

Regional Meetings – their historical development and importance

In the mid-1940s, when travel was a bit more cumbersome than it seems to be today, and The War (WWII) interrupted a National Meeting, chemists within the American Chemical Society decided to join informally with others in proximal geographical areas to host meetings featuring presenters from academia and industry within that area so that those who might not be able to attend a National meeting could have a way of presenting their work in a professional environment at lesser expense than at a National Meeting. In this way 10 Regions* were formed in the “Lower 48” – that is how **our Region, the Great Lakes Region (GLR)**, was formed (see map on reverse side). Meetings were held on University campuses to keep participants’ costs to a minimum. With the increasing desire for comfort, air-conditioned hotels became an increasingly-used venue; as corporate donations waxed and waned, to help fund the meetings a larger exposition was also incorporated, and hotels included available space which took into account the needs of exhibitors for more visibility and easier access to participants in a frequently-traveled location.

Such meetings were more accessible to graduate and undergraduate students, younger faculty members and to those in industry who had modest travel support; they also provided valuable networking possibilities to the participants. Over the years the importance and prestige of presenting at Regional meetings in our Region has paralleled the content of the program selected by each Program committee and the “name” of the presenters invited to give seminars and organize symposia. Teaching and Volunteer Awards are given at Regional Meetings, and in the last 5-10 years meeting **abstracts** (oral and poster) **which are presented, are archived in the CAS database just like they are for National Meetings**. With the smaller size of Regional Meetings program planning and execution is more “nimble”. Currently, the National ACS Office offers the services of a staff member to help in several aspects of the organization of a Regional Meeting but primarily in the registration and the abstract-gathering processes.

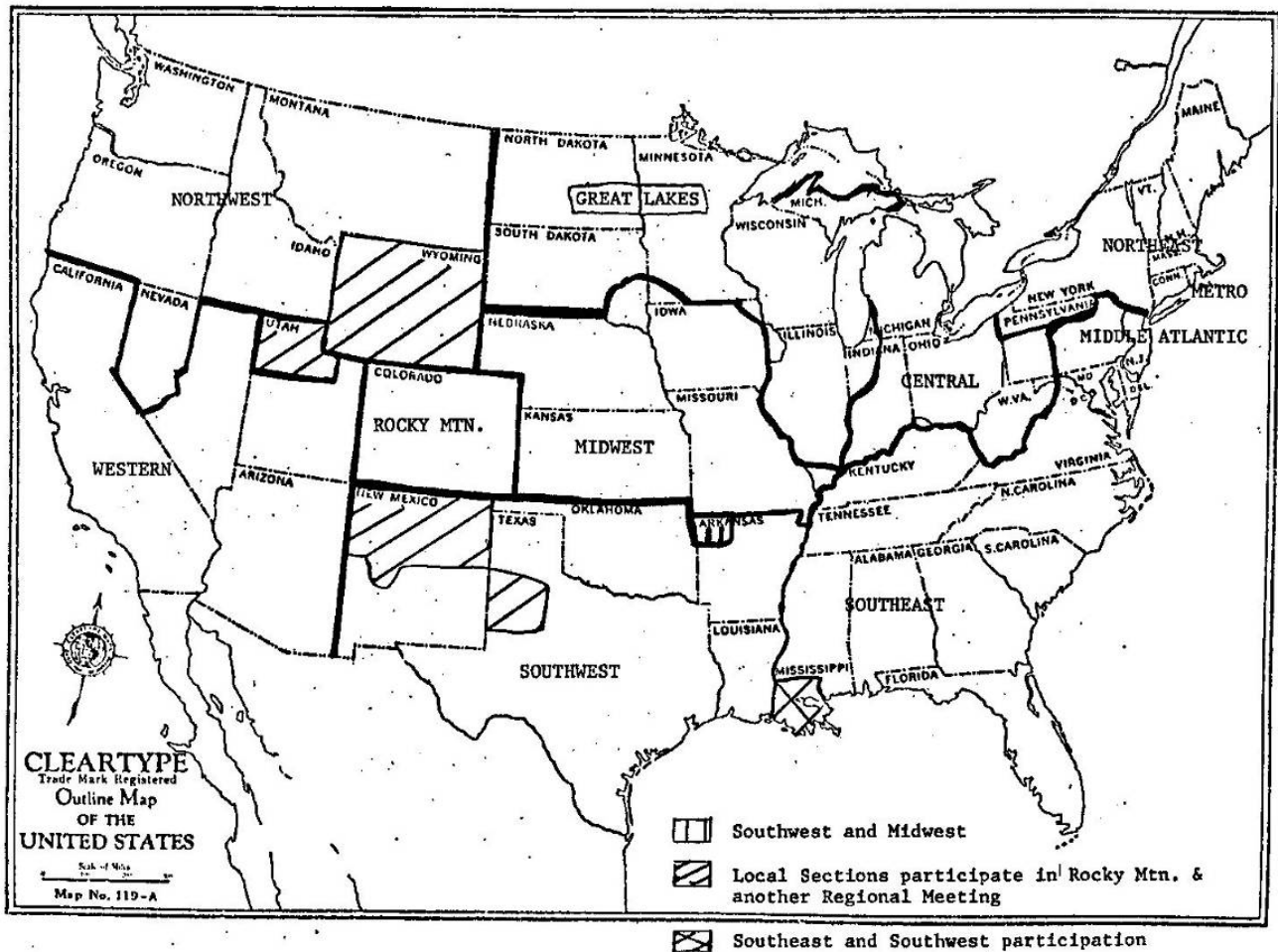
Our **Kalamazoo Section** hosted its first Great Lakes Regional meeting (GLRM) on the WMU campus in **1973** with Robert B. Moffett as General Chairman; our second meeting was also on the WMU campus under the General Chairmanship of Lydia Hines in **1984** – it was a Joint Meeting with the Western Michigan Section (Central Region); we have since co-hosted two more Joint Meetings, in **1994** with the Huron Valley Section (Central Region) in Ann Arbor (Jed Fisher was our representative program co-chair) and in **2001** with the Western Michigan Section (Central Region) in Grand Rapids (Brian Stockman was our representative general co-chair).

The GLR was the last to become incorporated, in 2009 at the GLR Meeting in Chicago. In an effort to maintain a schedule of annual Regional Meetings, our Region’s Board of Directors (one representative from each Local Section in the GLR – KACS’s representative for the last 27 years has been Lydia Hines) is considering assigning Sections, based on size and location so as to distribute the responsibility equitably, to act as hosts or co-hosts for a Regional Meeting. [KACS has been *tentatively* assigned to act as host (or co-host) in 2017].

Support of Regional Meetings by our attendance and/or hosting or co-hosting is very important if this more intimate venue of networking and professional development is to continue. The importance to the ACS of such smaller and more intimate meetings has grown as we seek to reach our younger constituents and the general public.

*Northwestern, Rocky Mountain, **Great Lakes**, Central, Northeastern, Mid-Atlantic, Southeastern, Midwestern, Southwestern, Western (see map below).

Map of Meeting Regions



Compiled by Lydia Hines
August 2011