



Editorial

I recently returned from ISIF 2000, the 12th International Symposium on Integrated Ferroelectrics held in mid-March in Aachen, Germany. Prof. Rainer Waser, one of the technical program chairs (D. Wouters, IMEC and R. Whatmore, Cranfield Univ. were the others) and local host of the conference welcomed the participants by noting that this year's attendance was about 50% larger than the previous year's. This was, no doubt, a consequence of the fact that dielectric and ferroelectric films are no longer being viewed as strange and obtruse materials, but as potential saviors of the chip industry as it strives to shrink devices ever smaller but maintain the same capacitance values. Many participants who have worked for many years on FeRAMs for non-volatile memories were delighted to hear that commercialization of such devices was becoming a reality. Indeed each participant was provided with a smart card badge with integrated FeRAM which they could use to check their registration status and even use in place of a printed ticket to enter the banquet hall for the conference dinner. Given the challenge to integrate oxide films into silicon devices, there was much work and interest in depositing high quality films onto silicon substrates with care taken to minimize the formation of intermediate reaction layers exhibiting low dielectric constants. Given the number of interesting and/or emerging fields, it was difficult to decide which sessions to attend. Some of these other areas included Piezoelectric Devices and MEMS, Pyroelectric and Optical Applications, Nano-size Effects and Nanotechnology, and High Frequency Devices. Overall, there were 380 papers on the program and I would not be surprised if that number grows again when next year's ISIF conference is held in Colorado Springs.

As I have mentioned on these pages before, we are striving to bring to our readers overviews of emerging and/or rapidly growing areas of electroceramics. We are presently negotiating with a number of leaders in their respective fields and hope to be able to publish special issues or feature articles on topical areas including microwave dielectrics, optically active crystals and films, advanced processing techniques and others. A special issue on composite conductors edited by J. Maier and J. Fleig of the Max Planck Institute, Stuttgart is presently in press.

We look forward to another growth year for the journal and expect that the move from 4 to 6 issues this year will assist in our effort to bring excellent papers to our readers in as timely a fashion as possible.

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