



ECS — Similar to a Gourmet Sauce or a Memorable Wine

As a Society, we are as diverse and complex as fine sauces and wines, and of the same high quality. Food and ECS? It's no surprise to me that my mind associates ECS with food and drink. George and Norrish Rozgonyi have found amazing restaurants for my wife, Nancy, and me to enjoy with them during ECS meetings. Years ago, the High Temperature Materials (HTM) Division executive committee began a Monday night tradition at Society meetings of enjoying gourmet food and memorable wines at restaurants located by Mark Allendorf. Not only have these culinary delights been memorable, but discussions have ranged from Division and Society issues, to research milestones, and to the latest news of family events. If such evenings together are not a tradition among other ECS Divisions, I highly recommend them as a delightful way to build camaraderie as well as a commitment to the Society.

The job I most dreaded as incoming president of ECS was finding volunteers and asking them to serve on Society committees. To my surprise, this turned into an especially rewarding task. Most of you actually thanked me for asking you to serve the Society in its business. I received from our executive committee and current committee chairs an abundance of names of people to ask. But I had the pleasure of contacting you, of asking you to volunteer your time and services, and of receiving your enthusiastic acceptances. As I pondered this, it struck me how willing our membership is to volunteer time and effort to ensure that ECS continues to be a star among professional societies. The quality and character of our membership ranks with that of the ingredients that produce a gourmet dining experience. Quality members that produce quality research are the reason many of us made a conscious decision years ago to begin presenting our own work at ECS meetings.

ECS Division, Society, board, and executive committee meetings have been a delightful mix of seriousness and humor, stating strong convictions while respecting opposing views, and following Society procedures while accommodating unusual circumstances. This mix works because ECS is composed of committed members. The same is true of our

professional staff in Pennington. Their actions show their involvement with ECS goes far beyond a job. We have a community of professionals and volunteers who are able to put individual differences aside for the good of the Society! There are exceptions, of course, but they are exceptions, and are not allowed to sour the many delights of ECS!

How did all this happen? I personally believe it is a result of (1) the interdisciplinary nature of our Society, which welcomes diversity and following "the path less traveled;" (2) the adventurous and curious spirits of our committed members; (3) the high quality of research presented at our meetings; and (4) our dedicated professional staff in Pennington, who are efficient, helpful, and tolerant of us volunteers who let our homework slip and forget deadlines and procedures. Our staff could easily make their lives simpler by making the "small decisions" our volunteers forget to make, but they take the time and effort to inform us of our responsibilities as volunteers so that ECS has remained our Society – a society governed by and for its members, all of its members.

I love partaking of gourmet food and remarkable wines. Just as aging can help blended ingredients to infuse and temper their sharp, sometimes conflicting flavors, into a perfect sauce, and just as the aging of good wines can result in remarkable wines, 100 years of ECS aging has produced a professional society with the quality and class of a 5 star restaurant.

It was great seeing many of you at our wonderful Centennial Meeting in Philadelphia, and I hope to see even more of you in Salt Lake City, Utah this coming October. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl Spear". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karl Spear
President