

Presidential Ponderings

President David Yozzo

Greetings AERS Members: We are gearing up for our Spring 2008 Meeting, to be held at the University of Delaware's Virden Conference Center, in Lewes, DE on March 13-15. This is a great venue for AERS – I had the opportunity to visit the Virden Center in early January and meet with Kathy Coyne, who is co-hosting the meeting along with AERS Board member Gulni Ozbay; and Lisa Doak of the University of Delaware Conference Services. The facilities at Virden are top-notch, with some lodging available on site, and overflow lodging at the nearby Beacon Hotel. Lewes is a wonderful coastal town, and I'm looking forward to visiting the area again. I'm especially looking forward to our banquet event at the famous Dogfish Head Brewery in Rehoboth Beach! At the Spring Meeting, I will be handing over the ceremonial AERS gavel and the office of AERS President to Leila Hamdan. As many of you know, Leila has served AERS in multiple capacities over the past several years, first joining the Board as Student Representative, and then serving as Treasurer (for a little bit longer than planned...). As President-Elect, Leila has worked closely with Past-President Chris Swarth and myself to organize meeting symposia, recruit Board members, and plan AERS participation in ERF 2007.

Speaking of ERF – it's now official: our parent society has been renamed the COASTAL and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF). This is one of several critical changes in the Federation that took place under Bob Christian's administration. It was certainly an interesting time for me to serve on the ERF Governing Board. In addition to the name change, the Federation updated

its corporate tax-exempt status with the IRS, and after decades of self-publication of *Estuaries* (now *Estuaries and Coasts*), selected Springer to take the journal into the future. With the advent of Open Access and other electronic publishing media, and an increased desire to reach a broader, international audience, the decision to move in this direction was clear. The ERF 2007 Conference in Providence was a big hit! Several AERS members participated on the Conference Steering Committee, working closely with former AERS student Representative Giancarlo Cicchetti and his EPA colleague, Jim Latimer. Dave Osgood and I worked on student Judging and Awards along with John Brawley of NEERS. Heidi Mahon worked with Computer Central, making sure that audio-visual logistics ran smoothly. Randy Chambers did a great job hosting the Student Careers Pizza Social (along with Amanda Kahn of SEERS) and coordinating the NSF Undergraduate Mentoring in Environmental Biology program for the conference. The phrase "Best ERF Ever!" was heard many times throughout the conference, which attracted over 1500 estuarine and coastal scientists representing over 20 countries.

I look forward to continuing to serve AERS as Past-President over the next two years, and I hope to see you all soon in Delaware!

Election of AERS Treasurer for a 2 year term, Spring 2008-2010.

By Julie Ambler, Nominations Chair.
We have two candidates for Treasurer: Treda B. Smith and David Osgood. We will hold an election for Treasurer at our Spring Meeting in Lewes, DE. At that meeting, we will also call for nominations from the floor. The biographies for the two candidates can be found on page 6.

(See Elections Continued on page 6)

Pre-registration on-line at www.AERS.info:
\$70- Student Member
\$90- Regular Member
\$85- Student Non-member
\$120- Regular Non-member
Walk-In registrations will probably be an order of magnitude higher!

Spring Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

cycling of upland and wetland ecosystems to gain an understanding of their response to stressors such as flooding and climate change. His research program has two primary components: feedbacks between climate change and terrestrial ecosystem function and plant-microbe interactions in the rhizosphere. He is currently collaborating with colleagues at SERC to understand the effects of elevated carbon dioxide in the atmosphere on carbon sequestration and methane production in wetland ecosystems.

Dr. Linda Blum's research interests have been and continue to be organic matter accumulation and the factors controlling sediment organic matter content as it relates to a conceptual model of marsh evolution. An important question Dr. Blum and the mainland marsh group have just begun to focus on is the relative importance of depositional processes and belowground organic matter accumulation to marsh surface elevation change in the current environment of relatively rapid sea-level rise.

Albert McCullough is a registered professional engineer in several states throughout the Mid-Atlantic region as well as a certified Corps of Engineers wetland delineator. As the principal ecological engineer at Sustainable Science he works to develop and integrate engineering applications with sound ecological principals. Mr. McCullough's current professional focus includes managing and planning engineering services for ecological restoration and creation projects and executing water budgets analyses using both standard and innovative engineering methodologies.

The panel discussion will be followed by a day and a half of scientific presentations (oral and poster) given by scientists and students from throughout the Mid-Atlantic States on a diverse array of estuarine and coastal topics.

For more information on the meeting please check out our website at www.AERS.info!

Membership Report-

By Pete Straub.

Presently we have 463 members on the rolls, 21 Honorary, 342 Regular, and 99 student. Of these members, 165 are current through 2008, 111 current through 2007, 72 current through 2006 and 84 have not updated dues since 2005. There are three ways to pay your dues: with your annual ERF renewal; through PayPal at the AERS website (www.AERS.info); and with your meeting registration onsite or by mail. Please make an effort to send in your dues even if you may not be able to attend the current meeting to keep the many benefits of AERS membership flowing including meeting invitations, reduced conference fees and access to some of the best local estuarine talent in the region.

Pesky Dues Notice

It is that time of year again when AERS members must decide to either pay up or forever be banished from polite company and AERS membership! Look at the label on the cover of this issue of AERSNews to see if you are in dire straits or not. AERS has Calendar year dues, so no matter when you joined, your membership must be renewed no later than the end of the Spring Meeting or risk being purged from the rolls. If the year above your name on the mailing label is 2007 or later you may continue to hear from us. If it is 2006 or older please pay your dues on-line, or bring them to the pirates working registration at the Spring Meeting if you dare. You can renew by visiting www.AERS.info and using PayPal to pay immediately.

If your mailing label states 2007 or later or if it has HM (Honorary Member) please keep us updated with your mailing and email information, and consider sending a payment in anyway earmarked for the Student Endowment. With all the money those Honorary Members save, they should completely fund the endowment with no real trouble. Just in case they don't, why don't you send in a special gift right now.

**For Lodging Choices at the Spring Meeting please see www.AERS.info
Be sure to mention that you are with AERS when you make your reservation**

(Election Continued from page 2)

Candidate for Treasurer- Treda B. Smith

I received a M.S. degree in Environmental Sciences and Policy from John Hopkins University and a B.S. degree in Marine Science with Biology and German minors from Coastal Carolina University. I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Marine Science at The Virginia Institute of Marine Science College of William and Mary, where my focus is benthic ecology. My research is centered on characterizing individual organism responses to single and multiple stressors in estuarine systems. I am also employed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water in Washington, D.C., where I support the national monitoring program. I first became involved in estuarine research societies when I attended my first ERF meeting in 1997 as an undergraduate student. I have also attended the 2001, 2005 and 2007 ERF meetings. I became involved in AERS in 2006, and have been involved as a member ever since. I am most interested in serving as AERS Treasurer as I believe the position provides an excellent opportunity to interact with other students and researchers also dedicated to estuarine research. Also, I think this position will provide another outlet to exercise my organizational and leadership skills.

Candidate for AERS Treasurer – David Osgood

I received my PhD in Environmental Science from University of Virginia in 1996. My doctoral research was on natural marsh development on barrier islands with an emphasis on subsurface hydrology, nutrient dynamics, and their influence on the developing plant community. My research evolved into a study of Phragmites impact on marshes in the NE US again within the context of hydrology and biogeochemistry, but also impacts on nekton utilization. I am an Associate Professor at Albright College in Reading Pennsylvania. I currently serve as director of the environmental science program and the undergraduate research program at Albright. My research is presently on headwater streams and floodplain wetlands of coastal watersheds with an emphasis on restoration and applications of GIS. I started out my time with ERF as an AERS member in the early 90's and have had membership with SEERS, NEERS, and finally back to AERS in 2001.

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom.

Isaac Asimov (1920-1992)

AERS is in the process of seeking 501c(3) status, which grants AERS, a non-profit organization, an exemption from filing federal taxes. We are currently locating and gathering the required documents in order to complete this lengthy process. The Executive Board welcomes assistance from individuals (i.e. members, friends, spouses, etc.) that have some experience and are familiar with the filing process. Please direct all suggestions to President Leila Hamden or Acting Treasurer Treda Smith.

2008 Spring AERS Student Travel Support Recipients

By David Osgood

Please consider a donation to the AERS Student Endowment Fund which makes these awards possible. Your gift can go a long way towards helping a new generation of AERS scientists to participate in our meetings. Remember it is tax deductible. The support is funded by the proceeds of our small endowment, and by the kind donations of members when the proceeds are not quite enough. This meeting's recipients are:

Tiffany Medley. Queens College, CUNY. Habitat Preference and Population Structure of Wild Eastern Oyster Populations in the lower Hudson River Estuary. Advisor: John Waldman
 Tiffany Schell. Albright College. Sedimentation in a restored floodplain wetland complex in the upper Schuylkill River Watershed. Advisor: David Osgood

David Kile. Albright College. Use of a Geographic Information System to assess riparian restorations in the upper Schuylkill River Watershed. Advisor: David Osgood
 Kristen Beckert. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. Effect of watershed land use on nutrient dynamics in Maryland Coastal Bays. Advisor: Judith O'Neil.

Chris Cotroneo. SUNY Purchase. Fish species-habitat association study in the Great Swamp of New York. Advisor: David Yozzo.

Sharain Halmon. Elizabeth City State University. Using ArcGIS to Map Locations of Trophy Fish Caught in North Carolina. Advisor: Elizabeth Noble.

**AERS Spring Meeting Agenda (Tentative)
 Virden Center in Lewes, Delaware**

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-  **March 13**
Thursday PM
4:00 - 6:00 Executive Board Meeting
6:00 - 9:00 Registration
7:00 - 9:00 Evening Social
-  **March 14**
Friday AM
(Registration continues all day)
8:00 - 8:30 Continental Breakfast
8:30 - 8:45 Opening Remarks and Introduction
8:45 - 9:30 Keynote Address
9:30 - 12:15 Panel Presentations/ Discussion and Technical Presentations
Friday PM
1:00 - 4:30 Technical Presentations
4:30 - 5:30 Business Meeting
5:30 - 7:00 Poster Session and Happy Hour
7:00 - 9:00 Banquet at Dogfish Head Brewery in Rehoboth Beach
-  **March 15**
Saturday AM
8:00 - 12:00 Technical Presentations
12:00 Student Awards
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By Louise Wootton

When the balmy winds of Pine Knoll shores blew the AERS board members together in March '07, the news was all good. Our new treasurer, Treda Smith, pronounced our finances to be sound, with a small net increase in our operating funds since the last meeting. Peter Straub, reported that AERS currently has 421 members on the books, but reminded us that many of those members haven't renewed their memberships recently. Non-paying members will be purged from the membership list every few years, so if this includes you, gentle reader, please pay up soon! Rachel Blake, our illustrious program chair, reported that, although there were still openings for abstracts by the original deadline (Feb 15), a tidal wave of abstracts was received during the following one week extension, with the result that not all abstracts could be accepted. Dave Osgood reported that four, \$125 student travel awards were given at the spring meeting. A lively conversation ensued about ways to raise additional funds for the endowment used to support student travel, including asking for donations on the website or with membership dues or to have auctions of donated items at meetings. Two candidates were nominated for the President's position: Leila Hamdan and Dave O'Neill, and two others were nominated for the role of secretary: Roger Wood and Louise Wootton. We also heard from Heidi Mahon (Student Representative) about her trip to Providence RI, funded by AERS. Heidi had been helping to plan many wonderful events for the fall ERF meeting, as well as working to make the entire event car-

(See AERSNews Continued on page 4)

STUDENT NEWS

By Shelley Sullivan

Several students received recognition for the presentation of their work at the last AERS meeting at Pine Knoll Shores, NC. The award for best graduate student presentation went to Bryce Brylawski of VIMS. Best graduate poster went to Pam Medley of UNC-Wilmington. Kathryn Dick of Smith College was awarded best undergraduate poster. Congratulations to all the winners. We hope to see a continuation of the exceptional presentations and posters from our student members at the meeting next month in Lewes.

If you have been doing anything of note that you would like your fellow AERS members to know about, email me at sesulliv@odu.edu and so that I can see that AERSNEWS reports it.

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bon neutral. Bravo Heidi! Heidi also introduced the Board to her successor to the student representative position, Shelly Sullivan (also of ODU fame). Dave Yozzo suggested that AERS should assess how many free registrations a sponsor / vendor should receive. Chris Swarth, Dave Gillet and Dave Yozzo volunteered to work on an AERS meeting manual to help guide meeting hosts in the future (Thanks guys!). Chris Swarth also suggested that AERS should consider hiring a lawyer to help guide us through the paperwork needed to assure the organization's 501 C-3 status. Things then turned to the lighter side in the discussion of whether AERS should replace the venerable clam, since the outside of the current clam is now full of signatures dating back to the clam's original awarding in 1948. Peter Straub offered to find a new clam, should the group so decide. Several locations for the spring 08 meeting were discussed including Georgian Court University and Brookdale Community College in NJ and The University of Delaware at Lewes, and it was determined to pick one of these in time for the Fall ERF meeting. Finally, a plaque was made by Mario Vieira to celebrate AERS' newest honorary member, Steve Rebach, who, unfortunately, was unable to attend the meeting to receive his plaque in person. Congratulations all the same Steve!

The weather was distinctly more "drippy" and cold when once again the Board met in fall 07 in the huge conference facility in Providence, RI. Once again Treda Smith brought us the good news that AERS is on solid financial ground, and that the spring meeting had actually resulted in a small surplus income which was split evenly between AERS and SEERS. Frank Reilly, editor of AERS news, made an impassioned plea to all present to please send materials to him for inclusion in upcoming issues of that publication. Peter Straub reported that the number of paid-up members in AERS was holding steady at about 230, and he urged everyone to be sure to renew their membership when they pay their annual ERF memberships. The location of the spring 08 meeting in Lewes Delaware

was announced. Dave Osgood announced that the student travel endowment was in pretty good shape, with \$600 available to fund awards to the spring meeting, and that plans were afoot to create a button on the registration form that would allow AERS to solicit donations from all who start or renew a membership or register for a meeting. Leila Hamdan announced that when ERF become CERF AERS will need to change the first paragraph of its constitution, which states that AERS is an affiliate of ERF to reflect this change. This will require a constitutional amendment which, in turn, will require a strong vote turnout, so everyone's support for this process would be much appreciated. Krista Laudenbach reminded the board that AERS will also need to update the websites and other places where the ERF logo is used to substitute the new CERF logo. Leila Hamdan then filled the board in on what has been found out about the organization's IRS status since the last meeting. The take home message is that AERS is currently listed as a 510-C5 (educational organization) rather than the 501-C non-profit that we'd like to be, since such a status offers additional protections and other benefits. It was agreed that this was sufficiently important of a process that AERS should enlist the help of a professional organization. The Foundation Group has been recommended to the organization for this purpose, since they specialize in helping small organizations through this process and charge a flat fee of \$1800. All present agreed to empower the board to do whatever needed to be done to resolve this issue. Finally a number of changes to the board were announced including welcoming Leila Handan as incoming president, Shelly Sullivan as Student affairs representative and welcoming back Steve Fuller who rejoined the board as Parliamentarian. In addition Judith Stribling agreed to serve as the Honorary Membership chair and Jessie Campbell will be the new program co-chair. The meeting adjourned and folks dispersed to the student career and networking dinner and ERF unplugged events. It's a rough life being an attendee at an ERF / AERS meeting!

Instinctive Responsibility

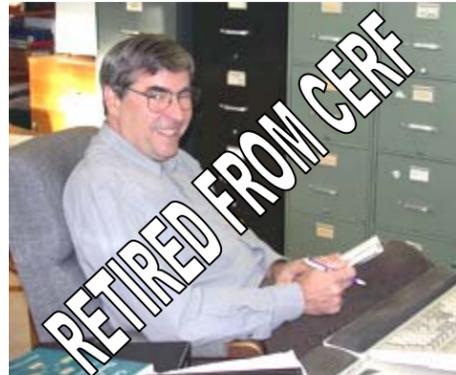
From the President-elect, Leila Hamdan

Last summer during a research cruise, I notice that a cable deploying a piston corer looked odd, so odd that an unseen force caused my brain to send the signal TURN AND RUN! to my legs. When barely at safe distance, the odd nature of the cable became evident: the sea state caused 2 tons of metal to suddenly freefall. This culminated in a chain reaction on deck that could have resulted in an election for a different AERS President-elect if not for one thing: Instinct saved my presidential rear.

Instinct is an individual disposition, repeated in order to maintain the self alone. Instinct is an unlearned, un-intellectualized response to stimuli that is hard to resist. Instinct does not help the population endure. My instinct told me "TURN AND RUN!" on another occasion, when my nomination for AERS President first came up. In just milliseconds, that circuit of my brain processed the possibility and concluded that it would be too costly to the self. That moment of weakness would have cost me a tremendous honor and incredible opportunity to serve a community rich in knowledge, history and integrity. Obviously (note the by-line), another force prevailed: Responsibility. Unlike instinct, responsibility concerns both the self and the collective, is intellectualized and something that gladly runs rampant among the AERS membership.

During the past few years I have had the occasion to survey the AERS archives and research the evolution of our society through the generations. In my survey I have observed Responsibility prevail again and again over Instinct. Those who would become AERS founders felt responsible for the regional coastal and estuarine science community and acted to create this forum for discovery and discussions. That later evolved into a sense of responsibility for the greater estuarine community in accepting that AERS could not serve all.

Recently, former AERS Board members have returned to Board service (Welcome back Jessie, Judith and Steve!). Other Board members have taken on new Board positions (Thanks David, Julie, Louise and Pete!). The current AERS Board really gets it: Responsibility is the fuel that keeps AERS running. That sentiment inspires them to continue to help the AERS population endure even though their individual responsibilities may bring on the TURN AND RUN instinct. However, the source of AERS fuel must be sustained and renewed. Now and throughout my upcoming tenure as President I will implore the AERS membership to take responsibility for the past, present and future of AERS. I hope many of you will be encouraged to turn your instinct to responsibility and become more active in AERS. Who knows, it may some day save your presidential rear!



What's happening at CERF (a.k.a. ERF)?

By Bob Christian

Frank asked that I write a paragraph or so on what's new with the Federation. Well, first we're tying up loose ends from an exceptionally successful biennial conference. We're also finishing up recent changes, such as how we publish Estuaries and Coasts, what we call ourselves and what our constitution says. Each has taken much work from a variety of people. In particular Joy and Janet at Headquarters have been at the center of it all. They deserve your thanks, because everything is

looking like it is working out for the betterment of us all. The Howarth administration is focusing on two initiatives: expanding international efforts and expanding the Federation's impact in bridging science and policy. These are just beginning, so stay tuned. Finally, I'm sure you'd like to know that I'm recovering from my two years as President of ERF. It was quite a ride. Thanks to all who helped make it a great experience. It would have never happened without me first being involved in AERS.

Editor's Note: Bob actually does not get to retire from CERF, but this is the only picture he would send me. Bob serves as Past-President for a little bit longer. In case you were unaware, Past-President duties include: keeping your mouth shut; taking the blame for past performances; and doing whatever the actual President cannot get anyone else to do! And one more thing - Thank you very much Bob!