

State of the Society

In this final letter for 1988, I would like to offer a few comments on the current status of some key MRS activities...with special reference to future plans and possibilities.

The state of the Materials Research Society can be succinctly described as one of robust good health. The Society continues to experience unprecedented growth and success in many different areas. The Officers and Council are determined, however, that while fostering the process of growing and maturing, MRS plan to keep its traditional flexibility, freshness, readiness to innovate, high quality of services, and personal involvement of its membership in all aspects of the Society's activity. Sound planning is required to achieve this goal while positioning MRS to move forward with new ideas. Accordingly, the initial draft of a 5-10 year long-range plan has been prepared this year for informal comment by Council.

1988 has been another year of vigorous growth and development for MRS, as can be seen in several examples.

- MRS membership will substantially exceed 8,000 in 1988 (membership was 1,600 in 1983). Membership renewal, independent of meeting registrations, is rising fast, a very positive sign.

- The number of papers presented at MRS meetings continues to rise by about 500 per year. This reflects primarily stronger support per symposium, although the number of symposia at the Spring Meeting has also increased and will ultimately stabilize around 20.

- Total (Spring and Fall) meeting attendance in 1988 will probably top 5,800. Spring attendance was affected by travel problems, but nevertheless showed an increase of 200 over the previous Spring Meeting. The Boston Meeting is now taxing the size of meeting rooms, and we are currently exploring ways to resolve this happy problem.

- *Journal of Materials Research* is securely established as an archival journal of high quality. The total pages published in 1988 rose to 1,511, up from 929 the previous year. MRS will take over publication of *JMR* in January 1989, following the very successful three-year startup period during which The American Institute of Physics handled publication.

- Symposium proceedings continue their popularity. In 1988 we expect to publish 28 proceedings books and four extended abstracts, plus 15 volumes in the Interna-

tional Symposium Proceedings series. In addition, we will publish two other conference proceedings. Thirty-nine books are already scheduled for 1989. In addition, video/audio tapes of Symposium X presentations will be made available, starting in early 1989.

- The MRS BULLETIN published 12 monthly issues in 1988, with substantially increased coverage of technical matters and news. Consolidation of the BULLETIN as a respected periodical has also led to a significant rise in advertising revenue.

- The International Meeting on Advanced Materials in Tokyo (sponsored by MRS) drew an attendance of 1,600, with more than 900 papers presented in 21 symposia. This is seen as outstanding support for a first-time conference of this kind.

- We note with pleasure the success of E-MRS, whose Spring Meeting attendance topped 750, with the expectation of similar support for its Fall Meeting.

- MRS Short Course offerings were augmented by On-Site Courses contracted to industrial organizations and courses presented under contract for technical meetings of other societies. Short Course registrations at the Spring Meeting matched those of 1987.

- Two new Student Chapters and two new Sections are expected to receive approval in 1988. New approaches to the organization and structure of the Chapters and Sections are being considered, with a view to strengthening the program.

- MRS co-sponsored the first AIP Congressional Science and Technology Symposium in Washington, DC, an experimental project to provide technical information for congressional staffers. Other such public information initiatives are being considered for the future.

- New MRS Corporate Affiliates in 1988 brought the total number of affiliates to 165. Their contributions constitute a major enabling source of revenue, which has substantially exceeded that of 1987. Expansion of the Corporate Affiliate base is an important goal for 1989.

- The MRS Constitution and Bylaws have been updated with great care so as to restore internal consistency and precision and to accurately reflect the present functions of MRS, which have undergone such extensive expansion and change as the Society developed. The new version should serve well for many years ahead and, after Council approval, the Constitutional

changes will be submitted to a ballot of the membership.

- MRS Headquarters has accepted greatly increased responsibilities in the professional management of our technical meetings, and support of our increasing army of volunteers and our burgeoning membership. With the goal of improved levels of service to our members, the new staff positions of Director of Meeting Activities, Publications Marketing Specialist, and Accounting Assistant have been filled this year, and the position of BULLETIN Editor should be filled soon. A new computer system for Headquarters is to be installed early next year, and more powerful office equipment is being added.

The present staff of 18 is an extraordinarily dedicated family, whose efforts to advance the goals and aspirations of MRS continue to be enthusiastic, tireless, and exceptionally effective. This family represents one of the greatest strengths MRS is fortunate to have.

- The Headquarters office handles an increasingly massive operation with remarkable economy. However, space is no longer sufficient for that operation, and a marked expansion must take place in 1989.

- The draft MRS budget for 1989 projects total revenues in excess of \$3 million. The budget could be described as conservative, but it is probably as lean and well trimmed as any that MRS has produced. It is based on projections which derive from years of careful recordkeeping, and it has been examined project-by-project in detail made possible only by recent enhanced accounting procedures at Headquarters.

MRS is evidently doing something right...in fact, doing a great many things right. The Society is, it seems to me, in the utterly enviable position of enjoying a wonderfully productive today and contemplating with excitement the choice of new directions and initiatives that will ensure an even more rewarding tomorrow. We indeed have the choices at our feet. With the continued lively participation of each MRS member in the Society's planning for both present and future, MRS can confidently look forward to an ever expanding role of unique leadership and service in the materials community.

