

President's Letter

President's Greeting

As the incoming President of The System Dynamics Society, I am pleased to have the opportunity to compile this President's letter.

Thanks to the good work of many system dynamicists, our Society has established itself as a well-recognized international group of scientists and practitioners from different fields. However, there is no reason to be satisfied with the status we have reached so far. Instead, I feel very strongly that the diffusion of the system dynamics philosophy in the international scientific community and its impact on practical problem solving could be better. Therefore, my first message is in the form of a request. Please help through your academic, research and consultancy activities to improve, enhance and extend the reputation of system dynamics as an effective approach for better understanding and solving complex problems. If we accomplish excellent work we need not worry about the growth of the Society and the field.

I am honored to assume the post of President and you can be assured I will endeavor to maintain the momentum.

Erich Zahn

The System Dynamics Review

A major change in the publication process for The System Dynamics Review occurred this winter. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, Sussex, England has contracted with us to print and publish it. John Wiley publishes a

number of journals with similar interests and expects that they can broaden the interests of some of their other subscribers to include our journal, as well as induce some of our subscribers to also read their other journals. Also, they are quite effective in placing their journals in libraries, a task that we have only begun to master.

They will not interfere with our editorial process. George Richardson and his hard working editorial staff will still design the journal and edit the articles, although Wiley will press us to publish more pages and more frequently, a prospect that is not repugnant to George.

Another change is that Wiley will handle the membership billing process. Bills will come directly from Wiley (and can be paid with credit cards). They will forward to us a portion of the membership fee (as well as a publication royalty). This is the one area where the policy council had reservations about the transfer. Only in the past several years had we solved the confusion over who was doing what to administer the society. This change will probably temporarily add to the confusion as Wiley and our Cambridge/Lincoln office straighten out who does what for whom. In principle it is simple, but there is the inevitable learning process as our members learn the answers. Wiley will be responsible for collecting membership dues and address changes starting in September. Wiley will also offer back issues of the journal after volume VII.

Julie will continue to handle the Society's correspondence and distribution of earlier back issues and conference proceedings. We are grateful for her assistance in coordinating the personalities and activities of the Society.

The policy council and the editorial board are looking forward to a successful and prosperous relationship with Wiley.

Current Officers

Officers of the Society for 1991 are:

President, Erich Zahn

President Elect, John Sterman

Secretary, Bob Eberlein

Vice President, Finance, Jack Pugh

Vice President, Publications, John Morecroft

Vice President, Meetings, Jose Machuca

Vice President at Large, Andy Ford

Vice President, Member Activities, Alan Graham

Editor, System Dynamics Review, George Richardson

Members of the Policy Council: Antonia S. Camara, Peter M. Milling, Erik Mosekilde, Erling Moxnes, Andres E. Breiter, Ralph L. Levine, Ali N. Mashayekhi, Henry B. Weil, Jac A. M. Vennix, Brian C. Dangerfield, Ulrich LaRoche and Peter L. Galbraith

Election of Officers

Candidates for 1991 Election

President: Peter M. Milling

Vice President for Meetings: Michael J. Radzicki

Vice President at Large: James H. Hines

Policy Council: Juan Rego, Saburo Kameyama, Douglas Franco, Jack B. Homer

Under the constitution of the Society, these people will assume office unless alternative candidates are nominated by 10 members before May 15, 1991. If alternatives are nominated, a ballot will be mailed to all members by early June to be returned by June 30th. Please send your nominations to Nathan Forrester, Sandhill Systems, 289 Great Road, Acton, MA 01720 (508) 635-9440. Election results will be announced at the Conference in Thailand and in subsequent issues of the President's Letter.

Jay W. Forrester Prize

The 1990 Jay Forrester award was presented to John Morecroft for his paper, "Rationality in the Analysis of Behavioral Simulation Models" in Management Science, 1985.

Please send your nominations for the 1991 award to David Andersen, Rockefeller College, Milne 3146, 1400 Washington Ave, Albany, N.Y. 12222.

Conferences

August 27 -30, 1991 Bangkok, Thailand, Khalid Saleed, Chairman and Toshiro Shimada, MEIJI University, Cochairman. 230 people have preregistered as of this date.

July, 1991, Utrecht, Netherlands. Jac Vennix and Henk Akkermans will present the dates and plans at the Bangkok Conference.

1993 Conference proposed for North or South America. Who would like to help plan this?

SDS Bibliography

The Bibliography of System Dynamics Publications, which is being compiled by Kip Cooper of Pugh Roberts Associates, (5 Lee Street, Cambridge MA 02139) will be available in March for PC and MAC users. Please send your suggestions of recent titles to Kip.

The Gordon S. Brown Fund

The Gordon Stanley Brown Fund has been established to promote system dynamics, systems thinking, and an understanding of dynamic behavior in feedback systems in junior high schools and high schools.

For more than ten years, experimental teaching below the college level has demonstrated that system dynamics can provide a foundation capable of unifying physical science, social studies, biology, mathematics, history, and a student's personal experience in family, school, and community. Students find the approach exciting and motivating. It gives relevance to studies that too often have failed to challenge students.

The criteria governing the Fund can be adjusted to recognize changing conditions. Initially, it is expected that the fund will focus on making successful teaching experiences available to others. At least ten high schools and junior high schools in the United States and others in Europe are

developing teaching programs in how to introduce system dynamics. There seems to be no need to provide funding for the main stream of local activity such as teacher time in the classroom or for equipment. Instead, the present intent is to fund released time and summer time of successful teachers so that they can put into transmittable and usable form the materials and methods that can help others. There is also a need for communicating experiences that did not meet expectations so that others can be forewarned of difficulties and paths to be avoided. In the first few years the Fund will assist in moving teaching methods from the most successful schools to those schools that are most receptive and ready to move along the same path.

The fund is not limited to encouraging work in the United States. It has an international focus and is receptive to outstanding systems teaching where ever it may be found. On the other hand, for a period of three to five years, it is proposed that the Fund give some preference to those schools with which Gordon S. Brown has been closely associated.

Inquiries and applications for grants should be sent to Jay W. Forrester at MIT.

Sponsors

Seven sponsors for 1990 were MIT System Dynamics Group, SUNY Albany, Frank Davidson, Jay Forrester, Pugh-Roberts Associates, Sandhill Systems, and Ventana Systems. We are grateful for this generosity and support.

"The Beginning of System Dynamics"

The Beginning of System Dynamics, by Jay W. Forrester, is a reprint of Professor

Forrester's banquet talk delivered at the Stuttgart Conference. This speech was printed by the conference chairmen, Erich Zahn and Peter Milling, and given to the Society to be shared with its members. For your copy, please send \$5.00 to Julie Pugh, 49 Bedford Road, Lincoln, MA 01773.

Current Members

Membership in the Society for 1990 increased during the year. By December 31 there were 362 regular members, 136 institutional subscribers, and 109 student or

supported members. Many joined during the last half of the year and missed being included in the membership directory, which was printed in June.

Volume 7,1 of the Journal is being mailed to those who have renewed their memberships for 1991. If you have not yet renewed, please send your dues (\$70.00) to Jack Pugh.

The 1991 membership directory will be distributed after the Bangkok conference.

The System Dynamics Society
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USA