

Greetings from OCMRA

- Shan Liu & Yan-Yan Hu

Hope you all have had a wonderful summer. As the summer is coming to an end, what's a better way to remember it than to share your fascinating summer stories with friends at OCMRA! Let us stay informed and connected. In this issue, you will find news of past and upcoming NMR conferences reported by the OCMRA members as well as a special report from Cheng Peng (MestreLab) detailing his trips to China:

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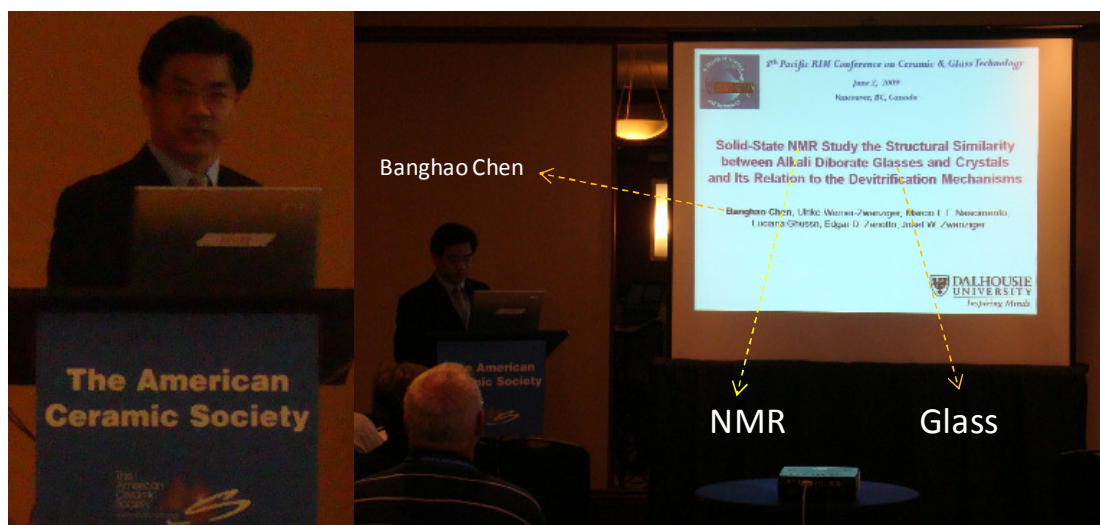
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BRIEFING

The 8th Pacific Rim Conference on Ceramic & Glass Technology (PACRIM8) was held on May 31 - June 5, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada. This conference was the eighth in a series of international conferences that provide a global forum for presentations and information exchange on the latest emerging ceramic and glass technologies. PACRIM conferences have established a strong reputation for facilitating global dialogue and discussion with leading global experts, practitioners, and end-users. The American Ceramic Society organized this important international meeting with the cooperation and support from the Australian Ceramic Society, the Ceramic Society of Japan, the Chinese Ceramic Society, and the Korean Ceramic Society.

Meeting Summary: The conference started with a Welcome Reception, on the 34th floor of the Hyatt Regency. Over 450 people ate, drank and networked as they enjoyed a panoramic view of downtown Vancouver, the mountains, and many waterways. The Opening Session started the conference on a high note, where over 400 people listened to "Global Megatrends: Challenges and Opportunities of Ceramics" plenary session featuring Joseph A Miller Jr., a senior vice president and chief technology officer of Corning Inc. who discussed Corning's approach to growth through innovation, and Dr. Larry Hench, a professor of the University of Florida, who gave a 40-year retrospective of the discovery and uses of bioglass. Over the next 4 days, a total of 862 people from 41 countries attended PACRIM8 where 883 technical presentations were made in 27 symposia and a poster session.

NMR and PACRIM8: PACRIM8 is designed for materials scientists, engineers, researchers and manufacturers to share knowledge and state-of-the-art advancements in materials technology. Recent developments of NMR, especially solid-state NMR (such as high resolution NMR experiments under higher field), make it a viable approach to probe both the short- and intermediate-range order of glasses and glass-ceramics. These developments explain why a number of NMR/materials scientists (including myself) attended this conference and marketed NMR in glass community.



I like Vancouver: The conference venue for PACRIM8 is located in beautiful Vancouver, Canada. It is well-known that Vancouver is a cultural crossroad that is located midway between Western Europe and Asia Pacific; a food-lover’s dream place with more restaurants, a wider selection of ethnic cuisines, and better prices than any comparably-sized cities in the world; and one of the only cities in the world where you can ski, golf and sail all on the same day. If you have not been there, make a plan right now.

-By Banghao Chen,
Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada



The Johns Hopkins Biomolecular NMR Center had a new addition!

On the Friday of May 29, Johns Hopkins University hosted a one-day NMR symposium in recognition of the successful running of their newest Varian Inova 800 spectrometer. The symposium was entitled “Applications of High-Resolution NMR Spectroscopy to Biological Problems” and its program can still be found here <http://biophysics.jhu.edu/nmr>. The Johns Hopkins Biomolecular NMR Center is an inter-campus research facility, encompassing the Johns Hopkins University (Director - Ananya Majumdar, P.I. - Blake Hill, P.I. - Joel Tolman) and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (P.I.-James Stivers). The Center comprises of six NMR spectrometers (Varian Inova 800, Bruker Avance 600, Bruker Avance II 600, Varian Inova 600, and two Varian Inova 500)– four of which equipped with cryogenic probes- for liquid state high-resolution NMR studies of biological molecules. More information can be found on its website <http://bionmr.jhu.edu/>

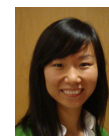
Dennis Torchia celebrated his 70th Birthday!



<http://biochem.uthscsa.edu/~ahinck/torchia70/index.html>

On another Friday, June 12th, dozens of NMR scientists flocked to NIH campus for an afternoon NMR symposium celebrating Dennis Torchia’s 70th Birthday. Torchia’s former postdoc Darón Freedberg (FDA) organized the symposium. The theme for session 1 was solid-state NMR presented by Robert Griffin (MIT), Donna Baldisseri (Bruker), and Gary Drobny (U. Washington). Session 2 focused on solution NMR of macromolecules and it was led by Andrew Hinck (U. Texas HSC), Yun-xing Wang (NCI), and Lewis Kay (U. Toronto). Torchia’s current and former group members gathered for a private reunion dinner after the symposium.

-By Shan Liu, NIH

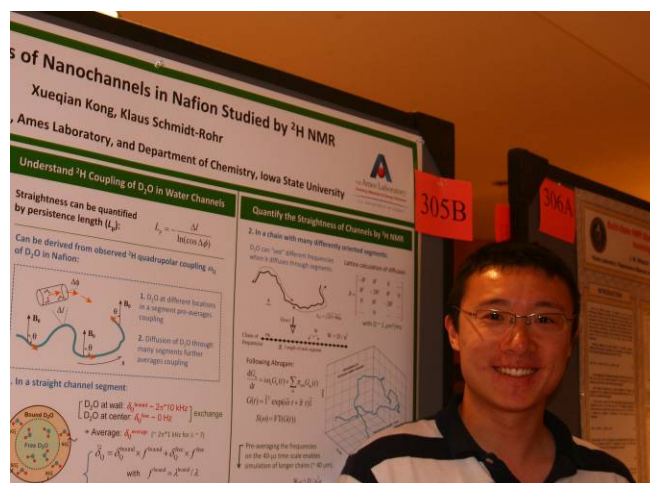


The 51st Rocky Mountain Conference (RMC)

Around July every year, many of you are probably hiding in your offices, laboratories, or homes away from the scorching heat and glaring sunlight. However, the weather feels like spring in the pristine mountains of Colorado, and this is the place where the Rocky Mountain Conference (RMC) on Analytical Chemistry is held annually. The RMC includes three sessions, which are solid state NMR (SSNMR), EPR and analytical methods. It is the favorite conference for most of SSNMR and EPR people. The conference provides a very friendly academic environment comprising many loyal attendees, who bring in state-of-the-art research to share almost every year. This year's RMC was held from July 19 to July 23 in Snowmass which is approximately 200 miles to the west of Denver. Snowmass is one of the most popular resorts in Colorado for skiing and summer getaways. Maroon Bells, one of the most famous mountains in Colorado, is just within bus distance to Snowmass.



Maroon Bells, Aspen, Colorado

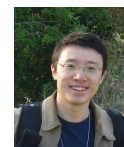


Xueqian at poster session, RMC 09

Philip Grandinetti and Mei Hong co-chaired this year's meeting. More than 40 talks were given in both SSNMR and EPR sessions and over a hundred posters were presented. On the website: www.rockychem.com, you can learn about the conference and review the recent abstracts. As for SSNMR, the talks were centered on topics including energy-related materials, new technique development, and biological macromolecules. The RMC will be held again in Snowmass in early August of 2010. If you are interested, please mark your calendar and visit the website www.rockychem.com for the latest updates.

A few well-known Chinese scholars including Zhehong Gan (NHFML), Mei Hong (Iowa State), Yue Wu (North Carolina), and a number of students and postdocs, attended this year's RMC. Even though there is a large attendance of Chinese scholars and students, I have not seen or heard of any organized events specifically for the Chinese community in RMCs. Thus, in next RMC, it shall be an obligation for us in the OCMRA committee to host a gathering to facilitate connections among Chinese scientists, especially for those who cannot attend ENCs.

-By Xueqian Kong, Iowa State



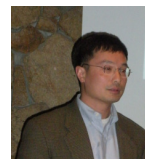
The 10th International Conference on Magnetic Resonance Microscopy (ICMRM, <http://www.icrm10.montana.edu/>) will be held very soon (August 30-Sept 4th) in West Yellowstone, Montana. This is a conference primarily focused on non-medical applications of MRI, such as material science, porous media, and MRI microscopy, as well as related development in methods, technologies and sciences. Diffusion is also a major interest of the conference. The conference is held once every two years and is

attended by scientists from a wide range of disciplines, such as physics, chemistry, chemical and civil engineering, and applied mathematics. The conference often starts with a few educational sessions given by senior scientists in the field. The main sessions may include topics of method development, hardware, porous media, materials, plants, food, and recent technology advances such as polarization enhancement and ultra low field NMR. In addition to the oral presentations, the conference also features two poster sessions to enhance the interactions among all participants. For young scientists, there is a chance to participate in a special session for Young Investigators and compete for the Young Investigator Award. Also, there is a MRI Imaging competition to select the most beautiful MRI images. The results of these competitions are announced at the end of the conference.

My first ICMRM was in 2003 held in Salt Lake City, Utah and I have been to every one of it ever since. I am very impressed by the broad range of topics and the interesting applications discussed at the conference. However, what appeals to me most is the people (including the organizers and participants), the warmth, the openness, the inclusiveness, and the high caliber science. I am looking forward to the 10th ICMRM at the end of August and will report back in the next newsletter.

Invitation to the 2010 ENC The next ENC (<http://www.enc-conference.org/>) will be held in Daytona Beach on April 18-23, 2010. Although it is still early and quite a few months away before you all have to rush in your abstract, the preparation of the program is already starting. If you have great results and interesting work that you believe you deserve to present orally to the ENC audience, please do not hesitate to send it to me or any others on the Executive Committee. And your suggestions are highly welcomed and will be a valuable contribution to the success of the conference.

-By Yiqiao Song, Schlumberger and Harvard



STORY: A Newly-converted Salesman’s Trips to China

I’ve joined Mestrelab Research as a “Director of Business Development for US and China” since May 2009, and I certainly still consider myself as a newly-converted businessman from an NMR software developer. Handling two big markets with very different cultures is a challenging yet fascinating task to me. While I routinely travel to cities all over the US for conferences, tradeshows and customer visits, I’ve made two trips to China so far. The first trip took place in last October and November, covering the Cross Taiwan Strait NMR Symposium and the Biennial National NMR Conference of China, and many site visits (see www.ocnmra.org for details). Everybody knows that China has made drastic changes and advancements in the recent years, yet both Santi (CEO of our company, my Spanish buddy) and I were shocked to see the massive scale of the infrastructures in the many high tech zones in Shanghai and Beijing. The Zhangjiang High Tech Area hosts numerous chemical and pharmaceutical companies, large or small, and you won’t be surprised to see the names of many Western big pharmas there. The Waigaoqiao Foreign Trade Zone hosts Wuxi AppTech, the biggest CRO company in China, which boasts over 2000 chemists and 14 NMR instruments. The NMR equipments in the academic institutions are also impressive. For example, when I was working on my Ph.D. at SIOC in 1987-93, the 60 MHz NMR was the only open-access instrument (while most institutes did not allow any open-access in China then). Nowadays they have a 500 and two 400 NMR for open-access, and the facility manager Dr Guangyu Li told me that they are still buying more. Santi and I exhibited our software Mnova on the NMR conferences and presented it to many companies, universities and institutes. Our Mnova software was invariably well received. We were also glad to see that they seriously considered purchasing software for their R&D work – for this I sure had been prepared to see the opposite. Of course, this was partly due to the fact that we offered a very generous discount to the Chinese market for a limited period.



After this encouraging first trip to China, Santi and I started our second one in April. We flew to Shanghai where we met Mr Hongyu Liu. Hongyu is the president of Qingdao Tenglong Weibo Technologies (TLWB), who recently became our distributor in China. The first Monday, we visited three top CRO companies. They all reviewed Mnova positively, and two of them confirmed that they would order the software. The second day we hosted a whole day conference (like a user meetings plus training session) in the Institute of Materia Medica with about 50 people from many companies and universities in the Shanghai area. Santi had improved his Chinese significantly, and he started the conference by an impressive introduction in Mandarin with occasional interpretation aid from me. This time he also learned the lesson and accepted my advice to wear his fancy suit – even though he never bothered to dress formally in the West. Certainly he was considered charming and attractive by the audience. During the lunch time, we drew a prize of free annual licenses to 5 lucky attendees and the winners were very pleased.

We flew to Beijing in the evening, and hosted a similar conference in the Pharmacy School of Beijing University on the next day. I had an audience of close to 100 people from the local universities and companies. On the 4th day, we visited a CRO company in the Life Science Park in the Changping District. This company purchased our software a few weeks later. After that we had a brief trip to the Tiananmen Square to take some pictures for Santi, and then flew to Qingdao to visit our distributor, TLWB. In Qingdao we enjoyed its beautiful streets and beaches, famous Tsingtao Beer, and scrumptious seafood, in addition to the warm hospitality of Hongyu and his team. We delivered training sessions to the TLWB team, and some presentations to the NMR people from several local universities as well. We were truly impressed by the enthusiasm and professionalism of the TLWB team. Shortly after this, Santi left for Beijing since he had to join an NMR conference in Brazil two days later. And I, after relaxing a few days over the May 1st holidays, embarked my multi-city travel in the company of Hongyu.

In the following two weeks, we visited Beijing, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Xiamen, and then back to Shanghai. I also visited my parents in Hunan for several days. We shuffled between flights, rental cars, hotels, restaurants, parties, presentations, and demos. For many of the universities and research institutes that we visited, I was constantly impressed by the fancy buildings and conference rooms, the NMR equipments, and of course, the delicious cuisines. My camera did not rest much every day. If you are interested, go to

<http://picasaweb.google.com/chenpeng67> to see the many albums dated for April and May this year. It is certainly a strenuous trip as well. I remember that we arrived in Xiamen from Guangzhou at midnight, and had to present in Xiamen University on the very next morning. When we visited the famous NMR Lab of Dr Zhong Chen, they were busy unpacking the new Varian MRI instrument. After a nice lunch with him and his team, his driver gave us a wonderful tour around the beaches and rode us to the airport. We returned to Shanghai around 7 pm on the same day, waited through the long taxi line, and arrived at the East China Normal University where we gave a training session to a group of about 20 people. It was midnight when we got back to our hotel.

After more than 3 weeks in China, I said good-bye to Hongyu in Shanghai and flew to Santiago de Compostella in Spain to visit the headquarters of Mestrelab. I still miss the days with Santi and Hongyu in China, and the many friends I met along the way. We are happy to see that more than twenty universities/institutes and several companies have joined the long Mnova-user list since my two trips to China.

-By Chen Peng, Mestrelab Research



Concluding remarks

For the next issue of OCNMR newsletter that will be published at the end of the year, we cordially invite all OCMRA members to share with us your news, photos, and perspectives. Please send your letters to Yan-Yan Hu (huyy02@gmail.com) or Shan Liu (Lius5@mail.nih.gov). And please visit our website <http://www.ocnmra.org/> (funded by Mestrelab Research) for updates and forum discussions. We always welcome suggestions from members to improve our newsletter, website, and services to NMR community. Thank you for your consistent interest and support.

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