

Minutes 2002 CESE Annual Meeting

The 6th annual CESE meeting convened at the First Unitarian Church at 1 P.M. on June 16, 2002. About 40 people attended, and an additional 22 sent in their proxy votes.

Timothy Moy, outgoing president, welcomed everyone, followed by individual introductions of those present.

Tim said that success is often the greatest threat to an organization's survival. That is, after the goal that founded the organization is met, sometimes the group dies. CESE has survived and is moving in many directions, such as advising legislators and other public officials to use data when considering reform. And he has found allies in Santa Fe and Washington in reforming math education to include a deeper treatment of probability, statistics, and uncertainty.

In the past year, CESE sponsored a couple of events (along with New Mexicans for Science and Reason and the New Mexico Academy of Science). First was a preview of Mark Shelley's visually exquisite, PBS series, *Shape of Life*, shown in February at the NM Museum of Natural History & Science.

Also, Kansas physicist Adrian Melott, recently honored by the American Physical Society for his work in promoting quality K-12 science standards, spoke in April. His topic, "Intelligent Design is Creationism in a Cheap Tuxedo," resulted in a lively question and answer session.

Tim also mentioned that creationist speakers had recently visited NM and that CESE is following the Intelligent Design movement in the rest of the country. NM's science content standards will come up for revision next year, and we should not become too complacent. CESE, as other organizations, have been faced with new challenges since the events of September 11th.

He thanked the other board members for their contributions and urged the general membership to contact any other board member on how to get involved.

Following Tim was the keynote speaker, Jack Jekowski, Principal Partner of Innovative Technology Partnerships. The topic of his speech was "Education in New Mexico: Perspectives on a Complex Organism, Revisited." He also said education reformers should look at data, instead of relying on opinions and emotions, that unintended consequences could result from misunderstanding or misuse of data, and that there is no quick fix for the problems in education. Jack provided handouts of

his comprehensive slide presentation, that covered topics such as a flowchart of NM's public and higher educational system, some common myths, teacher quality initiatives, math and science quality initiatives, and developing strategies for improvement. For the entire presentation of Jack's speech, please see:

<http://www.cesame-nm.org/Resources/reports.html>.

Members were asked to pay dues. (They are tax-deductible.)

Founding member, Alan Morgan, moved to accept the slate of officers. Several people seconded the motion, and the new slate was approved by acclamation. Officers for next year are:

President: Bill MacPherson
Vice-President/President elect: Art Edwards
Past president: Timothy Moy
Treasurer: Jerry Shelton
Secretary: Marilyn Savitt-Kring

board members at large:

Marshall Berman
Paul Bolduc
Steve Brugge
Kim Johnson
Dave Thomas

nonvoting member:

Sema Wynne

Tim turned the gavel over to Bill MacPherson. Bill spoke of the Intelligent Design (ID) movement. He said there are two ways to look at ID; one is that it threatens to undo everything science has accomplished, and the other is that ID is creationism's last gasp. Its proponents are misrepresenting the Santorum amendment that is only in the conference report of the bill, "No Child Left Behind." It was not in the legislation that was actually passed and signed into law. We will have to be vigilant for ID attempts to insert their agenda into the public school curricula, as well as individual teachers who have stealthily preached young earth creationism in the classroom.

CESE is still pushing data based decision-making concerning education. CESE's statisticians, recently revised the white paper using more current data. The basic conclusions are still valid. There is still a bimodal distribution of test scores; demographics still play a strong role in student performance, although some districts do well in spite of

disadvantages, and some advantaged districts do not perform well. The challenge is to uncover and address these problems, convince other organizations, such as the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce of the merits of such a strategy, rather than completely overhauling the state's school system.

Bill suggested we contact the future governor with suggestions for candidates for the five appointed members of NM's state Board of Education. It is important for scientists to get politically involved. He asked that all members become more active by recruiting new members, and e-mailing him with suggestions for the coming year.

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Following Bill's speech, board member and occasional magician, Dave Thomas, provided an amusing demonstration. For this, please see:

<http://www.nmsr.org/amazing1.htm>

The meeting was adjourned, and the Sheltons served lunch to everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

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