



2003...Best Year Ever?

In the world today, people are interested in having the best or the biggest or maybe the fastest "thing" ever. But how can you judge what is the best and who can really say when you have found it? So I don't know if 2003 is really the best year ever for the Society, because it depends upon what criteria you choose to define the best. I do know this, if the criterion for our success is measured by our ability to disseminate information and advance solid-state and electrochemical science, then 2003 was the greatest year in ECS history.

Choosing the best year is difficult because the Society has had many great years. Certainly one of the most memorable was 2002, the year of the ECS centennial. The Society's one-hundredth-anniversary celebration provided us with an opportunity to commemorate our rich history, and the occasion to bring together the many outstanding people that have contributed to the success of the Society. In recent history, the year 1997 could also be considered as one of the best ever. In 1997, we had two very successful meetings including our first in Europe, and we also experienced enormous financial success. With the world economy and stock markets souring, we had the single largest increase in net assets in the Society's history. These were both great years, but I don't think historical milestones like the centennial or financial successes would be the true measures of our "best." I believe our best measure of success comes from satisfying the mission of the organization, which is what we did extremely well last year.

In 2003, we set new benchmarks for excellence in nearly every important category. A list of these benchmarks is given in the box above.

As I discussed in my previous column ("...Find Oil," *Interface*, fall 2003), we are a very focused organization. Our distinctive competencies include: (1) technical journals and books, (2) technical meetings and courses, and (3) a membership benefits package that enables the distribution of and participation

in the first two competencies. The list of benchmarks above is not long but encompasses all of our essential programs and activities, and the standards that we set in 2003 represent ECS records in all but one of our major categories (number of new members ranks as second best all time).

These benchmarks are not just pretty darn good... reaching them all in the same year is nothing less than phenomenal. They validate the strategic planning and actions of the ECS leadership, and indicate that we are effectively serving the community of scientists and engineers engaged in solid-state and electro-

chemical science and technology. However, these record setting program benchmarks do not suggest that we are exempt from any challenges. We still have to maintain excellent quality, improve functionality, and increase the speed of the content of our publications. We also need to continuously broaden the distribution of the publications and the participation of our constituents. Finally, we have to figure out how to pay for all of the growth without charging prohibitive prices. But I'm confident in our ability to continue the success, especially with our "best year ever," right behind us. ■

New Benchmarks Set in 2003

- Most papers (822) and pages (5389) published in the *Journal of The Electrochemical Society*
- Most papers (222) and pages (770) published in *Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters*
- Largest number of combined papers scheduled (4,430) at the spring and fall meetings
- Largest number of combined attendees (4,618) at the spring and fall meetings
- Largest number of attendees (2,936 in Paris, France) at a single (non-joint) ECS meeting
- Second largest number of new members (1277) ever admitted to membership in ECS
- First year of the ECS Centennial Campaign with a total of \$550,000 in contributions

Roque J. Calvo
Executive Director