

Peter Jurs (2020)



Treasurer – 2022-2025

Oct 12, 2022: The American Fur Trade of the Far West

Sept 10, 2025: John Muir and the Camping Trip that Changed America

Peter was born and raised in Oakland, California. He received a B.S. in Chemistry from Stanford and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Washington and then joined the Penn State Chemistry Department in 1969. He retired in 2006. He was Assistant Head for Undergraduate Education for ten years and taught freshman chemistry for more than ten years. He authored approximately 270 publications and supervised 57 advanced chemistry degrees at Penn State. His research area was computational chemistry, investigating the links between molecular structures and activities of compounds. He served on the University Faculty Senate for 25 years and was its Chair 1995-1996. Peter enjoyed teaching, and he volunteered to teach freshman chemistry to thousands of Penn State students. He was one of three co-authors of a college freshman chemistry textbook, *Chemistry: The Molecular Science*, that went through several editions. In 1995 he was awarded the C. I. Noll Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching. For decades Peter was actively involved with the American Chemical Society. In 2009 he was elected a Fellow of the American Chemical Society. Peter was a dedicated runner for many years, logging tens of thousands of miles. He ran the Skylon Marathon, Buffalo to Niagara Falls, four times, with a personal best time of just under three hours. Peter enjoys traveling and has visited almost every state in the USA and many foreign countries. Highlights include rafting through the Grand Canyon, backpacking and climbing mountains in the Sierra Nevada, Rockies, and Cascade ranges, touring the Alaskan inside passage, briefly living in Japan, touring Northern Italy, Scotland and spending a week in Paris for his and Elaine's 25th anniversary. In retirement Peter became active in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Centre County, where he held many leadership positions including Treasurer and Board member for more than ten years. Peter held the position of Election Judge for his precinct in State College, running the polling place serving his area of the Borough.

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