

## PRESIDENT OF THE TENNESSEE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE FOR 2001

Martin V. Stewart was born July 7, 1944 in Shamokin, Pennsylvania to June and Martin Stewart as the first of four children: Dennis (1948), Mitchell (1955), and Cynthia (1960). His father was a pilot in the United States Air Force (veteran of WW II, Korea, and Vietnam), and his mother subsequently returned to college and became a registered nurse in 1971. Because families of military officers move frequently, Stewart attended public schools in Pennsylvania, Texas (twice), Massachusetts, and Florida before graduating in 1962 from Albany High School, Albany, Georgia, where he played trombone for the AHS band and participated in local and state science fairs.

He remained in Georgia to earn a chemistry BS in 1966 from Emory University in Atlanta, spending his freshman and sophomore years on the historic campus of Emory at Oxford (now Oxford College) in Newton County where Emory was initially located (1836–1919). Stewart outgrew sixties-style student activism while teaching various mathematics and physical science subjects as a boarding faculty member until 1968 at the college preparatory Brandon Hall School near Atlanta, and then entered the University of Georgia to pursue a PhD in organic chemistry under Professor Richard K. Hill. He left the antebellum traditions of Athens in 1975 for a four-year postdoctoral appointment at the University of Pittsburgh to collaborate with the physical organic chemist Edward M. Arnett in pioneering experiments concerning monolayer films of chiral molecules at the air-water interface (Topics in Stereochemistry 13:195–262, 1982), simultaneously writing his doctoral dissertation titled "The Absolute Configuration and Maximum Specific Rotation of 1,6-Methano[10]annulene-2-carboxylic Acid."

Stewart completed the dissertation and was formally awarded a doctorate in 1979, then he left Pittsburgh for Murfreesboro to join the faculty of Middle Tennessee State University in the Department of Chemistry and Physics (which evolved into the present Department of Chemistry when the Department of Physics and Astronomy was created in 1995). He teaches general and organic chemistry, organic spectroscopy, and graduate courses on several organic topics. He has coordinated a weekly departmental seminar series for twenty years and helped to establish and maintain a Doctor of Arts (DA) program, which is a terminal degree designed to produce teaching faculty for undergraduate chemistry courses (J. Chem. Educ. 78:158–160, 2001). Stewart writes biographies of prominent chemists and mentors undergraduate and graduate (MS and DA) students in individualized research projects that are presented each year at the TAS and other professional meetings. Some representative topics include the NMR spin-spin coupling of HOD, correlation of the proton chemical shift and carbon-13 coupling constant of *tert*-butyl groups, hazard assessment of rotary evaporation, and the recovery of acetonitrile and other solvents. Other projects explore preparative and mechanistic aspects of heterogeneous organic reactions such as Friedel-Crafts alkylation catalyzed by silica gel, aldol condensation catalyzed by zeolites, ether formation from sterically hindered alcohols through phase-transfer catalysis, and oxidations with solid-supported reagents.

Stewart became a member of the Tennessee Academy of Science (TAS) in 1980 and was elected as a Fellow of the Academy in 1990. He served as Chemistry Section Chair for Annual TAS Meetings (1989, 1991, and 1997), Chemistry Section Editor for the *Journal of the Tennessee Academy of Science* since 1993,



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Member-at-large on the Executive Committee (1999), and President-elect and Program Chair for the 110th Annual TAS Meeting at Belmont University in 2000. On January 1, 2001, he assumed the Presidency of the Academy. Other professional affiliations include the American Crystallographic Association, Sigma Xi, the Two-Year College Chemistry Consortium (2YC<sup>3</sup>), and the American Chemical Society (Treasurer of the Nashville ACS Section, 1997–2000).

He was married on July 22, 1989 to Betty McNeely, who is the executive director of the Rutherford County Adult Activity Center, a vocational and residential program for adults with mental retardation. His stepdaughter, Zena Tenenbaum, graduated with a biology major from Middle Tennessee State University in 1994. She is now a naturalist at the Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary near Liberty, Missouri; however, the family cats, Mikey, Sister, and Mouse, continue their employment at the Murfreesboro residence. He enjoys reading and collecting old books, especially sets, and also likes backpacking and mountaineering, seeking to reach the highest point of elevation in each of the 48 contiguous states. He has sung major choral works as a member of the tenor section of the Middle Tennessee Choral Society, including Mozart's *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall and performances in cathedrals while touring Austria, England, and France.