In the Final Analysis

"I like to compare the holiday season with the way a child listens to a favorite story. The pleasure is in the familiar way the story begins, the anticipation of familiar turns it takes, the familiar moments of suspense, and the familiar climax and ending."

— (Mr.) Fred Rogers

One of the joys of being a Pittsburgher is the tremendous civic pride that comes from having a brilliant pioneer of children's television as, quite literally, a resident of our neighborhood. If you never had the experience of viewing a telecast by Mr. Rogers of *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* fame, suffice to say he was a good guy who spoke to children for decades like they were all good guys and girls as well.

As a kid, I appreciated Mr. Rogers' imagination-provoking journeys into the land of make believe. As an adult, I appreciate all of the good work that he did to help shape two generations of young people with an uplifting, but never treacly, message. As a columnist, I appreciate that I can take Mr. Rogers' thoughtful reflection on the psychology of children and leverage it into an editorial. In this case, I find that if we substitute "TMS Annual Meeting" for "holiday season," we end up with the warp and woof of the society's conference-organization experience.

In terms of significance, the TMS Annual Meeting is the society's capstone event. It is the holiday season of all holiday seasons on the materials calendar from our perspective. Every day in some essential way, there is a cadre of volunteers and staff endeavoring to help the society prepare for it. They're all doing a great job.

Of all of the preparatory activities with which we busy ourselves, perhaps the most significant happened but a few days before the penning of this column. The editor even stopped the presses to work the breaking news into this issue's News & Update. What's the event? It is the finalization by the TMS Program Committee of what symposia will be presented at the TMS 2011 Annual Meeting. As you read, these symposia are opening for the submission of abstracts in the society's ProgramMaster website. If the still-distant TMS 2011 Annual Meeting is to be a success, it will be because of what happens from now to late July when the appeal for abstracts closes and the organization of thousands of presentations into sessions begins.

I'm already intrigued by several elements of the emergent programming plans. Accounting for my personal biases and in full recognition that everything at this point is subject to change, here's a quick peek at how the TMS 2011 neighborhood is taking shape:

- Seven programming tracks have been created to hold a record 72 (!) symposia: Aluminum and Magnesium; Advanced Characterization, Modeling, and Materials Performance; High-Performance Materials; Materials and Society (Energy and Sustainable Production); Materials Processing and Production; Nanoscale and Amorphous Materials; Professional Development.
- The Materials and Society Committee is looking to hold a plenary session to open the meeting with a cross-cutting program. A broad plenary session by the Light Metals Division is under discussion as well.
- Two honorary symposia are under development: The David Pope Honorary Symposium on Fundamentals of Deformation and Fracture of Advanced Metallic Materials, and Polycrystal Modeling with Experimental Integration: A Symposium Honoring Carlos Tome.
- It looks to be a big year in computational materials science and engineering, with nearly ten symposia that fit under that broad umbrella. One that I look forward to based on title alone: Massively Parallel Simulations of Materials Responses.
- I ask your indulgence as I give a shout out to my friend Jud Ready for busting a rhyme with his symposium Geek Speak on the Hill. Succinct and syncopated!

All in all, it looks like TMS 2011 is shaping up as five beautiful days in the neighborhood.

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