Greetings from the Chair
Bruce Clark
The Leighton Group

It’s my pleasure to serve as your Chair of the Geology and Society Division for 2016! G&S is one of the most exciting Divisions in all of GSA, largely because we have so much to discuss with our society at large and so many great people to help carry on the discussions. I hope you will be one of those people. I’ve been involved in those discussions for many years, first as a Professor at the University of Michigan, then as a practicing engineering geologist working in the geologic and seismic hazards world, and finally as the Chair of the California Seismic Safety Commission. The Board and I are happy to help you in your efforts to communicate with others about Earth.

G&S welcomes a new team of Officers and Board Members for 2016. Last year’s Chair, Chris Carlson, moves to the Past Chair post, where he will head the Division’s activities on the Joint Technical Program Committee (JTPC), the folks who put together the sessions and programs for the Annual Meeting. Chris is the Acting Deputy Director of the US Forest Service in Washington, DC. Chris will be joined by Alan Beninoff in this task. David Szymanski, an Associate Professor of Geology at Bentley University in Waltham, MA, moves up to the First Vice Chair position. We are pleased to welcome two new Officers elected by you last summer, and a new student member to our Board. Susan Stover is our new Second Vice Chair, bringing her expertise as the Outreach Manager of the Kansas Geological Survey.
Greetings from the Chair (cont.)

and former High Plains Manager for the Kansas Water Office. Jeff Rubin is our new Secretary-Treasurer; his day job is Emergency Manager for Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue in Oregon. In addition, we are especially pleased to welcome Erin Barry, a junior at Pomona College, as our first Student Representative this year. Erin has wasted no time in providing the Board with timely and relevant information and recommendations for improving our communications with our Division’s nearly 200 student members.

Special thanks go to our ‘retiring’ Board members, former Chair Suzanne O’Connell and former Secretary-Treasurer, Jon Goodwin. Well, Suzanne is not exactly retiring yet. She will Chair the Nominations Committee for our Division this spring. Interested in playing a role in the Division’s activities in the Future? Want to recommend someone? Contact Suzanne and send her a letter of interest and a resume. We might have just the spot for you.

Your officers and Board members are delighted to hear from you with your concerns, opinions, and insights. The Secretary-Treasurer would be particularly delighted to hear from someone interested in serving as Newsletter Editor or Division Webmaster.

2016 ANNUAL MEETING PLANNING HIGHLIGHTS: SOMETHING NEW

GSA returns to Denver for the 2016 Annual Meeting, but a little earlier than usual: September 25-28. G&S is primary sponsor of 6 topical sessions (5 oral, 1 poster), and is co-sponsoring an additional 32 (29 oral, 3 poster). Stay tuned for the call for abstracts!

Based on feedback from Baltimore and other meetings, this year we are trying something new. For each of the G&S sponsored Technical Sessions, we are asking the convener to include a brief introduction, explaining the significance of the issues being discussed in that session. Too often, unless we are experts in that particular subfield, we have trouble figuring out what the point of the research is and why it is important. Since we all like to attend at least a few sessions outside our specific area of interest, a couple of minutes of introduction to the topic at the beginning of the session will help us connect to the work being described.

HOW CAN WE BEST COMMUNICATE?

Are you getting what you want from the Geology & Society Division? Melody Holm, recently retired from the US Forest Service, is chairing a small group to assess how we communicate with our members and the rest of GSA, and how best to meet the diverse interests of our members.

Our Connected Community page on the GSA website is seeing some increase in activity as we all get used to its format. It’s easy to learn when new material is added to the G&S page. Just sign on to the Community and in your “My Profile” section, pull up “My Community Notifications.” That gives you a list of all the communities you belong to, and how to be notified when something new hits our page. Select either “Real Time” or “Daily Digest” and you’ll get an email each day that something is added. But there’s a lot more to communication than a web page, and
we’re looking for better ways to keep us all in touch.

Stay tuned for more on this topic, but in the meantime please let us know what you’d like to see from us and through what media you’d like to see it.

SUMMARY OF COMBINED MEETING OF G&S DIVISION MEMBERSHIP and MANAGEMENT BOARD

**Courtesy Jonathan Goodwin**  
Outgoing Division Secretary-Treasurer  
*(With updated information on pending events)*

About 12 members and officers of the G&S Division gathered in the Baltimore Hilton on November 2, as G&S combined its membership meeting with its board business meeting for the first time.

**Best Student Paper Award winners.** 1st Vice Chair Bruce Clark presented Best Student Paper Awards from the 2014 Vancouver meeting to:

- Stephanie Wong, a PhD student at Baylor University in Waco, TX, for her presentation entitled *Time Not Wasted: How Collaborative Research and Education Help Groundwater Sustainability in Rural Northern Uganda, Africa.*
- Genevieve Kidman, who had recently graduated from Southern Utah University, for her presentation entitled *Lessons from My Summer Internship – National Rivers and Streams Assessment with the NAGT and USGS.*

**Reappointment of Erin Barry as Student Board Member.** Because appointments made by the chair expire at the end of the officers’ term, Chris proposed that Erin Barry be reappointed for the 2015-2016 term of the new officers that will begin at the end of this meeting. Jon Goodwin moved that Erin’s appointment be extended until the end of the annual meeting in Denver in September 2016. Suzanne O’Connell seconded this motion. Before a vote was taken, David Szymanski moved that Erin’s appointment be extended by acclamation, Jeff Rubin seconded this motion and it passed unanimously. Erin will remain our Student Board Member for the coming year,
and may run for election by the membership during the election in the summer of 2016.

Treasurer’s report. As of September 1, 2015, division membership stands at 468, including 184 students. Jonathan Goodwin reported that the Division had received $3775 in unrestricted donations to the GSA Foundation during the past fiscal year. As of the end of the first quarter of fiscal 2016, the Division had $7204 in unrestricted net assets. Anticipated expenses for the Baltimore meeting included approximately $2000 for the Rocks and Hops soiree and guest speaker Simon Winchester. Thanks in large part to donations, FY15 revenues were slightly more than expenditures, but the division’s financial sustainability is not strong. The dues increase approved by an overwhelming majority (72 For, 2 Against, 2 Abstaining) will help. We strongly encourage donations to G&S: it’s easy to do when renewing your membership, but feel free to do it anytime: just look for “Geology & Society Division Fund on the GSA Foundation donation page.

Improving communication with members. The G&S Division is fairly well linked to GSA’s Connected Community. Beyond that, the Board sees a need for an ad hoc “communications committee” to further improve our outreach to members. Erin Barry advocates sending out a newsletter to student members, in large part to make them aware of what G&S can do for them. It was suggested that an updated web site for the Division should have connections to blogs that would show opportunities to interact with policy-makers, along with other content. Melody Holm’s Communications Committee will be considering all these suggestions for the future. If you have other ideas, let us know!

Congressional Science Day. Jon noted that funding for a student to attend the Congressional Science Day visit and training could be a cause for fund-raising from G&S donors. For 2016, a special Congressional Science Day on Climate Change is being scheduled for February 9-10 [NOTE: Great event!]. The regular Geoscience Congressional Visits Day is typically in late September, but for 2016 the event has been moved to September 13-14 to avoid conflict with the Annual Meeting in Denver. Contact Kasey White for more info.

Kasey White introduced Elizabeth Goldbaum, GSA’s recently appointed (and third ever) Science Policy Fellow. The blog Speaking of Geoscience, for which Elizabeth is a content-provider, has information on current bills and other government actions affecting the geoscience community.

2016 meeting plans. The management board encourages the members of the Division to propose and organize policy-oriented technical sessions for the Denver meeting and for section meetings as well. Plans for Denver include the following:

- **Distinguished Lecture:** Lucy Jones, USGS Scientist and recent Science Advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, will be our distinguished lecturer for the 2016 meeting.
- **Topical Session:** G&S member Jim Heller is organizing a topical session on legal issues for geoscientists (T69). The session includes a panel that will cover different legal concerns and provide an opportunity for audience discussion. Additional talks are invited.
- **Pardee Keynote Symposium:** The High Plains Aquifer: Can it be Managed for Today and the Future? has been selected as a Pardee Keynote Symposium. It is being organized by G&S board member Susan Stover.

Transfer of Leadership. The meeting was declared adjourned at 1:30 PM, and the officers elected during the summer of 2015, being prevented from fleeing the jurisdiction, officially assumed their new offices.
In Baltimore, outgoing Secretary-Treasurer Jonathan Goodwin accepts sincere appreciation for his years of dedicated service to G&S.