

**AAG - MOUNTAIN GEOGRAPHY SPECIALTY GROUP (MGSG)
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

- Report -

Submitted by outgoing chair, Daniel Fagre, and incoming chair, Ulrich Kamp
100th Meeting of the Association of American Geographers
March 15, 2004, Philadelphia, PA

The Mountain Geography Specialty Group (MGSG) annual meeting was held in Philadelphia in conjunction with the 100th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. There were 31 attendees.

1. Welcome (Fagre)

Dan Fagre, Chair, welcomed the group and handed out the meeting agenda and the report of the annual business meeting 2003 in New Orleans. Ulrich Kamp, Secretary and Treasurer, took notes of the meeting.

2. Approval of 2003 Minutes (Fagre)

Regarding the report of the 2003 meeting, Jack Shroder mentioned the misspelling of his name (“Schroder” instead of the correct version “Shroder”). This will be corrected. Besides this, the report was approved.

3. Chair’s Report (Fagre)

Dan Fagre informed the group about the actual budget of MGSG. As of March 2004, MGSG has a balance of \$1,215.44, which has grown modestly over the past few years. No expenses have been reported since the account balance. The account is managed for MGSG by AAG.

During the last year, MGSG’s membership increased from 149 to around 200. The AAG has recommended a minimum of 100 members for its 54 specialty groups and, as discussed at the AAG chair’s meeting earlier in the day, is proposing to deactivate those groups that have become very small or inactive. As a growing SG, MGSG is not in jeopardy but should work to maintain its momentum. Two different mailing lists exist, which makes it difficult to establish the exact number of members. AAG will be asked to submit a list of paying members of its specialty groups.

At the 2004 AAG centennial meeting more than 3,000 papers and posters will be presented. The AAG has apologized for the number of errors in the program and the printing problems this year and has taken steps to ensure a better product for 2005.

Despite the increase in MGSG membership, it was not easy to organize the mountain sessions for the 2004 meeting. Dan Fagre's call for the submission of session topics and papers was not very successful and it required additional efforts to establish a number of sponsored and co-sponsored sessions to maintain MGSG's visibility. One reason might be that many mountain researchers are involved in other specialty groups, e.g. Remote Sensing SG, and see advantages to present a mountain topic in such groups.

The AAG encourages its specialty groups to sponsor sessions at future AAG meetings. However, the AAG recommended greater "control" by specialty groups for submitted presentation abstracts. Instead on quantity, the focus should be on quality. For the annual meeting 2005 in Denver, Jack Shroder recommended a review process for the abstracts by a MGSG review committee. The committee should work out abstract guidelines, set session topics in advance, and invite elected speakers.

From 2004 on, AAG had received a suggestion from the Specialty Group chairs that the annual activity reports of the specialty groups be due one month after the annual business meeting, which as a rule is held at the annual AAG meeting. AAG is considering the implementation of this change.

AAG asked for additional contributions to AAG's centennial fund. Don Friend encouraged MGSG to contribute \$100 to the fund. There was no vote against this contribution.

4. Mountain Research and Development Journal (Wachs)

The MRD journal Managing Director Ted Wachs described the journal and tried to enlist new subscribers. The journal has approximately 400 paying subscribers and can be found in nearly 500 institutions in developing countries.

5. Reception Announcement (Friend)

Don Friend invited all MGSG members to the reception that took place after the business meeting. Every present member and all guests received a free ticket for one beverage.

6. Centennial Projects Discussion (Fagre)

As at the meeting in 2003, Jack Shroder, who is Editor-in-Chief of the Development and Earth Surface Processes series for Elsevier, invited the group to submit a book proposal on a mountain geography history publication. A book committee could be formed within MGSG to organize this effort. Statements of interest, first ideas or proposals should be sent to Ulrich Kamp soon.

7. Website Development (Fagre)

An improved version of the MGSG website, hosted at the University of Georgia, will be accessible soon. The URL is: <http://www.ggy.uga.edu/mgsg/> MGSG will use the Mountain Forum as an additional platform for a wider communication beyond its own member pool. Peter Anderson, who could not attend the meeting, is willing to help manage the website.

8. Election of Secretary (Fagre)

Ulrich Kamp, Secretary and Treasurer, will be chair of MGSG for the period 2004/05. He will organize the mountain sessions for the AAG annual meeting in Denver in 2005. Dan Fagre called for nominations for secretary-treasurer for the period 2004/05, and, after his nomination, Alton Byers (Mountain Institute) was elected by enthusiastic consensus.

9. Appointment of New Awards Committee Member(s) (Fagre)

Dan Fagre called for nominations or volunteers to serve on the MGSG Awards Committee. After his nomination, Martin Lafrenz (University of Tennessee) introduced himself to the group and was elected by enthusiastic consensus. He will join George Malanson and Kevin Blake on the committee.

10. IGU/IGC Mountain Commission (Friend)

Don Friend called for submission of abstracts for the session “Diversity of Mountain Systems” at the IGU/IGC Conference in Glasgow, UK, in August 2004.

11. The Mountain Institute (Byers)

Alton Byers, Executive Director, reported on the MI activities. He called for volunteering as senior technical advisers on projects.

12. Mountain Studies Institute (Stein)

Ellen Stein, Executive Director, reported on the MSI facilities and activities. MSI offers field-based courses for undergraduates and a minor in mountain studies. She encouraged all MGSG members to visit the MSI website and to pass on information about MSI to students.

13. Other Business (Friend)

In the name of the founding committee Don Friend thanked all advisory board members for their work and support.

14. Awards (Marston)

Dick Marston presented awards, with newly designed plaques, to the following persons: Karl Birkeland was the recipient of the Outstanding Recent Achievement Award for his work on avalanches. Katherine Hansen, founder of the Mountain Research Center (now Big Sky Institute) at Montana State University - Bozeman, and Alton Byers, Director of the Mountain Institute, both received a Distinguished Career Award. Kathy was especially honored for her work on snow dynamics; Alton for his work on people and mountains. Dick Marston donated the award plaques and has a template established for future use. Kathy Hansen was sponsored to attend the awards luncheon.