

# American Phytopathological Society

## Potomac Division

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### Minutes

57th Meeting of the Potomac Division, American Phytopathological Society  
October 17-19, 2001

The 2001 meeting of the Potomac Division was held jointly with the Northeast Division on October 17-19 at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Cromwell, Connecticut. Wade Elmer of the Northeast Division served as the local arrangements chair. Attendance was 92, including 10 students.

The programs started Wednesday morning with a Forestry tour, attended by 22 people, of Dinosaur State Park and a review of Chestnut Blight research with tour leader Sandra Anagnostakis. This was followed by Extension and Industry meetings Wednesday afternoon, chaired by Cheryl Smith and Mike Agnew, respectively. A welcome social was held Wednesday evening which included a "Phytopathological Jeopardy" contest.

The Thursday morning session began with a symposium entitled "Sampling plant pathogens with an eye on impact, genetics, and spatial structure" with Peter Oudemans presiding. A keynote address Thursday afternoon by APS President Noel Keen was entitled "Genomics of plant pathogens: Learning that they are a lot smarter than we thought". The rest of Thursday morning and the afternoon were devoted to 22 contributed papers, including a Graduate Student Paper competition. In the Graduate Student Paper Competition, the first place award went to **F. A. Nalim** from Pennsylvania State University, for a paper "Molecular phylogenetic analysis of *Fusarium avenaceum* from *Lisianthus*," coauthored by D. M. Geiser, R. J. McGovern and B. K. Harbaugh. The Runner-up award went to **M. Filion**, from McGill University for a paper "Detection of the arbuscular mycorrhizal fungus *Glomus intraradices* using species-specific PCR primers", co-authored with M. St-Arnaud, C. Hamel and S. H. Jabaji-Hare.

The technical program on Friday morning included an outreach industry seminar on "Diseases of Herbaceous Perennials," organized by Connecticut Cooperative Extension and the Northeast Division APS. Approximately 220 people registered for this workshop.

A joint business meeting of the Northeast and Potomac Divisions was held, followed by the Potomac Division Business meeting. The Joint meeting was called to order by Potomac Division Chair Vern Damsteegt, who thanked the Northeast Division for hosting the Joint Meeting. Bruce Clarke, Northeast Division President, co-chaired the meeting. Meg McGrath provided a Necrology Committee report, listing Dale Hindal, David Quinn, Paul Stevens, and Clark Rogerion as having passed away during the preceding year.

APS President Noel Keen reported that membership nationally was stable this year, but that the organization ran a budget deficit due in part to significant investments in the start-up costs for the on-line journal Plant Health Progress. The APS Public Policy Board, chaired by O. W. Barnett, issued APS Position Statements on Use of Biotechnology and contracted with a lobbyist in Washington DC to support funding for agricultural genomics. Changes in APS governance are being proposed in the "Madden Report", as the APS Council evolves toward more of a strategic policy body. The Madden report also proposed changes in Council representation and recommends reducing the publications editors to one or two seats and would confer Council representation to "subject matter" disciplines, while giving up Council seats currently designated for Division Councilors. Any such changes will be discussed in more depth at future meetings and would be subject to By-Laws amendments to be voted on by members. Vice-President Gary Bergstrom has been appointed to an ad hoc committee to review the changes.

Erik Stromberg described the activities of the "branding" committee which has approved a new logo for APS. Cindy Ash provided comments from APS Headquarters and described the new on-line publication Plant Health Progress. It is intended to be the reliable source of the latest science-based applied plant health management information that will be easily accessible from the field or home office.

Barbara Christ and Erik Stromberg presented a joint Councilor's report. Topics included the Governance report, annual meetings, and results of a membership survey.

Northeast Division Treasurer Suja Hare presented preliminary income estimates for the meetings and indicated that profits from the Herbaceous Perennial Workshop would be shared among the Northeast and Potomac Divisions and Connecticut Cooperative Extension.

The Joint meeting then recessed and individual Division business meetings were held.

### **Potomac Division Business Meeting, Oct. 18, 2001**

The 57<sup>th</sup> annual business meeting of the Potomac Division was called to order by President Vern Damsteegt at 5:30 PM. Minutes of the previous year's meeting were presented and one correction was offered; the Thursday symposium (2000 meeting) on "Advantages and Pitfalls of Using Biotechnology" was organized by Bob Mulrooney and chaired by Tom Evans. Erik Stromberg moved, Anton Baudoin seconded, that the Minutes be approved as amended. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report for the Jan.1-Dec. 31, 2000 fiscal year was presented by James Kotcon. The Division's operating account had a net loss of \$482.01 and an ending balance of 2,890.24, while the Memorial Fund increased by \$159.50 (due to interest income and favorable stock market results from an investment account at APS Headquarters) and closed the year with a balance of 19,494.72. Due to worsening stock market conditions, losses in the investment account were being experienced in 2001. The report of the Audit committee was presented by Morris Bonde and Mannon Gallegley and concluded that the financial records were correct and in order. Ken Deahl moved, Anton Baudoin seconded, that both the Treasurer's report and the Audit Committee report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Vern Damsteegt announced that the Graduate Student travel Award competition received six applications, and was awarded to Prappasorn Damrongkool of West Virginia University. She used the funds to attend a Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions Conference in Madison Wisconsin, July 13-14. She expressed her appreciation in a letter to the Division.

Under Old Business, Anton Baudoin announced that the 2002 Potomac Division meeting would be held jointly with the Eastern Regional Conference on the Ecology of Root-Infecting Microorganisms (ERCERIM) March 4-6, in Williamsburg, VA. The 2003 meeting will be held jointly with the Eastern Entomological Society in Harrisburg, PA, March 15-21, 2003.

Erik Stromberg led a discussion of the "Madden Report" on APS Governance. The report was developed out of concern that APS Council is not adequately representative of all members, and needs to focus more on strategic decision-making than on day-to-day operations. Most APS members are not members of individual Divisions, 30 % are overseas and have no Division affiliation, and current Journal Editors make up a disproportionate share of APS Council. The Madden report proposed adding "Disciplinary" Council representatives while reducing the number of Division and Editor positions on Council. Concerns were expressed about details of how APS Council representatives would be chosen, whether an individual University might have several votes on Council, how Divisions would support graduate students; and whether disciplinary representation would lead to increased partitioning of the Society by discipline, leading to further balkanization into specialized separate organizations. The full report is available on the APSNet website at: <http://www.apsnet.org/members/gov/top.asp>

Bob Mulrooney gave a report of the elections committee. Approximately 30 % of the ballots were returned, either by mail, at the meeting, or electronically. Arv Grybauskas was elected Councilor, but a tie was reported for the Vice-President's election. Bob Mulrooney stated that he needed to verify ballots that might have been received at his office after he had left for the meeting. Anton Baudoin moved, Vern Damsteegt seconded, that Bob get a final count and circulate a second ballot if a tie persisted. Motion carried.

(Note: David L. Clement, of the University of Maryland was elected as Vice-President when the final e-mail ballots were counted. Officers for 2001-2002 are: President Anton Baudoin, Vice President David Clement, Secretary-Treasurer James Kotcon, Councilor Arvydas Grybauskas, and Immediate Past President Vernon Damsteegt.)

Due to the 2001 Joint meeting being held late in the year, it was agreed that terms of office for President and Vice-President would last through one meeting, resulting in a term of one-half of a calendar year.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

James Kotcon, Secretary/Treasurer