

## Behind the Themes and Between the Lines

The *MRS Bulletin* usually lives in the dynamic present, moving with the ebb and flow of the materials community, not wanting to dwell on the past or risk predicting the future. Yet, the strong current of the year 2000 and the slight tug of the 25-year history of *MRS Bulletin* swept us into its grasp. So, in 2000 we will supplement the usual technical themes and departments of the *Bulletin* with a series of articles grounded in the current state of materials, but designed to start a dialogue in the materials community about future directions research might take. It is a new year, and by the end of the series it will be a new millennium. History tells us that civilization is anchored on materials. So, yes, it is time to pause, reflect, and make sure we have considered all of the possibilities.

V.S. Arunachalam, who orchestrated this series of articles, will set the tone in January with a brief editorial. Then Alan Cottrell steps back and gives a running start with "A Centennial Report," illustrating how far materials research has come in the past century, and showing that a brief glance in the rearview mirror



can help determine vectors for the future. Then a collection of features, written by eminent leaders in the materials community, will speculate on the role materials might play in specific societal sectors: Beyond steel and concrete, what will form the fabric of our homes, offices, and roads? After cars and airplanes, what materials will carry us from place to place? When Moore's law becomes passé, what will pave the next communications highway? How will materials sculpt and rejuvenate our bodies and our minds? How

will we generate and capture the energy we need to fuel the society of the future? These articles will extrapolate and speculate on the materials our society would need in the coming century and beyond for habitat, transportation, information technology, medicine, and energy generation. Cutting across even these broad societal sectors, we will examine issues of manufacturing, environment, education, and the global economy. Robert W. Cahn then looks to the future of research itself, addressing as-yet unanswered scientific questions—answers to which will propel technology for ages to come.

These predictions, if nothing else, will help frame the research issues that may become important in the coming years. The materials field has developed from one of finding and using materials to one where the materials essentially can be designed and tailored, atom by atom. What will the next century uncover as we dive deeper?

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# What's Hot... MRS Workshops

*"The combination of the focused topic and the good opportunities for interactions (lunches, poster sessions, dinner) made for a very useful meeting."*

*"I met several participants for the first time. This stimulated new ideas."*

*"A very good balance between talks and time for informal interaction."*

*"Really first rate."*

The Materials Research Society has established the MRS Workshop Series, a new service for the materials community. MRS Workshops deal with highly focused and compelling subjects, as do the MRS Fall and Spring Meeting symposia. However, Workshops differ significantly in that they:

- allow attendees to focus their full attention to a designated topic over a 2–3-day period.
- offer much more interaction and discussion between speakers and the audience
- are aimed at targeted audiences
- are limited in size to about 125 participants
- offer attendees a more in-depth review of important topics than is typically allowed in a "snapshot" symposium
- do not compete with any other MRS activities

For information on future workshops, contact MRS Member Services at 724-779-3003 or at [info@mrs.org](mailto:info@mrs.org)

**WE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING NEW IDEAS AND POTENTIAL ORGANIZERS FOR WORKSHOPS**

An MRS goal has been to respond to the needs of our members on a timely basis by providing quality forums for the exchange of ideas. To assist in achieving that goal, MRS will continually solicit new ideas from members on Workshop topics, along with potential organizers. If you would like to suggest a topic or volunteer to organize a workshop, please contact Patricia Hastings at [hastings@mrs.org](mailto:hastings@mrs.org)