

# Silicon Valley Chemist

Santa Clara Valley Section

American Chemical Society

Volume 24 No.12

## The Elements of Leadership: Chemical Demonstrations With a Theme!

2002 Harry and Carol Mosher Awardee

*Professor C. Marvin Lang*

The 2002 Harry and Carol Mosher Award will be presented to Professor C. Marvin Lang on January 17, 2003 at our monthly dinner meeting in the Biltmore Hotel in Santa Clara. The evening will include a dinner (make your reservation early, seating is limited), the Award address by Professor Lang, and a chemistry demonstration. The address and the demonstration will take place in an adjacent hall to the dining room.



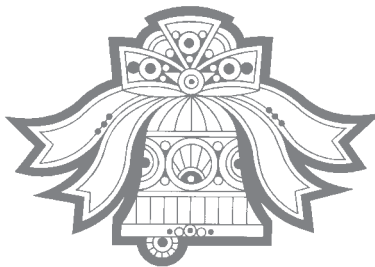
of England. Each of us could add a name to the list of renowned leaders in government, medicine, theology, law, etc., who had prior significant experience with chemistry. What characteristics do they have in common?

Dr. Lang's extensive biography has been published already – see the August 2002 issue!

### Abstract

Chemical professionals are leaders! They are immersed in challenging and intriguing problems. They identify and solve problems. In fact, there are some that claim, "Chemistry is the problem!" How is it that individuals interested in chemical phenomena, over many modern generations, have often held positions of great importance? In the last century Herbert Hoover was a chemical engineer before becoming President of the USA. Margaret Thatcher was an analytical chemist before her tenure as Prime Minister

The Harry & Carol Mosher Award addressee will present thoughts and ideas on the subject "What are the characteristics of a successful leader?" For example, "How do ordinary people perform extraordinary feats?" "What motivates and inspires leaders to rise above themselves and get others to follow?" "What roles do self-discipline, honor and integrity play in leadership?" These questions prompt answers and comments that will be punctuated with pertinent and inspiring chemical demonstrations!



## January Dinner Meeting

**Date:** January 17, 2002

**Time:** 6:00 Social hour  
Sponsored by Peters, Verry Jones, and Schmitt, LLP  
7:00 Dinner  
8:00 Lecture

**Location:** Biltmore Hotel & Suites  
2151 Laurelwood Road  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
408-988-8411

**Speaker:** Dr. C. Marvin Lang  
Lecture and chemical demonstration

**Cost:** \$27.00 with the choice of Grilled salmon or wild mushroom stuffed manicotti

**Reservations:** [www.scvacs.org](http://www.scvacs.org)  
Shirley Radding  
408-246-2564  
408-296-8625 Fax

Reservations should be made by January 13th, stating your name, company affiliation, number of people in party, and menu selection.

If you are unable to honor your reservation, you will be invoiced following the dinner meeting. Reservations are not needed for attending the lecture only.

## Chair's Message

Here is the update on National Chemistry Week (NCW) as promised in my last message. It was a great success! All of our events went well. I was at the Menlo Park slime event for kids at the La Entrada School soccer fields. We made a lot of slime, and the kids had a lot of fun.

I'd like to thank Asfia Qureshi for doing a fine job of organizing and coordinating all of the section's NCW events. And, thanks to the folks who volunteered and made each event such a success.

I wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. Our first meeting of the new year will celebrate the Harry and Carol Mosher Award winner for 2002: Dr. C. Marvin Lang of the University of Wisconsin. The dinner meeting will be on Friday, January 17th at the Biltmore Hotel. We are

fortunate that Dr. Lang, a renowned chemical demonstrator, will put on a show at Santa Clara University on Saturday, January 18th (check our web site for details). It should be a great time, so bring the whole family.

This is my last Chair's message. Writing them has been a rewarding experience as has been Chairing the section. I am glad to have had the opportunity. However, I am also glad to be finishing up and passing on these responsibilities to Maureen Scharberg, our new Chair. I know Maureen will do a great job.

Certainly, Laura Jarvis, our Newsletter editor, will breathe a sigh of relief, as Maureen's messages will not test Newsletter deadlines as much as mine. Have a great holiday week - see you next year!



*The whole team gets to work.*



*Youngest slime maker, Sarah Touster, and her Dad.*



*Morning slime crew.*



*Afternoon slime crew.*

## DON'T MISS World Famous Chemical Demonstration - January 18, 2003 -

Do not miss the Lang and Showalter Chemical Demonstration Show on Saturday, January 18, 2003 at Santa Clara University. This show is renowned on the national and international stage. Nationally, this show was presented at places like The U.S. Congress, The Smithsonian and The EPCOT Center.

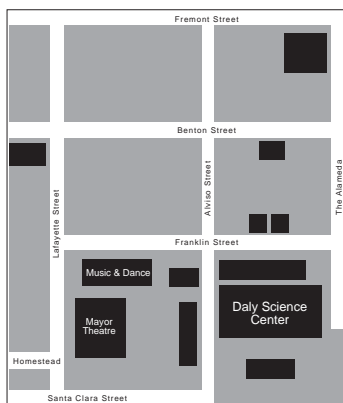


Internationally, Professor Lang presented similar demonstrations in countries like Finland and Russia. Professors Lang and Showalter gave our section a presentation at Stanford University in 1989. Do not miss this one or you may have to wait another 13 years to the next one!

Professor Donald Showalter is the Professor who nominated Dr.

Lang for the Mosher's Award. He is a Professor of Chemistry at University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. He will be the one who will do the introduction of Professor Lang on Friday at the dinner. He works together with Dr. Lang in the presentation of the Chemistry Shows. Often, Professor Showalter has been referred as the "Side kick".

The Saturday Chemical show will begin promptly at 2:00 pm in the Daly Science Center on the Santa Clara University Campus.



## Patent Truths: Kid Stuff

I have found some great web sites for the kid in all of us. Some of the information below is summarized from these sites

(<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bltoy.btm> and <http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bltoy.btm>).

1. "LINCOLN LOGS" were invented by John Lloyd Wright in 1916. Wright was the son of the famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, and claimed he was inspired by the interlocking foundation of the Imperial Hotel (the earthquake proof building) in Tokyo, Japan. (The day the Imperial Hotel opened in 1923, the massive Tokyo earthquake and fire destroyed all buildings for miles. But the hotel survived intact and operating.) By 1975, more than a million sets of LINCOLN LOGS were being sold annually (<http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/lincolnlogs.btm>).
2. The modern plastic Frisbie® was invented by Walter Morrison (U.S. Patent No. 3,350,67). The Frisbie Baking Company of Bridgeport, CT sold pies to local New England colleges – including Yale University. The metal pie tins were sailed by Yale students. Students would yell "Frisbie" when someone was about to be hit by the sailing metal tin (like "fore" in golf). The plastic Frisbie® was popularized by Wham-O of Southern California.

Morrison received more than \$1,000,000 in royalties from two USC graduates, Rich Knerr and Spud Malin, the founders of Wham-O (<http://www.airfairways.com/history.btm>).

3. The modern Hula Hoop® was really not protected by patent and sales were subject to cut-throat competition. Research chemists Paul Hogan and Robert Banks of Phillips Petroleum in Oklahoma invented MARLEX® plastic, a blend of crystallized polypropylene and high-density polyethylene (HDPE), U.S. Patent No. 2,825,721 (see National Inventors Hall of Fame at <http://www.invent.org>). Twenty million hula-hoops were sold (by Wham-O) in 6 months in 1958 for \$1.98. It was a great use for this new polymer (<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blbulahoop.btm>).
4. SILLY PUTTY® was invented by James Wright at GE's New Haven, CT labs. Boric acid and dimethyl silioxane produced a novel goo that bounced further than rubber. But, no one could find a practical use for this unusual product. In 1949, unemployed advertising man Peter Hodgson saw "nutty putty" at a party. He borrowed \$147, bought the production rights from GE, and produced the elastomer. It was packaged in plastic eggs and sold just before Easter. It was an instant

hit - first, with adults and later, with kids. When Hodgson died in 1976, he left an estate of over \$140 million (<http://web.mit.edu/invent/www/inventorsAH/sillyputty.html> and [http://sillyputty.com/history\\_101/timeline/timeline.btm](http://sillyputty.com/history_101/timeline/timeline.btm)).

5. PLAY-DOH® was invented by Joseph and Noah W. McVicker in 1956 and they received U.S. Patent No. 3,167,440 issued in 1968. It really is based on a well-known wallpaper cleaner formulation used in the East to remove residual winter coal and fuel dust. The similarity to modeling clay without toxicity made a great toy. Joe McVicker became a millionaire before his 27th birthday (<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blplaydob.btm>).
6. "KOOSH® BALL" was patented (U.S. Patent No. 4,756,529) by Scott Stillingler of Campbell, CA in 1971. It is a series of elastic strings connected at the center by elastic. In the Silicon Valley, the KOOSH® BALL was a favorite toy to be thrown from one office into the adjacent cubical in the open office environment of most startup companies (<http://www.yesterdayland.com/popopedia/shows/toys/ty1198.php>).

My wife, Sally, read this draft and said, "You can really tell a guy wrote this column."

Howard M. Peters, Copyright © 2002



## 2003 ACS - SCVS Election Results

CHAIR-ELECT: George Lechner

SECRETARY: Karl Marhenke

TREASURER: Hong Gao

COUNCILORS (2003-2005)

Maureen Scharberg

John Riley

Ean Warren

ALTERNATE COUNCILORS (2003-2005)

David Parker

Laura (Rasay) Jarvis

Asfia Qureshi

## Voluntary Membership It Helps

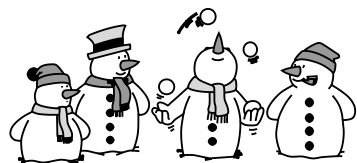
Many of you have already received your membership notice from ACS National. In addition to renewing your membership and journal subscriptions, we hope you contribute to your local section by paying the voluntary dues. For your \$12, you get all the programs your local offers including this newsletter, monthly dinner meetings, recognition of your fellow chemists through awards, support for local schools teaching chemistry, and outreach programs such as National Chemistry Week.

The volunteers of the local section would like to thank you for your generosity.

## 2002 ACS Western Region Outstanding High School Teacher Award



Maureen hands over the 2002 ACS Western Region Outstanding High School Teacher award to Gareth Wong. In the next issue of the newsletter hear more about the Teacher's Workshop celebrating National Chemistry Week.



### Editor's Corner

Happy Holidays! I wish everyone happy and safe travels as well as a relaxing time with family and friends. In this month's issue, you will not see a Technical Division Column. I had gotten married on October 27th and spent most of the October making final preparations. Thus, by the November 10th deadline, I had no time to work on the column for the issue. I hope to have something for the column in the next issue. Until then, happy holidays!



## Happy Holidays!

## Call for Volunteer Judges and Assistants

Dr. George Washington Carver  
Reconition Day Science Fair and Carver  
Kidvention

**Date:** Saturday January 4, 2003

**Time:** 8 am - 1:30 pm (includes continental breakfast/coffee and lunch)

**Location:** Santa Clara Convention Center

The local section has assisted these important events for the past four years; now, you can too! If you can help, please contact Dr. Howard Peters as soon as possible for more information (peters4pa@aol.com or 650-324-1677 Extension 3).

### NDE Analytical

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## SANTA CLARA VALLEY SECTION

### 2002 Section Officers

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Secretary: <b>Karl Marhenke</b>	831-479-6263	<a href="mailto:karlmar@armory.com">karlmar@armory.com</a>
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Past-Chair: <b>Sally Peters</b>	650-812-4994	<a href="mailto:speters@parc.xerox.com">speters@parc.xerox.com</a>

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2002-04: <b>Herb Silber</b>	408-924-4954	<a href="mailto:hbsilber@sjsuvm1.sjsu.edu">hbsilber@sjsuvm1.sjsu.edu</a>

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### ChemEmployment Abstracts

Director: **Shirley B. Radding** 408-246-2564 [sradding@att.net](mailto:sradding@att.net)

## FUTURE MEETINGS

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Jan 17</b>    | SCV Dinner Meeting<br><i>Dr. C. Marvin Lang</i><br>Mosher Awardee                 |
| <b>Jan 18</b>    | Chemistry Demonstration<br><i>Dr. C. Marvin Lang</i><br>University of Santa Clara |
| <b>Feb 2-3</b>   | Process Chemistry in the<br>Pharmaceutical Industry<br>San Juan, PR               |
| <b>Feb 1-5</b>   | 50 Years On: From the Double<br>Helix to Molecular Medicine                       |
| <b>Feb 20</b>    | SCV Dinner Meeting<br><i>Juanita Ryan</i><br>Antarctica Research                  |
| <b>Feb 23-26</b> | Polymorphism in Crystals<br>Tampa, FL   |
| <b>Mar 13</b>    | SCV Dinner Meeting<br><i>Dr. Thomas Okarma</i><br>Stem Cell Research              |
| <b>Mar 23-27</b> | ACS Spring National Meeting<br>New Orleans, LA                                    |

For the latest information, please visit  
SCV/ACS web site: [www.scvacs.org](http://www.scvacs.org)



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