oelke (Grinnell)
President-Elect: Allen Hanson (St. Olaf)
Secretary-Treasurer: Sister Mary Eileen Thompson (St. Catherine)

The newly-elected state representatives, chosen by caucus of the members present from their states are:

Minnesota: Paul Allan Barks (North Hennepin State)
Missouri: Marvin Dixon (William Jewell)
Wisconsin: Richard Scamehorn (Ripon)

Those state representatives with another year to serve are:

Illinois: Quentin Petersen (Monmouth)
Indiana: Stanley Burden (Taylor)
Iowa: Truman Jordan (Cornell)
Michigan: Leonard Worden (Michigan)

"PROBLEMS FOR AN ADVANCED INORGANIC COURSE"

Fifty mimeographed copies of Earle Scott (Ripon) and Jim Finholt's (Carleton) collection of advanced inorganic questions submitted by the MACTLAC membership are available. Those interested in receiving a copy should contact the new Secretary-Treasurer.

1772 MACTLAC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Each of you should find a green request form in this mailing. This has been used to indicate your MACTLAC dues and record status. The payment of MACTLAC dues always creates a question of timing. MACTLAC DUES FOR 1973 WILL BE PAID AT THE 1972 MACTLAC MEETING. If your record is not up to date, Sister Mary Eileen would be greatly helped by your acting to update it. USE OF THE COMMENT ON THE UPDATE SHEET TO INFORM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER OF MACTLAC MEMBER ADDRESS CHANGES WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

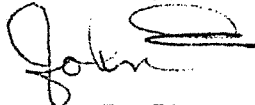
WHITHER MACTLAC?

MACTLAC has the potential to play a key role as the member institutions face the severe challenges of this decade. MACTLAC provides a unique, flexible forum for the interchange of ideas. It has a large core of very loyal members and a treasury in excess of \$1800. However, the critical ingredient for continued success lies in the capacity of the entire membership to input their ideas into the organization. Program ideas are always needed and welcome. Continuing to build the notion that MACTLAC belongs to all the members should guarantee the continued existence of an effective organization. - - At a dollar a year it's a real bargain!

With that I close by thanking all MACTLAC members for their patience with my three years as Secretary-Treasurer. The hours spent posting records and editing mailing lists will quickly be forgotten, but the joy of personally associating 450 MACTLAC members with faces at the annual meeting will last a long time.

Best wishes on your new academic year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John F. Zimmerman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

John F. Zimmerman