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Journal of Chromatography A, 997 (2003) 1–2

JOURNAL OF
CHROMATOGRAPHY A

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Foreword

On Sunday, 29 September 2002, 170 enthusiastic delegates from 19 countries assembled for the 15th annual meeting of the International Ion Chromatography Symposium (IICS'02). This year's four-day conference was held at the Baltimore Hyatt Regency Hotel, the site of the 1993 gathering.

As has been the custom the past few years, most of the first day was devoted to two short courses: Capillary Electrophoresis/Capillary Electrochromatography and Statistics for Analytical Chemists. Following these classes was the welcome reception, where attendees could both make and renew friendships.

The scientific program began in earnest on Monday with two plenary lectures. The keynote presentation was by Dr. Janusz Pawliszyn (University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada), the father of solid-phase microextraction. "Sampling/Sample Preparation with SPME Devices" was begun with an explanation of the theory behind the technique, which has been used widely in GC applications. From there, Dr. Pawliszyn described recent work geared towards HPLC and CE analyses.

The second talk was given by Dr. Charles Lucy (University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada), the 2002 recipient of the Ion Chromatography Achievement Award. In "Appropriate Technology in Ion Analysis", Dr. Lucy was reflective. He sought to answer two main questions: (1) Why do we do what we do? and (2) Where are we going? Through several examples from his own work, he showed how simpler approaches often give better (and more easily attained) results than do "high-tech" methods.

To conclude the plenary session, two Student Awards were presented. The awardees each received a certificate and a travel stipend that helped them

come to present their research. Both recipients are doctoral students. Christopher Harrison is a member of Dr. Lucy's group at the University of Alberta; Baoguo Sun works with Dr. Paul Haddad at the University of Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

The remainder of Monday, plus Tuesday and Wednesday, were filled with parallel oral sessions, poster displays and workshops. Scheduling was different from past years in that four workshops were offered instead of the traditional two. Also, two such forums were presented each afternoon instead of having them all after the official close of the meeting. The presented workshops and their organizers were: (1) Bioanalytical Ion Exchange (Jeff Rohrer, Dionex Corp., Sunnyvale, CA, USA), (2) Ion Chromatography Troubleshooting (Bonnie Clemons, Dionex), (3) Ion Chromatography Methods Development: Theoretical and Practical Approaches (Paul Haddad, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, and Chris Pohl, Dionex) and (4) Sample Handling Issues: Trace Level and Concentration Techniques (Rosanne Slingsby, Dionex, and Lynn Vanatta, Air Liquide-Balazs™ Analytical Services, Dallas, TX, USA).

During the course of the symposium, a total of 52 podium and 50 poster presentations were given. Five oral sessions were actively organized: (1) Biological/Pharmaceutical Drug Separation and Detection by K.C. Cheng (Medarex, Bloomsbury, NJ, USA), (2) Power Generation by Amy Ekechukwu (Westinghouse Savannah River Co., Aiken, SC, USA), (3) Pulsed Electrochemical Detection by William LaCourse (University of Maryland – Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD, USA), (4) Ions in Drinking Water and Environmental Applications by John

Sanders (Vordian, Kingsport, TN, USA) and (5) Semiconductors and Pure Chemicals by Lynn Vanatta.

A non-technical aspect of this year's gathering was a display noting our fifteenth anniversary. One panel contained maps showing the cities where IICS has been held. The second panel held copies of the Forewords from each Symposium volume.

Many people contributed to the success of IICS'02. My sincere thanks goes to all who helped organize the various sessions and workshops. These volunteers were a hard-working, cheerful group who spent many hours recruiting speakers and planning presentations. I thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone. In addition, I want to extend my appreciation to my fellow Scientific Committee members: (1) Becky Adams (Dow Chemical Co., Freeport, TX, USA), (2) James Fritz (Iowa State University, Ames, IA, USA), (3) Paul Haddad, (4) Charles Lucy, (5) Shi-Fen Mou (Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Beijing, China) and (6) Chris Pohl. Special thanks go to Becky Adams, who again assembled the Author Index for the Final Program. As always, Erich Heftmann of the *Journal of Chromatography A* patiently collected manuscripts from presenters and good-naturedly guided the papers through the review process. Angie Jinks (Dionex) and Anna Strimaitis (Century International, Medfield, MA, USA) cheerfully attended to the many duties associated with the registration desk. A debt of gratitude is due to Dionex Corporation, which generously supported the meeting financially; a special thanks goes to Jeff Rohrer and Nebojsa

Avdalovic of Dionex for their organizational contributions. Finally, I thank my good friend, Janet Strimaitis, for her usual thorough job as Symposium Manager. She meticulously attended to the many details associated with such a gathering, all the while maintaining her sense of humor and good nature.

Last, but probably most important, are my thanks to the conferees themselves. As a whole, they were one of the most engaged, eager group of scientists I have seen. They were extremely attentive at all of the events and asked excellent questions of the speakers. It was not unusual for dialogs to continue well after the formal sessions had ended. Furthermore, nothing seemed to dampen the attendees' enthusiasm. Even in the face of a sold-out hotel over the weekend (the Yankee fans were in town for a series with the Orioles) and a political fund-raiser at the hotel Wednesday night (President Bush came, meaning that the Secret Service was on the grounds well in advance), the delegates continued to enjoy their opportunities to talk ion chromatography and socialize with their colleagues. My hat goes off to all who came; they were the ones who truly made the meeting worthwhile!

My support and best wishes go to Paul Haddad, who will be the Program Chairman for the 2003 Symposium. All are invited to that meeting, which will be held from 21 to 24 September at the Hilton Resort in San Diego, CA, USA.

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