

Date: January 23, 2009
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 2008.

Staffing

We have not had any turnover with the processing and warehouse staff that supports our work. We have completed some internal re-organization of staff and have created a new position entitled Association Management Assistant. This person is responsible for providing much of the customer contact support as well as running some of the basic reports and lists in lieu of an association manager. Kimberly Faulk will serve WSSA in this capacity. Kimberly has been the WSSA customer service representative in the past so is very familiar with the Society. Jason Gilbert, our former association manager, has taken a new position with the Allen Press IT staff. Susan Metzger is now Director of both Association Management and Association Publishing and reports directly to the CEO, Gerald Lillian.

Membership Statistics

As of January 22, 2009, 72% of our membership is either new or has renewed for 2009 with a current total of 971 out of 1352 members. Last year on January 19th we were at 64% renewed. It's probably still too early to tell if our membership numbers will come close to the 2008 level or if we will experience further decline. Our 2008 new/renew numbers came in at 96% of the 2007 membership level, which is actually a very good number so I believe our membership goal for 2009 will be to match that 96% level.

Subscriber Statistics

I'm sure that Karen Ridgeway will be providing subscriber statistics for the journals. I was pleased with the number of subscribers to the IPSM, given that it was the first year. We had a total of 65 subscribers to IPSM; 31 of those were individual subscribers. One of our goals for 2009 will be to develop strategies for converting some of these IPSM individual subscribers into WSSA members.

Sustaining Membership

The sustaining membership numbers and financial commitment remained about the same as last year. However, sustaining members have increased their

funding for special projects which include the public awareness/EPA liaison campaigns and the IWSC.

Financial

I've already sent the financial reports and given some background information so I'll just summarize in this report.

Given the severe drop in investment values, our bottom line took quite a hit this year. In terms of operating income/expense, our expenses exceeded revenues but not to the extent we projected in the 2008 budget. I attribute this to less than anticipated costs associated with the new journal, more revenue than anticipated on the *Weed Science/Weed Technology* revenue share, and a slight profit on the International Congress. Although we met our projected revenue for the 2008 annual meeting, we did have a loss on this meeting, mainly due to a somewhat lower turnout (recall the blizzard and cancelled flights), higher than usual food and beverage costs, and higher AV costs.

My work

I thought I would also provide some brief information about my work this year. These were the main areas of work.

Annual meeting preparation and attendance
Follow-up reporting on the annual meeting
Involvement with planning of the IWSC
Set-up and administration of IWSC abstract submission system
Participation in regularly scheduled IWSC telephone conference calls
Responding to email messages regarding IWSC from organizers, authors, and MTOs.
Extensive work on the IWSC program
Attended IWSC; paid invoices, prepared final budget figures
Preparation of copy for WSSA annual meeting brochure
Administration of WSSA abstract submission site
Responding to email messages regarding the WSSA annual meeting from program chair, authors, and meeting registrants.
Exported data from OASIS into program format.
Proof-reading meeting program
Arranging for plaques, certificates, etc. for annual meeting
Coordinating production of awards program
Participation in regularly scheduled finance committee, public awareness committee, Jt-SRM meeting committee, WSSA Executive committee and IWSC organizing committee conference calls.
Monthly payment of bills; oversight of monthly and quarterly financial reports.
Assistance with NIWAW reports and grant application.
Response to daily phone and email messages from members and vendors; averaging 650 email messages per month.

For me, this was the year of “meetings.” In addition to the annual meeting in February, there was the International Congress and the preparations for the 2009 annual meeting and the 2010 annual meeting - plus, the site visits in December for 2011 and 2013. Since both the 2009 and 2010 meetings are departures from our standard meeting format there has been extra involvement and time needed from both Kate and I for those meetings.

I was very pleased with the outcomes of the IWSC – both in terms of the substance/attendance/flow of the meeting and the financial outcomes. Both Vancouver and the Westin were superb. We had a little over \$19,000 in revenue over expense for a split profit between the IWSS and the WSSA. The only negative item was that Karl Hurlle, the program chair who had worked tirelessly on the program, fell the very first day and spent the remainder of the week (and beyond) in a Vancouver hospital. The Society owes thanks to Robert Blackshaw, Carol Mallory-Smith, Dale Shaner, and Al Hamill for the success of this meeting.

Program Issues

Despite the financial issues, in my view our program operations are very strong. All three of our publications are of high quality and our two traditional journals have maintained their manuscript submission levels. Journal publication pages continue on a par with previous years. Our new journal performed over expectations for the first year.

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.

The administration and management is stable, responsive, and effective.
(Admittedly a biased view!)

Personal Goals

I was not able to attend the performance management training that I referenced in my report last year. Although I still believe this would be very valuable I doubt that funds will be available through Allen Press for this training in 2009 although I'll continue to push for it.

Develop additional strategies for impacting membership levels for a target of 96% of 2008, including strategies for converting IPSM individual subscribers to regular WSSA membership. This may involve establishing differentiated membership dues and benefits levels.

Recommendations

Sit tight. I would not drop any of our current programs or ventures, nor would I add any new initiatives – at least to the extent new items require additional expenditure of funds.

Regards,
Joyce