The 87th meeting of the Southern Division of APS was held February 7–8, 2010, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort in Orlando, FL, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists. President-Elect Boyd Padgett coordinated the local arrangements. President Bob Kemerait welcomed the group of 59 attendees (15 of whom were students) who contributed a total of 36 presentations to the program.

The meeting kicked-off on Super Bowl Sunday with a symposium entitled, “The enemy within: Current status and future outlook for diseases caused by fastidious vascular plant pathogens,” presided over by Padgett. Outstanding, timely presentations were made by the invited speakers, who included Tim Gottwald, USDA-ARS; Charlie Rush, Texas AgriLife Research; Don Hopkins, University of Florida; and Phil Brannen, University of Georgia.

The symposium was followed by a graduate student paper competition presided over by Past President Kenny Seebold, who was joined on the judging panel by Tony Keinath, Tim Brenneman, and David Langston. Twelve students took part in this year’s competition with participants representing Clemson University, North Carolina State University (NCSU), Southern University and A&M College, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, the University of Arkansas, and the University of Georgia. Moytri Roy Chowdhury (University of Arkansas; coadvisors, Yulin Jia and Rick Cartwright) won first place for her presentation, “Characterization of rice blast resistance gene Pi-z(t) in rice germplasm using DNA markers and pathogenicity assays.” Terry Spurlock (University of Arkansas; advisor, Eugene Milus) placed second for his presentation, “Etiology of zoysiagrass diseases in northwest Arkansas.” Ashley Zearfoss (NCSU; coadvisors, Christina Cowger and Peter Ojiambo) came in third for her presentation, “Effect of temperature on latent period of Sclerotinia sororum blight on winter wheat under field conditions.”

Barbara Christ, APS president, addressed the group during its annual business meeting, providing the annual report on the state and activities of APS. Secretary-Treasurer Don Ferrin gave the membership, financial, and necrology reports for the division. Christopher Clark, professor in the Department of Plant Pathology & Crop Physiology at Louisiana State University (LSU) and the LSU Agricultural Center, was presented with the Outstanding Plant Pathologist Award for 2010 by Vice President Langston in recognition of his nationally recognized research program on diseases of sweet potatoes. Langston also presented travel awards to Julie Campbell (Texas A&M University), Bhavesh Dutta (University of Georgia), and Kirhti Kirin Yadagiri (Clemson University).

Following the reading of this year’s resolutions by Seebold, the program came to a close with the passing of the gavel from outgoing President Kemerait to President-Elect Padgett, who adjourned the meeting until next year when we meet in Corpus Christi, TX.

This year’s festivities concluded with a dinner social followed by the Southern Division DeBary Bowl emceed by Chris “That’s Not What I Have Here” Clark. As in the Super Bowl the previous evening, the “Saints” came marching back in the second half to soundly defeat both the “Zebra Chumps” and the “PhytoWhizzes” to claim this year’s honor.

To see the complete program, visit the APS Southern Division website (www.cals.ncsu.edu/plantpath/activities/societies/aps/SouthernAPS.html).