



# The Academy of Leisure Sciences

March 22, 1996

TO: Members of the Academy of Leisure Sciences  
FROM: Ed Jackson, President  
SUBJECT: Mid-Year Report

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It has now become a yearly tradition for the President to present you with a mid-year report. As a strong believer in continuity, and having enjoyed this annual update from my predecessors, I felt the obligation to put together my own such effort this year. Unfortunately, I don't have a great deal to report in the way of new initiatives for the Academy, or to do more than keep you informed of our ongoing and regular activities. I seem to have exhausted my imagination for new initiatives in my year as President-Elect, when I edited the 1995 *Directory* and set up the Academy's "home page" on the World Wide Web; and my energy has been exhausted during the current academic year in my role as Associate and Graduate Chair of the new Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Alberta, which was formed last July 1 as the result of a merger between my former department, Geography, with Geology. Overnight we more than doubled in size, and the number of graduate students increased almost threefold, to well over 100 MA, MSc, and PhD candidates. Add to this the immediate need to become familiar with topics such as isotopes, ichnology, and clastic sedimentology..... I hope you will appreciate why relatively little has been happening on the ALS front!

## ***Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon***

Preliminary planning is well under way for the 1996 Academy business meeting and luncheon, to be held on Saturday, October 26 during the NRPA Congress in Kansas City. Although we cannot yet give you firm details, President-Elect Karla Henderson has been working on identifying a suitable location for our annual business and social occasion.

One change that Karla and I have agreed on for this year is that the Academy will not sponsor an "education session" prior to the business meeting. Unfortunately, the 1995 education session was extremely poorly attended, attracting very few members and virtually no non-members other than the Future Scholars. We believe - or, at least, hope! - that this was due to the large number of competing meetings and paper sessions that coincided with the education session, as well as the somewhat inconvenient location forced upon us, rather than disagreement with the principle of holding an education session, or a poorly chosen topic.\* In any event, we will try the experiment of foregoing the education session this year, leaving open the possibility of reviving it in the future.

Details of our 1996 get-together will be forthcoming later in the year, in plenty of time for you to plan to attend despite the many other formal and informal attractions of the NRPA Congress. I hope to see you there, along with the 1996 Future Scholars as well as "former Future Scholars," who will once again be invited to join us.

\*(For those of you who missed it, Fred Coalter's excellent presentation, in which he compared the "leisure studies" of Britain and Europe with the "leisure sciences" of North America, will eventually be published. Fred accepted an invitation from Tim Burton and me to include his paper as one of the closing, retrospective chapters in our forthcoming edited book, *Leisure Studies at the Millennium*, which is due to be published by Venture in 1998.)

### ***Elections of New Members and Officers***

The 1996 Academy elections are being conducted by the members of our nominations committee, Geof Godbey (officers) and Tom Goodale (new members). Geof tells me that the ballots for new officers are already in the mail - you may already have received yours - with a voting deadline of April 15; the results should be available around May 1. Tom Goodale will shortly be circulating the nomination letters, biographical information, and ballots for the election of new members. The deadline for the receipt of ballots will be May 8, and the results should be available in mid-May.

Please do not forget to vote in these important elections so that our new members and officers can truly be made to feel that they have been welcomed into their new roles by the entire community.

### ***Future Scholars***

The Future Scholars Program is being coordinated this year by David Compton, with assistance from Fran McGuire, Erik Rosegard (a former Future Scholar), and Mark Searle (fund-raising). You should already have received forms, either by mail or e-mail, for nominating this year's candidates. I strongly encourage you to seek out and nominate worthy recipients in your departments (students currently registered in master's degree programs), to ensure that the quality of this year's scholars is as high as in recent years. The application deadline is May 1, with selection to be completed by June 1.

The "down side" of the Future Scholars Program, however, is that funding for the 1995 scholars took an unusually large bite out of the Academy's balance sheet. Two strategies are being adopted to make sure that this doesn't happen again: On the "demand" side, it may be necessary to select fewer than the usual six recipients, and steps will also be taken to monitor and control their per capita expenses (e.g., cheaper air fares, etc.). On the "supply side," the program needs your money! If you are able and willing to make a tax-deductible donation to this important Academy activity, please mail your cheque, made out to Academy of Leisure Sciences, to Dr. M. Searle, College of Human Services, Arizona State University West, 4701 W. Thunderbird Road, Phoenix, AZ 85069-7100. It is worth noting that Erik Rosegard is soliciting donations from past award winners to support at least one 1996 Future Scholar.

## **The Academy, the Community, and the Internet**

Over the last couple of years the Academy – as well as the recreation and leisure studies community in general – has begun to take advantage of the enormous opportunities for publicizing ourselves and disseminating information about our field via the various components of the Internet. To begin with, Doug Kleiber set up a "private" e-mail discussion list (ALS-L) headquartered at the University of Georgia, for ALS members only. Unfortunately, the use of this list seems to have lapsed in recent months, although it was never very active in the first place, but I do encourage members to sign up if you are not already on the list (e-mail Doug Kleiber at [dkleiber@uga.cc.uga.edu](mailto:dkleiber@uga.cc.uga.edu)) and to use it for announcements, correspondence and discussion among the membership. Other lists are available, of course, such as SPRENET, Leisurenent, and the mailing list of CALS (the Canadian Association for Leisure Studies), and they, too, could be more widely used by the membership and the broader community.

About one year ago I set up a World Wide Web page for the Academy, located on a server in my Department at the University of Alberta. This page (for which the URL, or "address," is <http://www.geog.ualberta.ca/als/als1.html>) contains most of the information from the 1995 Directory (including members' biographies and, where available, links to personal home pages), as well as links to the White Papers produced a couple of years back. I installed a counter on this page toward the end of February, and we have been averaging around 16 "hits" or visits per day since then, which might not seem much but translates into a potential for well over 5,000 per year. I was also very pleased that the ALS page received a "4-star" award for quality of content and "net appeal." Finally, regarding the Academy's web page, one of my cartography colleagues recently designed a new logo, which I think neatly symbolizes the seriousness of the Academy and the "fun" side of our subject-matter of interest. Let me know what you think about the logo specifically and the web page generally.

There is also another web page that should be of interest to ALS members: "Recreation and Leisure Studies: Resources on the World Wide Web," for which the URL is <http://www.geog.ualberta.ca/als/rlsres.html>, and which includes links to as many academic departments and programs as I have been able to identify. If your department maintains a home page but is not included, please let me know and I will add a link, and if you do not yet have a page, may I encourage you to develop one: there are still some major departments who do not yet have a web presence. The World Wide Web is becoming increasingly important as a source of information for prospective new students for our programs, who I am sure are the "Resources" page's main "visitors" at the moment, and who are currently averaging around 45 per day – a potential "clientele" of up to 16,000 per year!

### **Dues**

Please remember that, if you have not already paid, your 1996 dues are overdue. Please send your cheque for \$50, payable to Academy of Leisure Sciences, to Dr. Ken Cordell, USDA Forest Service, Carleton Street, Athens, Georgia 30602. (Retired faculty are exempt).

### ***New Initiatives***

If any of you have ideas for new initiatives that might be adopted by the Academy over the next year or two, please let me know and I will publicize them via another memorandum before the 1996 meeting. Better still, why not volunteer! For example, the "White Papers" that were produced and distributed by the Academy over the last few years have been very successful and have been very favourably received among academics, practitioners, and even the public at large (via the "Web"). Perhaps it is time to start thinking about updating the current papers, and maybe adding to the existing set of nine papers. Are there any volunteers to take on this important task? Please contact me if you would like to make this commitment.



***Ed Jackson,  
Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences,  
University of Alberta,  
Edmonton, AB,  
Canada T6G 2E1.***