

# president's page

## Counting our blessings

Most often the President reserves this page to discuss major issues facing the Society. While we shall always have problems to dominate our attention, it is also important to pause, take stock, and to contemplate all the achievements and good things which we generally take for granted. Also, I'm sure that most of us fail to appreciate the people, only a few of them paid, who make the Society tick. At this writing, I have been your President for but five months and have only just begun to recognize the incredible array of AMS services and activities and the truly dedicated people who make them possible. It's worth setting aside our problems for a moment and counting our blessings.

I hardly need enumerate all our publications and the reputation they enjoy; they are a source of our strength and deserving of our pride. The publication of five journals and bulletins, plus Meteorological Abstracts and Monographs, amounting to some 9000 pages annually, is a feat of legerdemain for a society the size of ours. Though authors and readers may sometimes have bones to pick, no one can challenge the dedication and massive labor of Publications Commissioner Hilst and Editors Craig, Rapp, Newton, Reid, Bierly, Rigby, Spengler, and Gerhardt, and their assistants. And no rewards can adequately repay them.

The conduct of some 20 to 25 conferences each year, many now accompanied by advanced preprint volumes, is an organizational and management task of huge proportions. Only those of you who have participated in the running of such meetings know that meticulous planning and hard work is involved in making them a success. The STAC and local program committees which assume these burdens gracefully deserve more than mere praise. Our specialized meetings and preprint volumes have become an important medium of scientific communication that contributes significantly to the continued vitality of our discipline. More than that, they are reunions where we regularly renew friendships and

maintain the intimacy of a fraternity, the likes of which few other societies can boast. Indeed to me the AMS is "family" where I feel warm, comfortable, and very much at home.

While browsing through this issue, stop for a moment to contemplate the number of Commissions, Boards, and Committees, and the individuals they comprise. It is truly staggering. More amazing is their effort and devotion to the work of the Society, all graciously volunteered and nothing asked for in return. And I can personally testify to the magnitude of the job done by your Council and Executive Committee, not to mention that of the President.

Behind the scenes at Boston headquarters is the small, extremely effective, and highly dedicated team headed by Ken Spengler and most ably assisted by Evelyn Mazur, Dave Landrigan, and others. The workload they handle is mind-boggling. The President has the chance to do his job effectively only because this team keeps the wheels of the Society rolling so smoothly. Although I have been a member of the AMS for 29 years and active in its affairs for about 18, it was only as President that I came to fully appreciate Ken Spengler and his importance to the Society. Beyond his highly efficient and seemingly effortless management of the AMS and the daily handling of a myriad of problems, Ken is there to guide every meeting no matter where and how often. His vigor is astounding, his tact legendary, and his friends without number. He is our diplomat-extraordinaire in both national and international meteorological affairs. He is indeed the symbol of the AMS.

While I could continue at great length in this vein, the thrust and flavor of my remarks are clear. Our achievements are many, our blessings great. Surely the greatest of these are the countless dedicated people who have worked so hard and selflessly over the years to make the AMS what it is today. *David Atlas, President*