O.E. MEINZER AWARD

Presented to Donald I. Siegel

Donald I. Siegel
Syracuse University

Citation by Olaf Pfannkuch

Praesentatio ad Sigelium Praemium Meinzerianum.

Prohoemium: Donald Ira Siegel, this year's recipient of the O.E. Meinzer Award can look back to a long pedigree of academic ancestors. According to the European academic tradition, thesis advisors and advisees are viewed in a relationship of pater academicus and filius academicus. The lineage of my pater academicus, the late E.A. Brun of the Sorbonne (and Don's avus academicus), can be traced back to Pierre Simon de Laplace. Hence Laplace is Donald's academic great-great ancestor. In Laplace's time academic citations would be delivered in Latin. I will spare you my rusty Latin, but the headings of my citation at least will follow this venerable tradition.

Laudatio ad Siegelium, accipientis praemium Meinzerianum.

Radicis: Donald Ira Siegel has his academic roots in Rhode Island, Penn State and Minnesota. Professionally he had a foot in the oil industry, state agencies and the United States Geological Survey before re-entering academe in Syracuse. This gave him a broad scientific background from which came his scientific interests and achievements, and on which the choice of publications that were the basis of his nomination for this prestigious award are based. Cited in his nomination for this award was Don's work in paleohydrogeology, specifically aquifer recharge under ice sheets and their hydrologic and hydrogeochemical imprint on present groundwater flow systems, and the body of work on boreal peatland hydrology and hydro-geochemistry.

Pertinentia ad professionem

Quaestiones, Opera et Scripta: Siegel's diverse interests, work and publications cover more than the two areas mentioned above, and include: carbon cycling; isotope hydrology in systems ranging from crustal boundaries to shallow springs;fate and transport of hydrocarbons, solvents, landfill and fly ash leachates; environmental policy; geological education; well-head protection, and most recently, hyporheic interactions.

Res gestae: Achievements and contributions not necessarily prominently listed above that also influenced hydrogeology and hydrogeochemistry are the first discovery that organic acids and bacteria weather silicates - work done in cooperation with Phil Bennett (my nepos academicus), and studies on the interaction of peatland vegetation with hydrology and geochemistry with Paul Glaser, who covers the eco-biologic aspects of the subject.

Of great satisfaction to Don is his guiding of two score graduate theses and advising seven score and ten undergraduate students at SU.

Praemia accepta: Siegel is not new to distinguished awards (of course none as prestigious as the OEMA). He holds Syracuse University's Wasserstrom Graduate Mentoring Award, the Distinguished Service Award of the Hydrogeologic Division, the Birdsall Distinguished Lectureship in Hydrogeology, and is a Fellow, Geological Society of America.

Labores inter colleges: Siegel's professional advice and help is sought by many and gladly given. Among other contributions, he is a Councilor of the Geological Society of America, has served on six committees of the National Research Council, National Academy of Science, actively participates in professional societies as a member or chair of committees, and is also on editorial boards.

Pertinentia ad Morem et Vitam Ingenium et ars:

One of Don's innate gifts is presence of mind. In my first telephone contact with Siegel I had no idea that I was talking to future O.E. Meinzer material, but rather the contrary. While carrying on a fairly normal conversation about the hydrogeology graduate program at the UMN, he suddenly asked me out of the blue, to what degree open hole drill stem tests could be correlated to normal spaced resistivity deflections in a well log penetrating the I don't remember what oil-bearing formation in Oklahoma, and then hung up. What kind of a nut is this, I thought. He later explained that his supervisor was walking by and he didn't want him to know he was intending to leave for graduate school.

Studia: Siegel extends his range of interest to epistemology and ethics of the profession by giving advice to young geologists aspiring to academe. He makes time for interests other than those narrowly defined professionally. He plays a mean game of chess; but his son Micah beats him. His culinary interests range from eggs Benedict to his new cookbook: " From Lokshen to Lo Mein, the Jewish Love Affair with Chinese Food," which clearly derives from his hydrogeochemical background.

Hospitalitas: Known for the legendary parties at his house, these flow directly from his interest in food and food preparation and his love for people. But we cannot pass without mentioning Bette, his wife, who is as much part of the hospitality as he is.

Amicitia: I must take notice that Don has accomplished the rare feat of remaining in longtime contact with his advisees, collaborators and co-authors. The authors on his publication list are essentially a list of his friends. He is loyal to old colleagues and new alike, makes friends easily, and keeps them for life.

Hilaritas: One of the most striking observations to be made about Siegel in his laboratory (and in field work, if you will) is the laughter that emanates from it. It is not the laughter from a jocus, nor the risus of a sneer, nor the mindless laughter on sound tracks of even more ridiculous TV shows. It is the shared laughter with his professional and student colleagues that comes with the "aha" moment of having found new insights, of having completed an experiment, or solved a problem in common. It is the true laughter of cheerfulness, hilaria or laetitia that follows successful intellectual inquiry. It is also the laughter of someone who loves his work and approaches it with rigor, but who does not take himself too seriously. May this laughter continue in aeternum.

Perorem: With this I shall bring the citation to a close: Gratulemur igitur collegae quem summa laus consecuta est, discipulus, scholasticus, doctus in res hydraulica, professor, amicus, filius academicus, Siegelius.

Footnote: faber DIV adjuvit

Response from Donald I. Siegel

Wow. What can I say to this citation? Latin is a subtle and beautiful language, yes? But it isn't exactly in my cultural background. But I can say in Yiddish, when I got the call from Janet Herman about the Meinzer, I became quite *farblondzhet*, confused and bewildered, while almost *hetsken zich*, dancing with joy.

No accomplishment comes without significant support and mentoring. To this end, I'd like to briefly thank a few people.

First, there is Bette, my wife, sitting next to me here. Through fully 30 years of marriage, Bette has stuck with me as my best friend and confidante, and always puts me on emotional track when I become *mashugganah*, crazy, from multitasking and campus politics. Without Bette, I'd not be here. I'd probably still be in the Oil Patch somewhere in the Deep South.

Second, I have to thank my Latin mentor, Olaf Pfannkuch. Please come to the symposium in his honor tomorrow morning. I am flattered indeed by the academic lineage that Olaf derived for me. Now I know why he forced me to learn the Laplace Equation so well. Del squared H = 0. Olaf taught me how important it is to couple sound conceptual and theoretical models to hydrogeologic practice, and I do this by cartooning my ideas on napkins when I first discuss a possible thesis topic with a new student, usually at a local tavern. I'm told my students sometimes save these food stained napkins or scan them to remember the moment.

Academic lineage not only intellectually passes from generation to generation but also passes with respect to personal styles, something that people forget. As the song from South Pacific says, "You have to be taught."

Olaf showed me how to be a professorial *mensch*, a guy who tries to do the right thing without looking for personal gain. I look for *menschlicheit* in every person I work with, student or established professional. I even look for it in lawyers with whom I work—a longer search at times. Without being surrounded by *menschlicheit*, I would spend inordinate emotional time covering my back. I don't like covering my back. I'm not Wild Bill Hickok, although I have been accused by scientific detractors of sometimes shooting from the hip.

Olaf and his wife Georgette also showed me there is nothing better to foster *menschlicheit* than hosting dinners and parties to celebrate individual and group academic achievements and other milestones. And it doesn't hurt the process if you like to cook and entertain—hence Bette's and my parties.

Third, I must acknowledge how much Paul Glaser has been instrumental to my career. He and I work so closely on wetland hydrology and biogeochemistry, that part of this Meinzer Award, de facto (that's latin), goes to Paul too. We even look more and more alike, as our beards become the color of distinction and the hair on our heads migrates elsewhere.

My final acknowledgment goes to dozens of people—no, I won't say all their names—the incredible folks in the USGS Water Resources Division (WRD), particularly those in the Reston and Denver National Research Program. I worked for WRD before coming to SU 24 years ago. If you look at my cited papers, you'll notice that the work in them was mostly done when I was with the USGS or shortly thereafter.

The congenial, collegial and caring professional culture throughout the WRD then and now is something unheard of in any university or other setting of which I am aware. My eight years with WRD made it my disciplinary home, a place of intellectual sanctuary for me even today.), I would not be up here today without colleagues ranging from Mark Hult, formerly of the Minnesota district, to Mary Jo Baedecker (former director of the NRP. And there are many more and you know who you are. Thank you so very much!

Finally, to close, I'd like to say a short word on the process of science for the younger scientists here—something to take away from this boring awards meeting. We have no dancers and music, so I'd like to leave you at least this.

Here it is. I'm told we are hard-pressed to find citations more than 10 years old in most papers published today. I'm grateful that at least some of my papers have lasted longer in the collective scientific memory; but I hold no illusions. Science is a process. Even papers in *Nature* and *Geology* constitute but basement bricks for the larger edifice of knowledge to be built on top.

It gives me great satisfaction knowing that I've contributed some bricks to my subdisciplinary basement, which is where I like to do my science—more in the dark than the light. But all science, be it digging in the basement or crafting the filigree on the wood interiors, has merit in the doing. And all science paves the way for the next generation to modify and change with technology and understanding, again and again. So I charge you to continue the building and enjoy it every moment of the way. Prove my science wrong. Confirm it is right; but do it as a *mensch*!