

# DIALOGUE.....



**Jean Bahr**, *GSA President*



**Jack Hess**, *GSA Executive Director*

*The three highest awards* the Geological Society of America presents each year are the Penrose, Day, and Donath (Young Scientist Award) Medals. All three medals are 2.25 inches in diameter and have traditionally been made of 14-karat solid gold. We are now challenged by the fact that the price of gold has far-outstripped the ability of the Penrose and Day medal funds to provide the financial resources to fully cover the costs of producing those medals. At the time of this writing, each gold medal costs about US\$6,000.

Fred Donath continues to fully support the cost of the gold Donath Medal, but to maintain the tradition of presenting the Penrose and Day 14-karat-gold medals every year, an endowment of more than US\$150,000 for each medal is needed. Currently, there is only about US\$30,000 between the two funds.

The Day bequest specifies the gold content and size of the medal. Legal opinion states that we cannot change the bequest.

The Penrose bequest allows the freedom to change the composition and size of the medal. For Denver 2010, GSA Council has approved changing the Penrose Medal to a gold-plated silver medal. The Day and Donath medals will remain solid gold.

## *What choices does the Society have in order to continue presenting these prestigious medals?*

- **Raise at least US\$270,000** to endow both the Penrose and Day medal funds.
- **Use Society operating funds** to make up the difference. For fiscal year 2011, that would be about US\$11,000.
- **Change the Penrose Medal** to 24-karat-gold-plated silver. Approximate cost: US\$1,000.
- **Only present the medals when there are enough funds** to pay for them, knowing that this will create large gaps in the presentation of both medals.



## *What can you do to help?*

Please make a donation to either the Penrose or Day Medal funds through the GSA Foundation at [www.gsafweb.org/makeadonation.html](http://www.gsafweb.org/makeadonation.html).

## *The Penrose Medal*

was established in 1927 by R.A.F. Penrose Jr. to be awarded in recognition of distinguished research in pure geology—outstanding original contributions or achievements that mark a major advance in the science of geology. The award is made only at the discretion of GSA Council, which interprets pure geology to apply to all scientific disciplines represented by the Society. Nominees may or may not be members of the Society and may be from any nation. Penrose's sole objective in making the gift was to encourage original work in purely scientific geology; scientific achievements are to be considered rather than contributions in teaching, administration, or service. Mid-career scientists who have already made exceptional contributions will be given full consideration for the award.

## *The Arthur L. Day Medal*

was established in 1948 by Arthur L. Day to be awarded annually, or less frequently at the discretion of GSA Council, for outstanding distinction in the application of physics and chemistry to the solution of geologic problems. Day's intent was to recognize outstanding achievements and inspire further effort, rather than reward a distinguished career, and scientific achievements are to be considered rather than contributions in teaching, administration, and service.

## *The Young Scientist Award (Donath Medal)*

was established in 1988 to be awarded to a scientist who will be 35 years of age or younger *throughout* the year in which the award is to be presented for outstanding achievement in contributing to geologic knowledge through original research that marks a major advance in the earth sciences. The award, consisting of the gold Donath Medal and an honorarium, was endowed by Dr. and Mrs. Fred A. Donath.