

## PRESIDENT OF THE TENNESSEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE FOR 1998

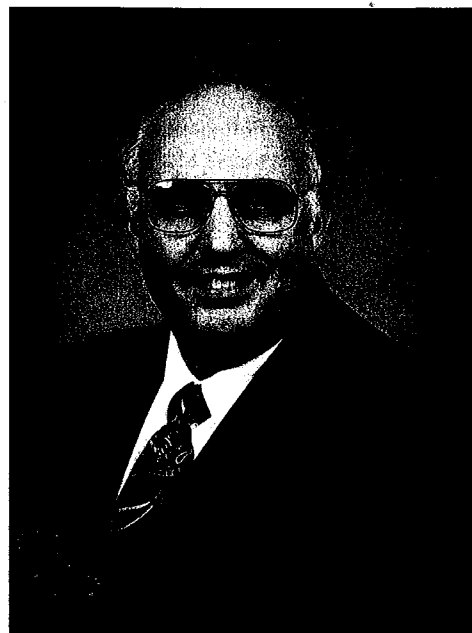
I have been asked to share some information about myself for this issue of the Journal of the Tennessee Academy of Science. I first want to say what an honor it is to serve as president of this organization. I join a long list of very able and dedicated past presidents. My hope is that on my watch I can be as responsive to the needs of the members and the community-at-large as my predecessors have been. I hope the Academy will continue to provide a true forum for science research and education.

My academic beginnings for all of my first twelve years were at the campus training school at Edinboro State Teachers College, now the University of Pennsylvania at Edinboro. My classmates and I were challenged by many excellent teachers and teachers in training. It was a very healthy atmosphere where education was admonished. More than one fourth of my graduating high school class went on to earn their Masters or Doctoral degrees. My memories include Mr. Bailey in junior high math, Mr. Zarenko in biology, chemistry and physics classes and Mr. Jackson in high school math classes. All three enthusiastically demonstrated the dynamic nature of math and science. While they continually emphasized the need for hard work, they also included the element of surprise and discovery and the wonderment of scientific inquiry in their classes.

I next attended nearby Allegheny College, known for its strong academic programs in the sciences. At first, teaching science meant to me teaching every science class like Mr. Zarenko. I eventually found, after my first high school teaching job in Phillipsburg, NJ, that my real interests were more in chemistry. I took additional chemistry courses across the state at Fairleigh Dickinson and Newark College of Engineering. I found that I really preferred more involvement in the research method than was possible in high school, given the great amount of energy required to teach four to six contact hours each day including laboratory set-ups and all the other required activities.

I was accepted at the University of Northern Iowa with a National Science Foundation Academic Year Institute Fellowship. I took on a synthetic research project at University of Northern Iowa and on a class trip to nearby Iowa State University in Ames, I became fascinated with the potential of the mass spectrometer. I was accepted there as a graduate student and became involved in some really exciting research in multiple bonded silicon under Tom Barton, all the while remaining active in teaching. I was selected Coordinator of the Freshman Laboratory Program, which included thousands of Freshman Chemistry Students majoring in engineering and many other majors. I received the Outstanding Teacher Assistant Award for my efforts, and it remains as one of my more prized awards. Working very closely with Bill Hutton and Harold Schobert, we used the local educational TV station on the Iowa campus to provide one of the first color video tapes for introduction of the freshman chemistry laboratory experiments to small classes of 25-30 students each.

Tennessee Tech was very much like Iowa State with an excellent engineering school requiring a lot of chemistry teachers for a lot of highly motivated students. I remember my interview trip from Nashville to Cookeville, and how much the hills and



Dr. Eugene A. Kline

countryside resembled my home in rural Pennsylvania along the same side of the Appalachian Mountains. I found the people both at the university and in the community to be most genuine, and the atmosphere to be most conducive to raising a family and pursuing a career.

Being invited to North Dakota under the Associated Western Universities program to work in model compound studies in coal liquefaction chemistry was an excellent combination of professional activities and weather. Concentrated teaching during the year in the milder climate of Tennessee and concentrated research in drier and cooler North Dakota in the summer worked very well. I traveled to North Dakota for seven summers under this program and was able to bring several projects back to Tech to continue with graduate students. It was an excellent way to maintain a balance of teaching and research.

The Tennessee Academy of Science meetings became excellent places to travel with graduate students and to present this work in various forms. It was a great opportunity to meet other colleagues and to share our professional and personal lives at least once a year. It was a great opportunity for students to interact with other students, and to learn about other graduate programs in which they became interested. The Academy was and continues to be a friendly place where science is shared. The Visiting Scientist Program provided an excellent opportunity to visit various schools and relive my high school teaching days. I still enjoy telling my story of the dynamic nature of science and trying to impress upon younger students the need for them to consider science as a career so they may help solve the many problems facing our increasingly populated and complicated society.

My time at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville has been a healthy mix of teaching, research, and university-related and community-related activities. I served on the faculty senate for twelve years, serving as Chairman of the Academic Council one year and was president of Sigma Xi when it changed to Full Chapter status. I am a member of the American Chemical Society and several of its divisions. I have been advisor to the health pre-professional club for my twenty-five years at Tech and have served as health pre-professional academic advisor for the last 10 years. In the community, I have coached girls basketball and softball and also been very active in the First United Methodist church at many levels (including the Wesley Foundation on campus and at the conference level) and sing regularly in the Chancel Choir. I have been an active member of the Cookeville Evening Lions Club,

serving as President and, more recently as Sight Conservation Committee Chairman.

My family includes my wife, Ruth Ann, a first and second grade teacher for most of our thirty-five years of marriage and our daughter, Natalie, who graduated from Southern School of Pharmacy, Mercer University, in May of 1998. Again, I am grateful to the Academy for their trust in me to maintain the momentum of progress made in the Academy and I pledge my time and efforts in promoting its many activities now and in the future. I also ask the membership for its continued support and activity as well, as the Academy's future depends upon an increasingly higher level of member activity to accomplish its long-standing goal to provide a forum for science education and research in Tennessee.