Phytopathology News

A potential director for the NIFA has not been named at the time this piece was submitted for Phytopathology News.

Unfortunately, no funding increase was provided for research supported by USDA-CSREES in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Congress did authorize $2.5 billion to USDA and $4.7 billion to the Department of Commerce to enhance broadband access, particularly in rural America, which might hopefully reduce the carbon footprint of delivering extension programs in the future. If you are a regular reader of Phytopathology News, you are familiar with the activities of the APS Public Policy Board to increase awareness of federal agencies about plant pathology and the endeavors of members. Hence, my time at OSTP has been another activity in this vein. An underlying theme of the election in November was change, and the transformation of USDA-CSREES to the NIFA that is legislated to be in place by October 1, 2009, will likely be a significant change. Keeping federal agencies appraised of what plant pathologists do and why it is relevant to the science agenda of the nation is required if support for plant pathology is to grow. ■

Activate Your APHIS ePermits Account at the 2009 Annual Meeting

ePermits is a web-based user interface that supports electronic applications, filing, processing, and tracking of all APHIS permits, including plant and plant product, plant pest, animal and animal product, and biotechnology permits. The system will allow applicants to apply online, track status online, and receive permits online. State and field officials will have access to the online database to review permits and to ensure compliance of importers with permit conditions. Additional information about ePermits, including registration information and a link to the login page, is available at www.aphis.usda.gov/permits/learnComposer.shtml.

In order to access ePermits, individuals must first obtain a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account—a registration process that confirms identity. To facilitate the registration of APS members and guests, USDA APHIS’s Plant and Plant Product Permitting Branch staff will be available at the 2009 Annual Meeting to complete this registration process. Individuals can complete the following steps, in advance, to expedite the process:

   a. Click on “Create an Account Page”
   b. Then click on “Level 2 Access”
   c. Fill out the online registration form
      i. Choose a user ID and password
      ii. Enter your contact information. Please note: You must enter contact information (name, address, and phone number) exactly as it appears on your government-issued identification card (i.e., state driver’s license, U.S. passport, state identification card). Do not enter your organization or company’s information. (You will be given the opportunity to add your organization’s/company’s name, and change the address to the same, when you log into ePermits.)
      iii. Complete the security requirements by choosing a pin number and a series of security questions and answers. (This information is important to reset a forgotten password.)
   d. Submit the information.

Then:

2. Visit the USDA/ePermits table to obtain your level 2 status. Be sure to bring your government-issued ID (i.e., driver’s license) to verify your identity.

Alternatively, individuals are required to visit a USDA Service Center. Service centers are listed at http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app. ■

Division News

Highlights of the 2009 Potomac Division Meeting

The 2009 meeting of the Potomac Division was held March 25–27 at the Eisenhower Hotel and Conference Center in Gettysburg, PA, with attendance at approximately 66 people. Prior to the commencement of the formal program on Wednesday afternoon, a field trip to the American Chestnut Foundation’s (ACF’s) chestnut breeding plantation at the Thorpewood Retreat was led by Rob Strasser, research associate at Hood College. Twelve participants viewed symptoms of chestnut blight on second- and third-generation backcrosses of American-Chinese chestnut hybrid trees and learned about the success of the ACF’s breeding program, as well as the programs for at-risk youth conducted at the Thorpewood Retreat.

The formal meeting program began Wednesday afternoon with a welcome by President David Schmale III, followed by the Industry-Extension Update, co-chaired by Steve Rideout and Arv Grybauskas. The first contributed paper session, consisting of six presentations and chaired by Mary Ann Hansen, was held on Wednesday evening. Thursday morning’s program began with a symposium entitled “Biological control of soil-borne pathogens,” chaired by Past-President Dan Roberts. A symposium entitled “Integrating IpmPIPE into research, extension, and education,” chaired by Nicholas Dufault, followed the morning break. At the lunchtime meeting, the Potomac Division honored its retiring president, Mary Ann Hansen, with a symposium entitled “A retrospective on Mary Ann Hansen’s contributions to the Potomac,” chaired by Arv Grybauskas. The second contributed paper session, consisting of six presentations and chaired by Steve Rideout, was held Thursday afternoon.

Spender,” sung by Lisa Algazi at the Potomac Division 2009 Annual Meeting in March.

Mannon Gallegly is serenaded with the song “Big Spender,” sung by Lisa Algazi at the Potomac Division Annual Meeting in March.
business meeting, Boris Vinatzer was elected secretary-treasurer for 2009–2010. Kate Everts presented the Council's Report, in which proposed changes to representation on APS Council were discussed. Six students participated in the Graduate Student Paper Competition, which was held after lunch. Following the student competition, APS President Jim Moyer gave a presentation entitled “Our changing world—Is APS ready?” in which he described some of the changes currently occurring at APS Headquarters to make APS more transparent to the membership. An early evening poster session/social, sponsored by Syngenta Crop Protection, BASF Ag Products, Bayer CropScience, and United Phosphorus, Inc., was followed by a banquet dinner, during which awards were presented. The 2008 Distinguished Service Award was given to Bob Davis, former Potomac Division president, for his exemplary contributions to research on phytoplasmas and for his service to the Potomac Division. The award was accepted by Rose Hammond since Davis was unable to attend the event. Rachel Melnick, Penn State University, received the 2009 Memorial Fund Student Travel Award. First place in the Graduate Student Paper Competition was awarded to Ryan Anderson from Virginia Tech. Melnick was first runner-up and Kun Huang, University of Delaware, received an honorable mention. Following the award announcements, the “Meeting resolutions,” composed by Mannon Gallegly, Nina Shishkoff, and Erik Stromberg, were read by Gallegly and the gavel was passed from outgoing President Schmale III to incoming President Chris Dardick. Music by the Star Spangled Band was then enjoyed by all, especially Gallegly, who was serenaded with the song “Big Spender” sung by Lisa Algazi.

Friday morning’s first symposium, entitled “Genomics research in plant pathology,” was chaired by Dardick. Following the break, a symposium entitled “Plant disease problems in bioenergy crops” was chaired by Bingyu Zhao. Meeting participants dispersed after final comments by Schmale and Dardick.

We asked 100 APS Emeritus members, selected at random, “What advice would you give to a scientist attending his or her first APS meeting?” Their advice to meeting-goers has been published below.

RP Thakur, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), India

Any scientist attending the first APS meeting must be very excited and thrilled. My advice would be: read the program carefully to know the details about different sessions; choose the most interesting sessions, including plenary sessions and attend these; look at the list of members attending the meeting and try to meet your favorite people; must visit APS stall to look at different publications—print and CDs—and buy a few of them; must attend the reception and conference dinner; and learn, experience, and enjoy the ambience.

R. Duncan Carter, California

Your first APS meeting? Plan your time, including open time. Schedule sessions of interest to you, your major adviser, and your employer. Include sessions outside your main area of interest. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Be sure to express your appreciation to the session leaders, speakers, and APS staff and officers present. Attend the social sessions and introduce yourself: start building a bigger network. Write a report on the meeting, even if you’ll be the only reader. Above all, enjoy the meeting and promise yourself you’ll be back for the next one.

Bob Forster, University of Idaho (retired), Idaho

My advice is to expand your network of colleagues, especially those who have an established track record and who share similar responsibilities and areas of research. Try to arrange a visit over coffee in the morning or a beer at the end of the day.

Time to Make Your Bids!
The Office of International Programs needs your help to make the 5th Annual Silent Auction the best yet! Make your bids during the Silent Auction and be part of this exciting event! You can still bring your fun and unique cultural items from around the world to the APS Annual Meeting to donate. Proceeds benefit the new Global Experience program. Learn more at www.apsnet.org/members/oip/silentauction.asp.