

Councilor's Report

1 May 2005

Gary Grove, Councilor of the Pacific Division

APS Council met in St. Paul on February 17-20. We had several serious and lengthy discussions about many issues affecting our science and society. Several issues of importance to our membership are summarized below.

Annual Meeting. Council voted to bring closure to the DeBary Bowl effective for the 2005 meeting. Interest and participation in the event had subsided during recent annual meetings. An academic contest similar in scope to the DeBary Bowl may be held at the 2008 Centennial Meeting in Minneapolis.

APS Journals. Council voted to provide open online access to APS Journals during the 3rd year following publication. For example, if an article is published in *Phytopathology* in 2005, it becomes open access at the end of 2007. This decision was viewed as one of necessity taken in order to remain competitive with other journals in our discipline. The current and future status of *Phytopathology* was the subject of focused discussion. Several years ago council commissioned the “Shaner Report”: analysis of our “flagship” journal. Voiced in that report were concerns about the journal’s publication niche, impact factor, and *perceived* “culture of rejection”. *Phytopathology* Editor-in-Chief Chris Mundt made an effective interpretation of survey data that indicated that despite some lean years and concerns about *Phytopathology*, the journal was in a period positive change.

Awards. Council voted to establish the “APS Volunteer of the Year” award to recognize those with superior records of service to our society. Nominations will be open and winners selected by division councilors and councilors-at-large.

Increasing the Value of Membership in APS. Council identified and discussed several factors that could enhance membership value. These include 1) increasing the inclusion and participation of emeritus members as essential in the function of APS 2) recruiting those in other related disciplines to join APS as a “second society” 3) increase the value to our international members through the creation of an “Ambassador Program” in liaison with the APS Office of International Programs and 4) enhancement of networking and programmatic services to international, private sector, and early-career professionals. These factors were viewed as essential to the long-term health of our science and society.

Plant Management Network. Council concurred that PMN represented an investment in the future and discussed means to bring PMN to a position of greater financial stability. Suggestions included a reduction in the importance of USDA in the PMN financial model and increased emphasis on universities and private sector partners. Also discussed was

the creation of a staff position to push and assess the marketing of PMN and strengthened 'PMN' partnerships with our sister societies.

Public Policy Board. John Sherwood made an effective presentation on the role of the APS Public Policy Board and its interrelationships with sister societies and government agencies. John also reported on the recent activities of PBB and the role that the board is taking to educate elected officials about the importance of Hatch Funding to the maintenance of plant health in the world. John also summarized activities of our highly-effective APS lobbyist and presented an effective summarization of APS public policy priorities that include the 1) National Research Initiative 2) National Plant Diagnostic Network and 3) Component Analysis for Understanding the Sustainable Environment.