

**Date:** January 20, 2010  
**To:** WSSA Board of Directors  
**From:** Joyce Lancaster, Executive Secretary  
**Re:** Executive Office Report

This report is a summary of the activities of the Executive Secretary's office for FY 2009.

### **Staffing**

We have not had any turnover with the processing and warehouse staff that supports our work. Kimberly Faulk continues as our Association Management Services Representative and Rusty Wright is our association manager – both very capable and diligent. Kimberly is the primary contact for member and subscriber services calls and email and Rusty provides support for me with reports and database issues. Susan Metzger continues as the Director of both Association Management and Association Publishing and reports directly to the CEO, Gerald Lillian.

### **Membership Statistics**

Quite interestingly, as of January 20, 2010, 72% of our membership is either new or has renewed for 2010 with a current total of 935 out of 1305 members, exactly where we were at this time last year. Our 2009 new/renew numbers came in at 97% of the 2008 membership level, which is one percentage point higher than last year. Our membership goal for 2009 was to match that 96% level, and we slightly exceeded that. A 97% figure is quite good compared to the few years ago when industry was consolidating and we were losing 100-200 members a year. Of course, we are considerably down from our membership numbers in the early 2000s when we were at about 2000 members but it appears we may have reached some stability.

### **Subscriber Statistics**

I'm sure that Karen Ridgeway will be providing subscriber statistics for the journals. This year we saw an increase in IPSM subscribers – from 65 to 82. Individual subscriptions to that journal increased from 31 to 38. One of our goals for 2009 was to develop strategies for converting some of these IPSM individual subscribers into WSSA members. Rusty reports though that only one of those subscribers has now become a WSSA member so there is still work to be done in this area. I'd like to see a survey completed of the IPSM individual subscribers to see what is of interest and what is important to them. Currently 55 of the 82 IPSM subscribers have renewed for 2010.

### **Sustaining Membership**

There weren't a lot of changes with the sustaining members although there are four Presidential level sustaining members instead of two. Sustaining members have increased their funding for special projects which include the public awareness/EPA liaison campaigns; the golf tournament at the annual meeting; other annual meeting related functions like the graduate student luncheon and the awards; and NISAW.

### **Financial**

Last year at this time we were looking at severe drops in our investment portfolios. In 2009, we saw improvement in the investment picture and so the bottom line values for both the general fund and the endowment fund has increased from the previous year.

As far as operating revenues/expenses are concerned I would say that overall we did better than projected in our 2009 budget. I'm sending a separate report that explains our budget activities for the year.

## **Program Issues**

Our program operations are very strong. All three of our publications are of high quality. The one area of concern is the number of submissions. I believe the publications committee and the publishing coordinator will be addressing this issue.

Our annual meetings continue to be well attended and provide some outstanding presentations on the latest research topics.

We have an effective Director of Science Policy and DSP committee providing educational support on weed science topics to a variety of local, state, and federal officials in addition to members of the WSSA and all of the regions.

We have very strong volunteer support among the membership with multiple committee members providing many volunteer hours to forward the purposes and goals of the WSSA.

We have an attractive and functional web site that continues to provide both member services and information on weed related issues for the general public.

Sustaining members are more engaged than ever, providing valuable guidance and economic support for our various programs.

## **Personal Goals**

I had three goals for the year:

1. Identify and train an individual at Allen Press who could fulfill my responsibilities in the event of an emergency or long-term absence. I did complete the goal. Christy Classi will be my replacement if necessary. I provided training to both Christy and Rusty on the following topics:
  - a. History of WSSA
  - b. Structure of WSSA
  - c. Committees of WSSA
  - d. Membership Categories of WSSA
  - e. Journals
  - f. Special Publications
  - g. Director of Science Policy
  - h. WSSA Finances
  - i. Paying WSSA bills
  - j. WSSA Meetings
  - k. Reports
  
2. Match the WSSA membership level – 2009 from 2008. I did not quite meet this goal in that we finished the year with 49 fewer members in 2009 from 2008. However, I am pleased that we came that close. I did send out an email message to lapsed members in June and we did pick up 50 members through the period of time we were tracking that and then had a few more individuals either join or renew to finish out with the 1305 members. I notice that in my report last year, I said the goal was to get to 96%, so we did actually exceed that slightly - hitting 97%. A new member initiative is to contact non-member authors and invite them to join. I'm sending along a report from Rusty on this initiative. We just started this program and it has generated 4 new members – about a 3% return – which is actually a little bit better than projected.

3. Establish new member board training. This goal will be completed on Wednesday of the annual meeting as the three new board members will be meeting with me. Topics will include:
  - a. Qualities of effective board members
  - b. Legal responsibilities/D&O liability insurance
  - c. The WSSA Constitution and By-laws; MOP
  - d. Reimbursements
  - e. Contracts – what we have and how they work
  - f. Financial reports - how to view and assess
  - g. Audits and taxes
  - h. Attendance
  - i. Voting – at the meeting and electronically
  - j. The DSP – the regions and the escrow account
  - k. Minutes from previous two years
  - l. Strategic plan
  - m. Stage-gate process
  - n. Insurance policies
  - o. Investments and the Investment Policy
  - p. Agreements without contracts
  - q. Incorporation, Legal Counsel, and Registered Agent
  - r. Special Pubs –
  - s. Board liaison with committeesAnyone is welcome to sit in; it's Wednesday at 11:00 am – I don't know the location yet.

### **Recommendations**

Last year my recommendation was to sit tight – don't stop any current programs and don't start anything new. But this year I would say it's time to reassess and then move forward. This Society has outstanding member support in terms of funding and volunteer time so there's much out there that could be accomplished.

Regards,  
Joyce