

Summary of the 39th Biennial Convention

The Society of Sigma Gamma Epsilon held its 39th Biennial Convention April 15–17, 2005, on the campus of Florida Atlantic University. The Eta Theta Chapter hosted the event, which included a field trip to the Nature Conservancy's Blowing Rocks Preserve and Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Kudos to all the members of the Eta Theta Chapter, especially Rebecca Port (Chapter President), Jason Fadley (VP), and Dr. Jackie Gallagher (Advisor), for their organizational skills and wonderful hospitality.

Delegates and alternates from 14 active chapters were present to conduct the business of The Society:

1. Eta (University of Missouri at Rolla)
2. Alpha Beta (Texas Tech University)
3. Alpha Omega (Oklahoma State University)
4. Gamma Zeta (Kent State University)
5. Gamma Eta (University of Toledo)
6. Gamma Sigma (University of Northern Iowa)
7. Gamma Phi (Stephen F. Austin State University)
8. Delta Epsilon (Wright State University)
9. Epsilon Kappa (Central Michigan University)
10. Epsilon Rho (Georgia State University)
11. Epsilon Phi (East Carolina University)
12. Eta Gamma (Weber State University)
13. Eta Theta (Florida Atlantic University)
14. Eta Nu (James Madison University)

In addition, four members of the National Council (President Don Neal, Secretary-Treasurer Charlie Mankin, Western Vice-President Rick Ford, and Southeastern Vice-President Mike Slattery), and Ms. Betty Bellis, Secretary to the Council, attended.

Important Convention Results:

1. **Membership Requirements/Constitutional Amendment:** Citing a desire to encourage earlier participation in SGE, particularly by second-semester sophomores, the Membership Committee proposed a decrease in the credit-hour requirement for membership from 12 to 10 semester hours (15 to 12 quarter hours). The proposal passed. The grade-point-average requirements are unchanged.
2. **Initiation Fees:** On advice of Dr. Mankin, National Secretary-Treasurer, the delegates approved an increase in the initiation fee from \$20 to \$25. The annual dues of \$15 remain unchanged.
3. **Changes to the Ritual:** Delegates at both the 37th (2000) and 38th (2002) biennial conventions raised the issue of adding the voice and perspective of a prominent female geoscientist to The Society's initiation ritual. However, an appropriate female geoscientist was never agreed upon by the delegates at those conventions. Professor Don Steinker, advisor to the Beta Upsilon Chapter (Bowling Green State University) and

former editor of *THE COMPASS*, suggested in a historical article published in *THE COMPASS* (v. 76, 2002, p. 69-71) that Mary Anning (1799–1847) would be an appropriate personage to join Agricola, Werner, Lyell, and Dana in the ritual. Members of the Ritual and Insignia Committee at the recent convention made this a formal proposal by drafting language to be included in a revised ritual. The delegates approved the proposal. At the recent GSA meeting, Erin Saupe and Kelly Fox, geology students at St. John's University, along with their faculty advisor Professor Larry Davis (former Central Province Vice President), presented a timely paper (Saupe and others, 2005, *GSA Abstracts with Programs*, Vol. 37, No. 7, p. 407) that outlines Mary Anning's many contributions to the field of paleontology and provides justification for her inclusion in the ritual.

4. *THE COMPASS*: On advice of National President Don Neal and former National Editor Don Steinker, the delegates approved a change in the publication policy of *THE COMPASS* to allow non-SGE members to submit manuscripts for publication. This is a return to the policy in force prior to the 38th biennial convention.
5. Future Conventions: An important convention tradition is to set the site of the next convention by voting on proposals from chapters wishing to host a national convention. The delegates approved a proposal from the Gamma Sigma Chapter (University of Northern Iowa) to host the 40th biennial convention on their campus in Cedar Falls, IA, during Fall Semester 2007. In addition, the Chapter Affairs Committee has suggested that the site of biennial conventions be rotated through the four geographical provinces of The Society. It was agreed to follow this proposal as feasible.
 - Fall 2002 – Western Province – Eta Epsilon (Southern Utah University)
 - Spring 2005 – Southeastern Province – Eta Theta (Florida Atlantic Univ.)
 - Fall 2007 – Central Province – Gamma Sigma (University of Northern Iowa)
 - Spring 2010 – Northeastern Province -- ??
6. National Officers: The delegates elected the following national officers to serve until the 2007 convention:
 - National President: Dr. Rick Ford, advisor to the Eta Gamma Chapter (Weber State University) and former Western Province VP.
 - National Editor: Dr. Don Neal, advisor to the Epsilon Phi Chapter (East Carolina University) and out-going National President.
 - National Vice Presidents:
 - Northeastern Province: Dr. Cindy Carney, advisor to the Delta Epsilon Chapter (Wright State University), was re-elected.
 - Southeastern Province: Dr. Mike Slattery, advisor to the Epsilon Delta Chapter (Texas Christian University), was re-elected.
 - Central Province: Dr. John Hogan, advisor to the Eta Chapter (University of Missouri – Rolla) was elected as a new member of the National Council.
 - Western Province: Dr. Rip Langford, advisor to the Alpha Lambda Chapter (University of Texas at El Paso) was elected as a new member of the National Council.
 - The National Council re-confirmed Dr. Charlie Mankin's appointment as National Secretary-Treasurer.

Chapter Affairs: The Chapter Affairs Committee made a number of recommendations to increase communication and visibility at the national level: (i) establish a message board on The Society's website for inter-chapter communications, and (ii) host a reception for members and alumni at the GSA annual meetings. Shortly after the convention, a members' forum (hosted by Yahoo! Groups) was activated on the website. The first annual SGE reception was recently held in conjunction with the 2005 GSA Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City.

The 39th Biennial Convention was a big success and a lot of fun. The chapter reports, to be published in a future issue of *THE COMPASS*, are a testament to the health and continued importance of Sigma Gamma Epsilon.