

Profile

Joyce Kern, this year's recipient of the Northeast Section's Achievement Award, steps down Dec. 31, 1979, as manager of the Fatty Acid Producer's Council, an organization she has worked for since 1962.

Her status in the industry has been such that AOCS President Norm Sonntag asked her to be the opening speaker earlier this year during the AOCS Short Course on Industrial Fatty Acids. "With Joyce as the leadoff speaker we were bound to get things underway on a fine basis for a technically sound education meeting," Dr. Sonntag said.

As FAPC manager, she monitors legislative and regulatory activity, organizes meetings, coordinates work of numerous committees, and handles numerous other tasks. For example, she supervises the compilation and tabulation of fatty acid production figures for the FAPC, a function requiring discretion and diplomacy in assuring each producer's figures are kept confidential, but accurate industrywide figures are available each month. Joyce also has been a spokesperson for the industry and active in related groups, including being an organizer and speaker at AOCS short courses and national meetings.

An experienced program planner, she has arranged events ranging from highly technical sessions such as government regulations of toxicology of fatty acids to pure "fun" events such as golf and tennis tournaments (she's an enthusiastic tennis player).

Joyce originally wanted to attend MIT in preparation for medical school. Her father, a newspaperman with the Wall Street Journal, had more traditional ideas and didn't believe MIT was the proper school for a young lady; besides, medical school appeared prohibitively expensive in those Depression days. Instead of MIT, Joyce enrolled at Connecticut College for Women where, on her older brother's advice to "study something at which you can earn a living," she majored in chemistry, one of her favorite high school subjects.

After receiving her bachelor's degree in 1936, she did graduate work in microbiology at what was then Post-graduate Hospital in New York City, then directed a blood bank at Memorial Hospital in New York.

When World War II started, women chemists were more in demand. Joyce went to work at a Vick Chemical research lab where she worked at obtaining U.S.P. approval for synthetic menthol and also trying to develop a substitute for vanilla. Was she successful? "Well, we sure stunk up the lab floor," she says. In 1944, she left Vick for a public relations firm where she was assigned to an account from The Soap and Detergent Association concerning industrial uses for glycerin and soap. About four or five years later, when the SDA decided to handle its own public relations, Joyce was invited to join the SDA staff. She did.

When she married, Joyce semi-retired to suburban Westchester County, continuing to work part-time preparing the Fatty Acid Digest each month and assisting at annual meetings. She also became an active volunteer in Westchester.

When she decided to return to full-time work in 1962, she applied for a position at a Westchester hospital, listing the SDA as a reference. The SDA, contacted by the hospital for information, quickly called Joyce and suggested that she come back to work for them full-time. She accepted and has been full-time with the Fatty Acid Producers' Council ever since.



Joyce Kern Receives Northeast Section Achievement Award from Section President David Berner

Her volunteer work has not ended. Although she has no children of her own, for the past 13 years she has served on the board of a New York City school for emotionally disturbed children. She also is active in the Episcopal Church in Pelham Manor, NY. Besides tennis, she also likes to sew: "I grew up in an era when girls learned to sew; and I enjoy it."

What's next for this active achiever? "I hope to do some consulting in the area of fatty acids and glycerin acid if inflation permits, and to do a little traveling."

The first trip will be to the Soap and Detergent Association meeting during January in Boca Raton, Florida, where she's to receive the Fatty Acid Service Award and the Glycerin Award for her years of accomplishment.

Rhee named associate director

Dr. Khee Choon Rhee has been named associate director of the Food Protein Research and Development Center, Texas Engineering Experiment Station, at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX.

Dr. Rhee, a member of AOCS since 1975, is a graduate of Seoul's National University in Korea and Michigan State University. He has been at Texas A&M University since 1970, serving as a member of the graduate faculty in food science and technology, and in the department of soil and crops. He has authored several technical papers and holds patents in oilseed's processing.