



MCM Solutions



6/4/2013

Message from the Editor:

The past academic year at McMurry University was one filled with anxiety for the faculty, staff, and students. McMurry found itself in a transitional period with a budget shortfall. All programs were examined with respect to how they contribute to McMurry moving forward and the Board of Trustees is currently developing a plan to meet the long-term needs of the university. As a part of this process the chemistry faculty surveyed the history and discussed the future of our program. We were proud of the excellent reputation that chemistry has gained which is demonstrated by your success and we are excited about opportunities in the future.

There is one future opportunity for which we would like to ask for your help. The 2015-16 academic year will mark the 40th anniversary of Dr. W. Norton Jones's last year. Dr. Jones was the first chemistry professor to stay at McMurry for a long time (1948-1976) and he really laid the foundation for the program. We have heard from many of you who knew him personally about what he meant to your educational experience. More recent graduates may remember having benefited from the Dr. W. Norton Jones Scholarship given to chemistry students in their senior years. We would like to spend the next year gathering ideas from you about an appropriate way to further celebrate what Dr. Jones meant to chemistry at McMurry. Please send me your suggestions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Edward Donnay

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Alumni News:

Former professor and alumnus Dr. W. L. Magnuson ('59) stopped by last June. After leaving McMurry Dr. Magnuson has been teaching chemistry at Kentucky Wesleyan College since 1969. We enjoyed speaking with Dr. Magnuson and his wife and son during their visit.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Donald L. Cook ('59) on April 27, 2013. Don graduated from high school in Pampa, TX, and then attended McMurry, where he also met and married Lou Smith. After McMurry, Don received a master's degree in chemistry from Texas Tech and also served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. Don first worked at Anderson Clayton in Richardson and later for Tyler Pipe and LaGoria Petroleum. He had been active as a Boy Scout leader in both Richardson and Tyler, as well as being active in his church choir.

Dr. Joe Loter ('65) wrote us a message letting us know what he has done since leaving McMurry. Along with John Fowler and Don DuBois of the same 1965 class, he went to graduate school at the University of Kansas. They all earned PhD's in chemistry there. He began teaching at the University of Corpus Christi in Fall 1970. When that private school was replaced by a state supported institution in 1973, he became a charter member of that faculty. They underwent name changes and Texas A&I University - Corpus Christi became Corpus Christi State University and finally Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi. The chemistry program at TAMU-CC has always been a part of a multidisciplinary department. He retired on August 31, 2010, after 40 years of teaching. He had reached the rank of Professor and had served as the chair of the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences. His wife is Zelma Cunningham, who attended McMurry from 1963-65. She received a BS in Microbiology from U of Kansas in 1967. They continue to make their home in Corpus Christi.

Dr. David Randell ('80) dropped us a note. He received a diploma from the American College of Family Practice and is a Fellow of the American College of Family Medicine. He has been a family physician in Abilene for 21 years and the team physician for Wylie H.S. for 18 years. His wife is Rosemary Pair Randell, McMurry Alumnus of 1982 and they have 4 children; one started at McMurry in the fall!

Dr. Kay Younggren ('02) received "The Spirit of McMurry Award" in 2011. The Spirit of McMurry Award was established in 2011 by the Alumni Association. This award honors alumni who have graduated in the last 20 years and have excelled in their profession, served their community, and served McMurry University. The nominee must be a graduate of McMurry and must not be employed by the University. Dr. Younggren is a respected dentist in Artesia, New Mexico, does extensive volunteer work, and has served on the McMurry alumni board.

Jennifer Trudeau ('04) gave us an update on her life. She has been a staff physical therapist at St. David's Rehabilitation Hospital for the last 3 years and loves it. She has been helping with developing a program for patients who have undergone a lower extremity amputation, served on the hospital committee for skin protection, and is currently serving the employee advisory group campus wide. She informed us that she was planning to be married September 22, 2012 to Matthew Rafacz. Currently her life is busy with work, church activities, & keeping up with her dogs.

Gabrielle (Famble) Mallet ('05) graduated from Abilene Christian University on August 10, 2012 with a Masters of Education degree in Higher Education, *summa cum laude*, no less! Congratulations, Gabby! She is still teaching at Texas State Technical College in Abilene. She is looking to complete a Teaching Certification and possibly teach at Abilene Christian Schools.

We saw on LinkedIn that Jennifer Codding ('06) recently received a PhD degree from the University of Delaware and is currently working as a postdoctoral research scientist at Columbia University. Well done Dr. Codding!

Catrina Reed ('07) wrote that she graduated in August 2012 with her PhD degree from Texas A&M, so now she is officially Dr. Reed! She has two recent publications from her graduate work in the journals *Microbiology* and *Molecular Microbiology*. In September she started working as a Postdoc in the lab of Dr. Liu in the Chemistry department at Texas A&M University. Her projects involve incorporation of unnatural amino acids into bacteriophage virus-like particles and generation of an M13 phage display library for incorporation of unnatural amino acids.

Brooke Morris ('07) returned to campus to give a presentation to the chemistry club concerning her work at Eljen Technology in Sweetwater. She has worked there for a few years making fluorescent molecules used in scintillation counters. While she could not show the structures of the molecules for proprietary reasons, she was able to bring some samples. She enjoys the work and has invited the chemistry club to come and take a tour of the facilities.

We occasionally run into recent graduates in Abilene. Katie Neal ('10) is working as a pharmacy technician as she prepares to take the PCAT and apply for pharmacy schools. Brandon Randell ('10) continues to teach chemistry at both Cisco College and for the Abilene Independent School District at Cooper High School. Erica (Rawls) Wilson ('11) and Danni McMahan ('12) were both seen on the McMurry campus, at a basketball game and a play, respectively. They are both attending the Texas Tech School of Pharmacy in Abilene.

We spoke with Nathan Worley ('12) at a McMurry swim meet this spring and he informed us that things are going well at Trinity University where he is studying for a degree in health care administration. He will soon begin a process in the program at Trinity University called the preceptors conference. Throughout this process he will be interviewing with around 20 different hospitals, healthcare organizations, and consulting firms for an administrative residency.

We have heard from the following alumni in the past year: Dr. Ralph McCleskey ('65), Dr. Joe Hudman ('71), and Dr. Dwight Needels ('77).

The McMurry Science/Math Advisory Board (SMAB) sponsored a golf tournament this spring to benefit the science departments at McMurry. They are thinking of making it a regular event. If you would like to know more about this event or SMAB, you can find a link to their website on our webpage, www.mcm.edu/newsite/web/academics/ncs/chemistry/index.htm or contact the chair Dr. John Manning ('79) at jmanning@sw.org.

Departmental News:

The department is happy to introduce two new graduates, Tara Williams and Amanda Genzling! Tara Williams officially received her B.S. degree in Biochemistry from McMurry University in December 2012, but she spent the fall semester taking classes at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy after obtaining early admission to their program. She will continue in pharmacy school this coming fall. Amanda Genzling graduated *summa cum laude* in May and completed an honors thesis under the direction of Dr. Hyunshun Shin. She won the W. Norton Jones Scholarship as a junior and the Outstanding Senior Award from the department this year. She was an active participant on the swim team during her time at McMurry. She interviewed for a spot in the School of Medicine at the University of New Mexico but was unsuccessful. She is planning to work at a local hospital for a year and reapply.

We are happy to announce that Dr. Hyunshun Shin was married to Jonathan Kim on May 25th in her native South Korea. Dr. Shin has been a member of the McMurry Department of Chemistry since 2008 and teaches organic chemistry. She is using the month of June for her honeymoon and we look forward to celebrating with her when she returns later this summer.

After serving as Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry for the past several years (notwithstanding the few years where we “officially” did not have department chairs), Dr. Pam Veltkamp has decided to turn over the reins to Dr. Paul Pyenta. Dr. Pyenta teaches biochemistry and has been at McMurry since 2002. Wish them well as they move through this transition.

The department was again successful in obtaining a one year renewal of our Welch Departmental Grant for \$25,000 that supports students and faculty doing research. The Welch Foundation has changed from three-year renewal periods to one-year renewals. This grant is essential for maintaining research activity in the department. Work being done under the Welch grant is described below.

The department saw an increase in enrollment in biochemistry in the fall of 2012 which required the addition of a second section of the laboratory. This coming fall term biochemistry will be taught downstairs to take advantage of the larger renovated facilities in biology. The other change in department course offerings occurred in the spring term. We have struggled in recent years getting sufficient enrollment in a course for non-science majors and decided to offer the first semester of general chemistry “off-sequence” instead. Approximately a dozen students took advantage of this opportunity. The department will continue to make adjustments in the courses it offers to better match enrollment numbers and meet the needs of McMurry students.

Departmental Research:

Dr. Donnay and Dr. Tim Renfro from the Department of Physics accompanied students to the West Texas STEM Undergraduate Research Conference at Midland College in October. Ms. Staci Desmarais gave a talk about her work with Dr. Shin entitled “*Synthesis and Evaluation of Hydroxamic Acid Derivatives as Metallo Beta Lactamases Inhibitors*”, which won 1st place in her group. A couple of physics students also presented talks and posters at the meeting; one physics poster won second place in its group.

Dr. Donnay had a student present a poster at the 5th Annual Undergraduate Research Festival at ACU on April 4th. Oluwatoyosi Adewunmi, a 2013 graduate with a B.S. in Biomedical Science, presented a poster titled "Analysis of the Interaction between Chromium Diimine Metal Complexes and DNA". Dr. Donnay also supervised her honors thesis this year.

Dr. Shin attended the 244th National ACS meeting in Philadelphia where her student Amanda Genzling presented a poster entitled "Design and Synthesis of Inhibitors of Ornithine Decarboxylase Using Hydroxamate Functionality in the Polyamine Biosynthetic Pathway". Dr. Shin also directed Amanda's honors thesis this year.

This summer the department has three undergraduate students conducting research on the Welch Foundation Departmental Grant. Dr. Hyunshun Shin will work with Damon Rose during the second half of the summer on a project targeting two enzymes: ornithine decarboxylase and histone deacetylase. Dr. Edward Donnay will be supervising two returning students, Josh Brooks and Christi Barr. Josh will be trying to characterize chromium containing metal complexes via electrochemistry. Christi will be testing the ability of the compounds to bind to DNA. Compounds with the right properties may be useful in photodynamic therapy to treat cancer and other diseases.

School and Miscellaneous News:

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. Clark Beasley, Distinguished and Emeritus Professor of Biology on June 24th, 2012. Dr. Beasley taught at McMurry from 1969 to 2009. A student summer research award has been set up in his name and the first recipient is Heather Rawls, who will work with Dr. Gary Wilson doing a microbiology project with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt). For more information about the award, please contact the Dean of the School of Natural and Computational Sciences, Dr. Alicia Wyatt (awyatt@mcm.edu).

Dr. John Russell announced his retirement as President of McMurry University effective on June 1, 2013. Dr. Russell has served as president for eleven years. With Dr. Russell's departure occurring just after the close of this academic year, a special event is being planned for this fall to honor his service to McMurry and to the city of Abilene where he and his wife Gerri have been active in civic and non-profit organizations. Ms. Lynn Yearwood, a 1970 McMurry graduate, will serve as Interim President while the search for McMurry's next leader occurs. A member of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Trusteeship Committee, Yearwood is a retired executive who has held key leadership roles in health insurance management including Vice President of Operations at General American Life Insurance (later Great West) and Chief Operations Officer and Vice President of Technology at HealthLink, a subsidiary of Anthem. Dr. Weldon Crowley, a 1957 McMurry graduate and member of the Board of Trustees and its Trusteeship Committee will serve as chair of the Presidential Search Committee.

40 Years Ago in the Department

Unfortunately we don't have a copy of a department newsletter from 1973. This feature will return next year. Note that the entire newsletters from 1969-1972 can be seen on our website.

Alumni Search:

The following list contains the names of alumni for whom we have incomplete, incorrect, or no address. If you know the contact information for any of these alums, we welcome your sharing that information with us, or you might contact that person and ask him/her to contact us.

Jack Shultze '62	C. Randall Cotney '74	Laurel Van Winkel '81
Mohamad Dareshori '63	Susan Arth '75	Sarah Lou Hearrell '90
Gail Hart Long '64	Conley Goines '76	Mirela Zimic '97
George E. Bernard '73	Gregory Guy Alexander '79	