

# Silicon Valley Chemist

Santa Clara Valley Section

American Chemical Society

Volume 30 No. 2

## FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER TOPICS

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## February Dinner Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, February 14, 2008

**Time:** 6:00 Social Hour  
Discussion Group  
7:00 Dinner  
8:00 Presentation

**Location:** Biltmore Hotel & Suites  
2151 Laurelwood Blvd.  
Santa Clara, CA 95054

**Speaker:** Dr. Ariel Fenster  
McGill University  
The Colors of Art: History and Properties of Artists' Pigments

**Cost:** \$27.00 with the choice of  
Chicken Honey Dijon  
Eggplant Parmesan  
Includes wine with dinner

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

Reservations should be made by February 10 stating your name, address, company affiliation, number of people in party, and menu selection. If you are unable to honor your reservation and do not cancel by Wednesday, February 13, you will be invoiced following the dinner meeting.

## Chair's Message

February, and the year is going apace. I hope that many of you will plan to attend the February dinner meeting, on the 14th. This is a week earlier than our normal meeting, but the topic will hopefully bring many to the Biltmore. "The Colors of Art" deals with history and properties of artists' pigments. Dr. Ariel Fenster's presentation should be interesting and informative. The March meeting is currently in a state of change; while I had intended to get a speaker from ACS Speaker Tour, Lee Latimer has arranged for a former FDA employee to talk to the California Section, and so the March meeting will be a joint meeting at the

Basque Center in South San Francisco.

Despite all of the methods available to us for communication, do we truly communicate very well with those with whom we come in contact? Included in our numbers are members all the way from fresh graduates just starting in their careers to those that have been members of the ACS and practicing chemists or chemical engineers for 50 or more years. How do we, who have been chemists for more than a few years, reach out to those who are just starting their careers? Even more importantly, how do we reach out and communicate the joys of

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## Reminder: February Dinner Meeting The Colors of Art: History and Properties of Artists' Pigments

Dr. Ariel Fenster

### Abstract

This presentation explores the history and the science of the various pigments used by the great masters, Titian, Rembrandt, Monet and others. Discover the unusual origins of Indian yellow and learn the secret of ultramarine. Understand the reasons for the widespread popularity of lead white and the versatility of cadmium paints. This will be an exceptional presentation highlighting the complementary relationship that exists between science and art.

### Biography

Ariel Fenster teaches at McGill University, where he is a founding member of the Office for Science and Society, an organization dedicated to disseminating up-to-date information in the areas of food, food issues,



medications, and environment and health topics in general. Dr. Fenster is well known as an outstanding communicator and an exceptional promoter of science with an extensive program developed over nearly three

decades. Over that period he has given close to 600 lectures and public presentations in English and in French across North America and overseas. He appears regularly on TV and radio to discuss health, environmental and technology issues and has presented numerous science segments for children's television. Recently he was seen in French on Radio-Canada's popular daily health show "37,5" and in English on the "Discovery" science show "What's That All About?"

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*Chair's Message, continued from front page*  
our discipline to our spouses, relatives, or friends who are not chemists? Of course we have had things occur in our careers which we would rather not repeat, but, by and large, the positive aspects outweigh the negative ones (if they do not, then I feel sorry for those who are in a career for which they feel no joy).

While there are many reasons for our choice of chemistry as a career discipline, I think that many of us who are chemists chose to do so because of what many of my students called the "gee-whiz" effect when I was in graduate school. There are many effects that fall in this category: watching rapid crystalline growth when a saturated solution is seeded; seeing the colors and color changes inherent in many reactions; pyrotechnic displays; others far too numerous to mention. We get to see and do these "gee-whiz" effects as part of our everyday lives at work.

As we continue with this year, I ask everyone to consider how we as a scientific society can reach out to those around us. We must communicate the joys and satisfactions that we find in our discipline to those with whom we interact, especially youths and children, for they are the future of chemistry. In addition, we must communicate the joys and satisfactions and processes of chemistry to adults, in order to help them make informed decisions about issues with which all of us deal in our daily lives. While I get a kick out of the "gee-whiz" effects, I also thoroughly enjoy teaching and explaining what it is that I do. There is a great joy and satisfaction in explaining a reaction/ process/ etc., to someone and seeing the light of understanding dawn in their face, that "Ah-hah" moment when they truly understand the concept being explained to them. Our knowledge is too dearly bought, in terms of our sweat, and, sometimes, blood and tears; and also in the efforts of those who taught us. We must not let it simply exist. Reach out and talk about chemistry with a non-chemist today!

*Mark Kent*

*Feb Dinner Meeting, continued from front page*  
Numerous awards recognize his contributions to teaching and to the popularization of science. He has received the "Award for Excellence in Chemistry Teaching" by the U.S. Chemical Manufacturers Association and the

"McNeil Medal for the Public Awareness of Science." Ariel Fenster, who is a native of the wine-growing region of Bergerac, France, holds a Master's degree from the University of Paris and a Ph.D. from McGill University.

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## COMMUNICATION

### How is ACS doing? How can we do better?

ACS is working to establish better tools and materials for communication with members and with the public, especially with regard to the value of chemistry. Several discussion groups have been held at national and regional meetings to get opinions and ideas from members. In order to get input from members on the west coast, two discussions are planned for February prior to local section meetings. Input is sought from a cross-section of members, but there is a particular need to get input from younger members.

I understand from a recent participant, ACS out-going president Katie

Hunt, that the discussions are a lot of fun. In addition, if you are chosen as a participant, you'll receive a free dinner and a gift card. The discussion group for the Santa Clara Valley Section will be held on February 14 at 6:00 PM during the social hour prior to the dinner meeting (I know, it's Valentine's Day, but what better way to express your love for ACS?)

Please see the ad in this newsletter and call Nancy McCormick-Pickett if you think you might be able to help out by providing your opinions and insights in the discussion group.

*Bonnie Charpentier*  
Director, District VI, ACS

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## 2008 Local Science and Engineering Fairs

The first six months of every year are the time for the intense effort for IMPORTANT Science Fairs at the local, regional and international levels. Contact information is given below (Remember: There is always a need for judges for these science fairs. Please volunteer – now.):

**San Mateo County Science Fair** (February 3 - 8, 2008) Contact: Mr. Gary Nagagiri

For more information, visit: <http://www.usc.edu/CSSF/Fairs/400.html>

**SCIENCEPALOOZA** East Side Union High School for first time science fair participants

(Saturday, March 1, 2008) Santa Clara County Fair Grounds. For more information, visit: <http://www.outreach-foundation.org/judges.html>

**Santa Cruz Science Fair** Santa Cruz County high school students (Saturday, March 8, 2008) Santa Cruz Civic Center. For more information, visit:

<http://science.santacruz.k12.ca.us/>

**Synopsys Championship** aka Santa Clara Valley Science and Engineering Fair.

(Wednesday, March 12, 2008) San Jose Convention Center. For more information, visit:

<http://synopsys.championship.googlepages.com/categoryjudges>

**Monterey County Science and Engineering Fair** County High School students

(Thursday May 8, 2008) California State University, Monterey Bay. For more information, visit: <http://www.montereycountysciencefair.com/>

**Intel International Science and Engineering Fair** World Class Competition

(Tuesday-Wednesday, May 13 - 14, 2008) Atlanta GA Convention Center

For more information, visit: <http://www.sciserv.org/isef/>

\*Please note that the INTEL ISEF in May 2009 is in Reno NV and returns to San Jose in 2010.

**California State Science Fair** (Monday-Tuesday May 19 - 20, 2008)

California Science Center, LA. For information, visit: <http://www.usc.edu/CSSF/>

# Highlights of the Mosher Award, January 7, 2008

Photos courtesy of Lois Durham



American Chemical Society

Let us know what  
**you think**

Take part in a discussion about how the ACS communicates the value of chemistry. Discussions will take place prior to the California Section dinner meeting on Feb 13 and the Santa Clara Valley Section dinner meeting on Feb 14.

**Discussion group participants will receive a FREE dinner at the Local Section meeting and a \$25 VISA giftcard**

All members are invited but members under age 35 are especially encouraged to participate. Participants will be chosen from those who have expressed interest. You must be pre-registered to participate.

For more information or to sign up to take part please contact Nancy McCormick-Pickett at [nxm98@acs.org](mailto:nxm98@acs.org)

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## SANTA CLARA VALLEY SECTION

### 2008 Section Officers

Chair	<b>Mark Kent</b>	408-736-0989	marklent@yahoo.com
Chair-Elect	<b>Natalie McClure</b>	650-906-7831	nmcclure@drugregulatoryaffairs.com
Past Chair	<b>George Lechner</b>	408-226-7262	glechner@aol.com
Secretary	<b>Karl Marhenke</b>	831-688-4959	karlmar@armory.com
Treasurer	<b>Herb Silber</b>	408-924-4954	hbsilber@science.sjsu.edu

### Councilors

2006-2008	<b>Abby Kennedy</b>	209-640-2005	akennedy@exelixis.com
2006-2008	<b>Ean Warren</b>	650-329-4554	ewarren@scvacs.org
2007-2009	<b>Linda Brunauer</b>	408-554-6947	lbrunauer@scu.edu
2007-2009	<b>Sally Peters</b>	650-812-4994	Sally.Peters@parc.com
2007-2009	<b>Peter Rusch</b>	650-961-8120	pfrusch@aol.com
2008-2010	<b>George Lechner</b>	408-226-7262	glechner@aol.com
2008-2010	<b>Herb Silber</b>	408-924-4954	hsilber@science.sjsu.edu
2008	<b>Howard Peters</b>	650-854-4614	peters4pa@sbcglobal.net

### Alternate Councilors

2006-2008	<b>Ihab Darwish</b>	650-594-1654	darwishis@yahoo.com
2006-2008	<b>David Parker</b>	408-615-4961	dparker@ci.santa-clara.ca.us
2006-2008	<b>Bruce Raby</b>	408-294-6718	brida954@comcast.net
2007-2009	<b>Stephanie Gehling</b>	408-261-3974	s_gehling@hotmail.com
2007-2009	<b>Natalie McClure</b>	650-906-7831	nmcclure@drugregulatoryaffairs.com
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2008-2010	<b>Mark Kent</b>	408-736-0989	marklent@yahoo.com
2008-2010	<b>Ferenc Makra</b>	650-855-5368	ferenc.makra@roche.com

### Newsletter

Editor:	<b>Cinzia Muzzi</b>	408-864-5790	muzzicinzia@deanza.edu
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### ChemPloyment Abstracts

Director:	<b>Charles Sullivan</b>	650-359-0731	cdansullivan@sbcglobal.net
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## FUTURE MEETINGS

<b>Feb 14</b> 6:00 pm	Discussion Group on Member Communication Santa Clara, CA
<b>Feb 14</b> 8:00 pm	The Colors of Art: History and Properties of Artists' Pigments Dr. Ariel Fenster Santa Clara, CA
<b>Mar 2-4</b>	Pittcon New Orleans, LA <b><a href="http://www.pittcon.org">www.pittcon.org</a></b>
<b>Mar 26</b>	Section Dinner Meeting Dr. David Feigal Basque Cultural Center South San Francisco, CA
<b>Apr 6-10</b>	National ACS Meeting Joint with AIChE New Orleans, LA
<b>Apr 19</b>	UNESCO National Chemistry Olympiad Exam Livermore, CA
<b>Apr 23</b>	Section Dinner Meeting Dr. Bruce Roth South San Francisco, CA