



# Newsletter

of the

## ASA & CSCA

volume 55 number 3



# SPECIAL ISSUE: 2013 Annual Meeting



A note from the editor, inspired by our time in Nashville, and by every year's annual meeting

When I was an undergraduate, studying to be a poet, self-promotion was the law. Whether or not you were the next Emily Dickenson or E.E. Cummings and had poetic genius drifting dreamily through your bloodstream, it wasn't going to do you much good if no one recognized your genius, and you sure weren't going to get recognized for your genius if nobody knew who you were.

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## The Director's Corner



As is evident from this issue of the newsletter, the ASA 2013 Annual Meeting at Belmont University in Nashville, TN, July 19–22, was a great success with stimulation in many respects. Approximately 40% of the 164 registered attendees had not been to a previous meeting. Their enthusiasm was contagious. The personal interaction enabled by the meeting was a stark contrast to the electronic-only communication so prevalent in today's society.

As program chair Bob Kaita points out in his summary of the plenary speakers, this year we broadened the scope by addressing disciplines in science that we don't often cover. Our intent was to show that issues of science and faith are not limited to controversial topics of origins but include all areas of science. The issues may be different but as Christians we are challenged to participate in every field as we study God's creation.

The primary theme of creativity in science and invention as a reflection of the image of God was portrayed in many ways. For the first time, we explicitly explored the nature of innovation and of entrepreneurship, seeing how creativity is expressed. God has given us a special gift and responsibility to use our minds not just to understand his creation but to innovate and enhance the beauty and harmony in the universe.

The two featured workshops continued our focus on the two aspects of our mission: understanding hermeneutics, especially as it pertains to creation (presented by Denis Lamoureux), and understanding science, especially as it pertains to human origins (presented by Dennis Venema). These themes will continue to be prominent in our work.

Our special featured speaker at the banquet, Ming Wang, delighted the group with his stirring account of his narrow escape from being banished to provincial China. He subsequently went on to earn degrees in physics and medicine from Harvard and to invent leading Lasik solutions for better eyesight. It was a superb illustration of the primary theme of our meeting. The video of that talk is available on our website (<http://network.asa3.org/?2013Audio>), along with videos of the other plenary talks and audios of most of the other contributed talks.

The launching of the new affiliate of ASA, Christian Women in Science (CWIS), was another milestone moment of the meeting. Lynn Billman, recently elected to the ASA Council, is the energetic driving force behind this organization which is drawing widespread attention. Anyone interested can sign in at our website and join CWIS.

Many attendees expressed interest in attending next year's meeting as well. Make your plans now to come to McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, on July 25–28, 2014. See you there!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy".

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At first, the avenues available for getting our words "out there" were pretty straightforward: Go to conferences and readings; schmooze with editors; get on the local reading circuit; submit everywhere, all the time; annoy your friends and family by urging them to buy your book; repeat, repeat, repeat.

These days, we have personal websites and Facebook and Twitter and Instagram and mass texting and a host of other platforms on which to indulge in what always felt to me like a sickness of self-absorption, but which is, perhaps, a necessary evil in the world of the professional writer.

Of course, the law of self-promotion extends beyond writing. Academics, artists, and businesspeople of all stripes are also subject to the law. So, it seems, are people with nothing better to do. These days, the law doesn't apply merely to the promotion of one's own work—it extends to one's entire personality and way of life. The advent of social media has made the sundry details of our daily lives a constant presence on each other's "walls" and news feeds—they even show up in the sidebars of certain email providers. Knowing this, we feel encouraged to promote our own unique brand of humor through clever quips and one-liners, post perfect-looking pictures of vacations and outings so others can see what we're up to (and how great it was), post announcements about parties and get-togethers even if these are not open invitation, post rants about the egregiously stultifying nature of going to department meetings, the DMV, taxes, traffic, etc., etc. ...

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## Welcome, New Members!

April–June 2013

Alozie, Daniel –Aba, Nigeria  
 Araguirang, Galileo –Los Banos/  
 Laguna, Philippines  
 Austin, Monica –Brownsville, TN  
 Billman, Timothy –Denver, CO  
 Blankers, Tony –Hospers, IA  
 Bodbyl Roels, Sarah –Bath, MI  
 Boone, Kyle –Bourbonnais, IL  
 Bossie, Glenn –Fredericksburg, VA  
 Branson, Robert –Pendleton, IN  
 Button, Daniel –Gloucester,  
 Gloucestershire, UK  
 Carbone, Elizabeth –Rochester, NY  
 Carman, Jefferson –Leo, IN  
 Carter, Calvin –San Marcos, TX  
 Champagne, Deborah –Newberg, OR  
 Chang, Jenny –Houston, TX  
 Chang, Lois –Atlanta, GA  
 Chen, Jack –Loma Linda, CA  
 Cole, Amos –Novato, CA  
 Conrad, Kevin –Dobbs Ferry, NY  
 Cortez, Alonso –Mount Joy, PA  
 Dowd, Monica –Lake St Louis, MO  
 Eckert, Steven –Leduc County, AB,  
 Canada  
 Eckert, Bill –San Diego, CA  
 Eglinton, Dana –Bordentown, NJ  
 Fitzgerald-Bocarsly, Patricia –  
 Plainsboro, NJ  
 Fleming, Catherine –Toronto, ON,  
 Canada  
 Foster, SherLeon –Nashville, TN  
 Furman, Quinn –Gaithersburg, MD  
 Garber, Libet –Columbia, MD  
 Gavard, Emily –Villa Park, IL  
 Gehr, Aaron –Albany, NY  
 Gisel, Grace –Bakersville, NC  
 Hartman, Gregory –Pittsburgh, PA  
 Hays, Rebecca –St Davids, PA  
 Hebert, Wesley –New Durham, NH  
 Henderson, Angela –Lakewood, CO  
 Isaac, Jonathan –Granger, IN  
 Jones, Glenn –Baltimore, MD  
 Junaid, Damilola –Wenham, MA  
 Justice, Paul –Bowling Green, KY

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## Plenary Speakers Focus on Faith and Creativity

At the 2013 ASA Annual Meeting, we celebrated the way God created us in his image, and how we honor him as Christians in science. In keeping with this theme, we had several outstanding plenary speakers.

- Andy Bocarsly, Professor of Chemistry Princeton University, Founder of Liquid Light Inc., spoke on “A Chemist’s View on Interacting with God’s Creation on Campus and in the Business World: Carbon Dioxide, a Problem and an Opportunity.” He described the science behind a serious global challenge, and how a mindset of faith could lead to creative solutions to solve it.

- Jeff Cornwall, Jack C. Massey Chair in Entrepreneurship and Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship, Belmont University, spoke on “Entrepreneurs as Stewards.” He highlighted the value not only of ends, but also of good ends, informed by obedience to God, that leads to truly successful entrepreneurship.

- Jim Van Dam, Director, Research Division, Fusion Energy Sciences, Office of Energy Sciences, US Department of Energy spoke on “Faith, Fusion Energy, and Federal Service.” For him, belief in God from an early age proved to be foundational for meeting the challenges of complex science and the complexity of public service.



- Bruce A. Vojak, Associate Dean for Administration, College of Engineering, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign spoke on “The Love of Innovation: Toward a Theology of Breakthrough Corporate Innovation.” He believes that faith in Christ enables us to put in proper perspective the innovations of scientists and engineers in the modern corporate world.

- Mary Wagner, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Administration, Rutgers University, spoke on “Taking the Road Less Traveled: Building Bones for Christ.” The decisions she made in faith led to her successful research in an area at first unfamiliar but ultimately rewarding to her.

Our speakers have traveled unique roads of faith and profession. Each of them shared, for the first time, their experiences as a common journey, and each exhorted listeners to act and make decisions that reflect their Christian identity, rather than responding to social or professional pressures to do what their peers or superiors might expect. Go to the ASA website to listen to and view their talks on the excitement and challenges of their calling as scientists and entrepreneurs in the service of God.

—Robert Kaita, 2013 Program Chair



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Even if you're not hooked in, you know the score: The stream of content doesn't stop. It's all the time, and it's a lot.

Despite my distaste for professional promotion, I am certainly not exempt from the latter, more pervasive kind—which bothers me, because it's not even necessary. Social media has become a mild addiction for most of the adults I know (not to mention the potent effect it seems to have on teenagers). Simply post, even when you don't have much worth posting about, and you'll receive flattering "likes"—there is no "dislike" button—

and comments from friends and family and people you barely know.

Mine has been called the "Me Me Me Generation," and it's no surprise. Just follow us on any of the above-mentioned outlets and you'll be deluged with strangely stilted portraits of how Millennials spend their days. In a world where many of us are medicated into complacency before we reach puberty, it's not surprising the inch-deep gratification of a passel of likes and shares on Facebook has become the omnipresent social opiate of our time. I, for one, don't wish to stop exploiting this nostrum anytime

soon—like a spike in blood sugar, the reward for one's involvement rarely doesn't seem worth its cost in time wasted, narcissism enhanced.

Except when you experience the alternative.

I thought about this after returning from this year's annual meeting. It was a time of celebration for the creativity we scientists and science aficionados share with the divinity we worship, a time to come together over breakfast and post-plenary beers to tease out the questions we should be asking about our responsibilities to others





and our small yet privileged place in the vast, vast cosmos.

It was a time, as it always is, of reconnecting with our humility, rather than our snowflake-metaphor personal importance.

It's at ASA meetings that I'm reminded why humility is so essential in the first place—no matter who you are or what your profession. Jesus abhorred a hypocrite, and it is hard to find one among people so ardently dedicated to the truth that they're constantly thanking each other for the stern criticisms they received over lunch. Among these spiritually

dedicated academics, it's rare to hear a voice raised in anger or resentment concerning some deeply held conviction that's just been raked over the intellectual coals. On the contrary.

Interacting with this diverse group of scholars—scientists, teachers, and theologians of all stripes—one can't help but come away tempered by the collective wisdom in every room. It's not just a competition, as so many conferences seem to be, for the best poster/presentation/contributed talk. It is, unlike the lion's share of social interactions these days, not All About Me. My work. My idea. (Never mind my critics.)

Rather, it's about nourishing our potential for wholeness—for motivated, well-rounded scholarship and motivated, well-rounded Christianity. The first involves a commitment to extracting truth from every resource available, and listening well to those who disagree with our conclusions. The second involves the same. We don't grow our understanding of the natural world by dogmatically repeating the same experiments, running the same numbers, over and over again. We don't grow our faith by never moving from the same spot, never trying on a new point of view, never questioning

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## Featured Lecture Focuses on Persistence, Faith, & Ethics

by Ming Wang, MD, PhD

Dr. Ming Wang, a Harvard and MIT graduate (MD, magna cum laude) and one of the few cataract and LASIK surgeons in the world today who holds a doctorate degree in laser physics, presented a special lecture at the 2013 ASA Annual Meeting entitled “Faith and Science: Friends or Foes?”

Growing up in China during the Cultural Revolution, Ming—a teenager at that time—faced the devastating fate of being deported by the Communist government to the poorest parts of China where he, along with millions of other Chinese youth, would be condemned to a life of poverty and hard labor. Ming learned to play the Chinese er-hu violin and to learn ancient cultural dancing as a way to avoid deportation. A chance meeting with a visiting American professor helped Ming come to America, so in 1982, with \$50 and a Chinese-English dictionary in his pocket, Ming arrived in the U.S. and began a whole new life.

While in medical school, Ming became a Christian, and since then, his faith has inspired all of his work. Today, Dr. Wang is a world-renowned cataract and LASIK surgeon, and the er-hu and dance skills he learned during the Cultural Revolution have now become his hobby, and are utilized to help his medical charity work (EyeBall). He is also involved in a project aimed at distributing Bibles among the Chinese, which he hopes will help in recruiting a quarter of the human population for God’s kingdom.

Describing his 16-year journey with faith and science, Dr. Wang told attendees the powerful story of the amniotic membrane contact lens, which involved taking fetal wound-healing cells to help injured adult eyes—and related how he was frustrated at not being able to find a way to conduct this corneal wound-

healing research without harming an unborn child. The questions in his heart were “Are science and faith really this contradictory? Should we do fetal wound-healing research without our moral, ethical and faith principles? Or, should we not do this research at all, and therefore not being able to advance medicine and improve the quality of our lives?”

The answer came in the form of being able to obtain the necessary healing cells from discarded amniotic sacs after the birth of healthy children. Using this technique, hundreds of people who might otherwise be visually impaired for life are able to see, with no harm done to another human being in the process.

Ming Wang’s talk was a unique and powerful presentation about growing up in poverty and deprivation, about working hard and appreciating every opportunity that God has given, and about persistence and patience, believing that God has created this world and he will show us his way!

Dr. Wang concluded his presentation with a musical performance on the Chinese er-hu violin with classical guitarist Carlos Enrique.



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Kahanic, Sarah –Sioux City, IA  
 Katsma, Mark –Arden Hills, MN  
 Kirkpatrick, Pamela –Hatfield, PA  
 Lake, Todd –Nashville, TN  
 Larkin, Bruce –Chicago, IL  
 Lau, Shanana –Montecito, CA  
 Lee, Arthur –Irvine, CA  
 LeMay, Jan –Loveland, CO  
 Little, Ginny –Kent, OH  
 Lopez, Jose –San Marcos, TX  
 Ma, Ye –Princeton, NJ  
 Macias, Monique –Azusa, CA  
 Matheson, Leonard –Saint Charles, MO  
 Mayfield, Evan –Boise, ID  
 Mays, Jeffrey –Austin, TX  
 McDaniel, Terra –Kingston, GA  
 McWilliams, Emily –Columbus, OH  
 Miles, Paul –CO Springs, CO  
 Miller, Julia –Nashville, TN  
 Murphree, Steve –Nashville, TN  
 Osczevski, Aaron –Martensville, SK,  
 Canada  
 Parr, Mittie –Greenville, SC  
 Pazos, William –Sandy, UT  
 Plumberg, Christopher –Columbus, OH  
 Price, Frank –Dothan, AL  
 Purtell, Amanda –Tulsa, OK  
 Remy, Daniel –Irvine, CA  
 Renfro, Roy –Brentwood, TN  
 Rensch, Ariel –St Paul, MN  
 Reynolds, Tyler –Watertown, NY  
 Rigoni-Quinto, Teresa –West Palm Bch, FL  
 Ruiz, Chelsea –Waco, TX  
 Sabates, Angela –St Paul, MN  
 Scavo, Karina –Mount Sinai, NY  
 Snyder, James –Oakmont, PA  
 Soeten, Emma –Abbotsford, BC, Canada  
 Spurgeon, Steven –Wynnewood, PA  
 Symington, Scott –Saginaw, MI  
 Tauber, Michelle –Edmonton, AB, Canada  
 Topazian, Hillary –Rochester, MN  
 Tucker, Faith –Los Altos, CA  
 Van Emburgh, James –Brandon, FL  
 Wagner, Mary –Milltown, NJ  
 Wang, Ming –Nashville, TN  
 Wojciech, Derek –South Riding, VA  
 Yuh, Jessica –Berkeley, CA  
 Zahniser, Megan –Dorchester, MA

## CWIS Takes Off!

On the evening of July 20— Saturday night at the ASA Annual Meeting—about sixteen Christian women in science gathered in a lovely board room overlooking the lights of downtown Nashville and punctuated by lightning from a summer storm. We were young and we were old, physicians and anthropologists, first-timers at ASA meetings and old-timers.



We talked about our future and the future of our daughters and granddaughters. We talked about our shared passion – that a love of science and a love of Jesus do indeed go hand-in-hand. We agreed that there was a critical need to help other women understand this passion of ours, and got right to work talking about what we could do together to make a difference.

In the weeks and months following the first Christian Women in Science (CWIS) meeting in Nashville in July, nearly fifty different women from across the country personally expressed interest and support for this new organization!

We want to make a difference for Christian Women in Science all over the country. We want to make a difference for women in ASA—and to attract more women to ASA and to encourage more women to pursue leadership roles in ASA. We want to make a difference for all age groups, from young women in middle school or high school, to college students, to early career and mid-career and established leaders. And we want to share this message broadly with women in science, engineering, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and medical fields.

If you share this passion of ours, there are things you can do right now to help make CWIS a success: First, start by sharing this news via your own email lists and organizations. Second, follow our blog by visiting our website at [network.asa3.org/group/CWIS](http://network.asa3.org/group/CWIS), or consider contributing your

own thoughts by emailing [lynn.l.billman@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.l.billman@gmail.com).



Thank you all for your interest and ideas and enthusiasm! May the Lord bless you in your work and life, and may he bless our new ideas and continue to guide us in his service.

—Lynn Billman

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our creeds or the commitments that make the most sense to us.

I'm not sure just what I get out of social media, why I don't delete my accounts and the unhealthy urges that come with them. I suppose I feel I need that extra surge of publicity or confirmation once in a while, and I've come to count on the novel effortlessness of staying "connected" with the people I've known. It is also true that some things we share on the internet inspire thought-provoking replies—but when I compare this digitized Parthenon to the intensity of personal growth I experience in the company of those who don't just "like" what I say or "agree to disagree"—that wholesale, 21st-century-style copout—whose passion for truth and whose love

of one another won't leave room for passive roles, lukewarm beliefs... I pause.

It's in their company, not the company of one-off comments, that I realize just how much of a work in progress my convictions are, and how very, very far I have to go before I appreciate what it means to live a life of searching grace. How removed I am from that ideal, how very much I have yet to learn. How thankful I am for the people that expose my flawed thinking out of love and devotion to humility, not the alternative.

Now there's something worth posting about.



Emily Ruppel, Editor

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## MEMBERS in GLORY

**Ray D. Walton Jr.**, 92, of Frederick, Maryland, died April 8, 2013, at Homewood. He was the husband of Frances Crabill Walton whom he married July 6, 1997.

Born January 26, 1921, in Ogden, Utah, he was raised in Portland, Oregon. In 1943 Walton received his bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering at Oregon State College, Corvallis, Oregon.

Like many of his generation, Walton proudly served his nation during the dramatic events of World War II. In 1943 he earned an artillery lieutenant's commission in the U.S. Army, as well as the Bronze Star for valor and a Purple Heart. In 2001, Walton's division belatedly received a Presidential Unit Citation for its heroism on Okinawa.

In 1956, he became a federal government employee with the Atomic

Energy Commission (which later became the Department of Energy). He worked in Idaho Falls, Idaho, from 1956–1960 focusing on the recovery of enriched uranium from spent nuclear fuel. In 1960 he was transferred to the Atomic Energy Commission headquarters near Germantown, Maryland, where he spent most of the rest of his career.

Throughout his working life, he focused on the solidification and immobilization of liquid, high-level nuclear waste. He was responsible for the process design of the world's first engineering-scale waste solidification facility at the Idaho test site. The American Nuclear Society designated this calcinating facility as a historical landmark.

For two years (1964–1966) Walton served as an international nuclear fuel cycle expert for the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, Austria. While on that assignment, he led an international nuclear power mission to Turkey in 1965. There he gave advice about the desirability of building a nuclear power plant in that nation.

After retirement from the federal government in 1986, he worked part-time as a high-level waste consultant for Argonne National Laboratory until 1996. In 2005 he received the Wendell Weart Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Waste Management Symposia (the largest nuclear waste management meeting in the world).

Walton's Christian faith remained central to his entire life. For two years at Oregon State, he was president of the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship. Walton also travelled widely including three trips to the Holy Land.