

# The Blue Ridge Chemist

The Blue Ridge Chemist, since 1947 the  
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Virginia Blue Ridge Section, American Chemical Society



## VIRGINIA BLUE RIDGE SECTION AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

### 613<sup>th</sup> SECTION MEETING Hosted by Roanoke Valley Governor's School

Monday, January 14, 2008

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January, 2008

No. 1

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#### PROGRAM:

5:30-6:30	Social Time
6:30-7:30	Dinner
7:30-8:30	Meeting



The social time, dinner, and meeting will take place room at the Governor's School. (See map on page 7). Dr. James Webb and Dr. Otis Rothenberger will be speaking on "Six Points of Chemical History that Belong in the Curriculum", which will include chemical demonstrations.

Dinner will be beef tips, chicken oreganato, rice pilaf, Grecian green beans, salad, a variety of desserts, and tea. A vegetarian option is available upon request when the reservation is made. Cost for the dinner is \$14.00, with students and retired ACS members being half price.

Reservations for the dinner must be made by MONDAY, JANUARY 7, (7 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING) by contacting Gwen Sibert at (540) 853-2116, or by e-mail to [gsibert@RVGS.k12.va.us](mailto:gsibert@RVGS.k12.va.us), (540) 853-1056 m(fax), or by writing to Gwen Sibert, Roanoke Valley Governor's School, 2104 Grandin Road SW, Roanoke, VA 24015.

Roanoke Valley Governor's School Hosts the January Meeting

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<http://membership.acs.org/V/VBR>

**Dr. James Webb and Dr. Otis Rothenberger**  
**Illinois State University**

**Six Points of Chemical History that Belong in the Curriculum**

It has been more than thirty years since Stephen Brush published "Should the History of Science be Rated X?" Published in the March 1974 issue of Science, the paper has become an almost obligatory reference in any discussion of the role of history in chemical education. For the chemical profession, there is at least one issue related to Stephen Brush's question that has driven the profession to answer the question with a resounding, "No!" Central to the collective chemistry curriculum is the message of the economic and social importance of our profession. Perhaps the proper teaching of physics can be hung solely on the framework of the beauty of a celestial machine, but chemistry is not sundered so. Having grown tired of the academic debate over this issue, Otis and Jim turned to a more light hearted approach. Using chemical demonstrations and a selected list of six historical scenarios, they explore the issue of using history as part of the modern chemistry curriculum. What are the six points? Don't be surprised if one or two traditional favorites are missing from the list, having been substituted by seemingly trivial points. The presentation framework is really a vehicle to stimulate discussion about the chemistry curriculum. This presentation is designed for chemical educators and other chemists with an interest in chemical history and chemical education.

Otis Rothenberger and Jim Webb are Emeritus Professors of Chemistry at Illinois State University with more than eighty years of combined experience in the field of chemical education. For the past twenty-five years, their partnership as co-presenters has brought the excitement and fun of chemistry to more than 20,000 adults, young adults, and children throughout the USA. Otis is an organic chemist. Although his current research interests involve the history of chemistry, his educational specialty is the presentation of chemistry to nonscientific audiences. During his active teaching career at ISU, Otis coordinated the large lecture section non-majors chemistry course. He also served as the cooperative education coordinator. His interest and expertise in the area of chemical demonstrations was a natural complement to his large lecture teaching responsibilities. Jim is an analytical chemist. He currently remains active as a research partner supporting several ISU research groups. During his active teaching career at ISU, Jim taught a full spectrum of analytical courses. He also served as the laboratory coordinator for the 100 level majors and non-majors laboratory courses. The presentation partnership of Otis and Jim was inevitable. They share a common sense of humor. They also share the belief that the excitement of chemistry can be presented with both humor and dignity. Most importantly, they share the experience of learning their craft from two generations of ISU students. Since their presentations use "chemical magic" as a serious teaching tool, the presentations appeal to a wide range of audiences. Otis and Jim have served as chemical education consultants to a number of educational organizations, including the Chemical Industries Council of Illinois, the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory's High School Teachers Workshop, and the American Chemical Society.

## **American Chemical Society Debuts Bytesize Science: A New Podcast for Young Listeners**

The American Chemical Society (ACS) Office of Communications has launched Bytesize Science, an educational, entertaining podcast for young listeners. Like the flying car, Anglia, in the Harry Potter films, Bytesize Science transports kids, teachers, and other listeners into a real-life world realm where science is the enchantment.

Bytesize Science translates cutting-edge scientific discoveries from ACS' 36 peer-reviewed journals into stories for young listeners about science, health, medicine, energy, food, and other topics. It includes content from Chemical & Engineering News, ACS' weekly news magazine.

New installments of Bytesize Science are posted every Monday and available without charge. The archive includes items on environmental threats to killer whales, a scientific explanation for why some people love chocolate, some unlikely new uses for compact discs, and a hairy tale about "hairy roots."

The podcaster for Bytesize Science is Adam Dylewski, an ACS science writer and recent graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison with degrees in genetics and science communication. Dylewski spent his college career immersed in science and journalism, writing down-to-earth explanations of vital discoveries as a weekly science columnist for The Daily Cardinal, UW-Madison's student newspaper. Later, he continued to translate science news as a reporter for UW-Madison's Communications office and for The Why Files, an award-winning science news site with a witty, fun edge.

Podcasting is an increasingly popular way of accessing news, information, and entertainment content from the Internet. The term

was derived from Apple's "iPod," a portable digital audio and video player, and "broadcasting." Podcasts allow users to subscribe to a "feed" and receive new files automatically whenever posted to the Internet.

No iTunes? No problem. Listen to latest episodes of Bytesize Science in your web browser.

For more information go to [www.acs.org](http://www.acs.org) and go to the Press Room.

## **Officers for 2008**

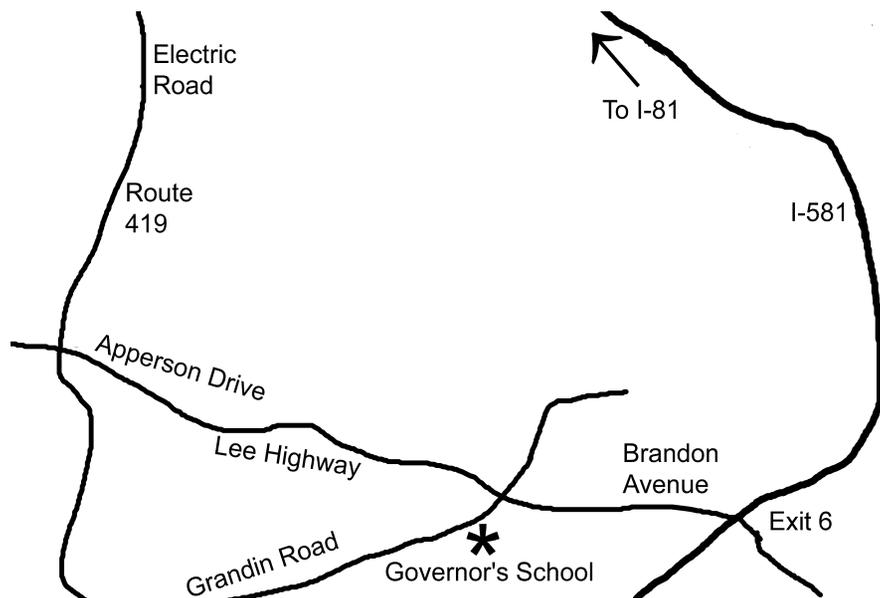
At our November meeting at Ferrum the following officers were elected for 2008:

Chair	Joe Wigau, Radford University
Chair-elect	Bill Lokar, Lynchburg College
Secretary	Michele Mayberry, Latimer, Mayberry & Matthews IP Law, LLP
Treasurer	Vernon Miller, Roanoke College
Recorder	Gary Hollis, Roanoke College
Newsletter Editor	Vernon Miller, Roanoke College
Councilor	Ben Huddle, Roanoke College
Alternate Councilor	Gwen Sibert, Roanoke Valley Governor's School

### Directions to the Roanoke Valley Governor's School

The Governor's School is located a little south of the corner of Grandin Road and Brandon Avenue. (Brandon Avenue is the continuation of Apperson Drive and Lee Highway.) When coming by interstate get off of I-581 at exit 6, which is the exit for US 11 and for Colonial Avenue. Follow US 11, which shortly goes onto Brandon Avenue. At the intersection of Brandon with Grandin Road, turn left, and shortly turn left again, into the campuses of Patrick Henry High School and the Roanoke Valley Governor's School. After entering these campuses, the building ahead and a little to the right is the Governor's School.

### Map to Roanoke Valley Governor's School



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The next Blue Ridge Section meeting will be Thursday, February 14 at Roanoke College. Our speaker will be Dr. Sara Risch, speaking on "Flavor Chemistry". The contact person is Ben Huddle.