

**John R. Abernathy**

Period of office: 1991-92

Site of the 1992 WSSA meeting was the Clarion Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Attendance was over 800. During the summer WSSA executive board meeting in 1991, the new hotel was only about 60% completed. Everyone was very relieved and pleased, when, upon arrival in February 1992, to find the new hotel totally completed.

There were 343 papers and posters, 1 workshop, and 4 symposia presented at the 1992 annual meeting. Sustaining members listed on the program was 65. Futuristic topics presented included weed resistance and the use of Geographic Information Systems for weed management; both topics which would be of great interest in the following years.

One of the highlights of the 1992 meeting was the presence and presentation by Former U. S. Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop. Dr. Koop's presentation to the general session included many comments as to the significance of weeds causing losses to the food and fiber crop productivity necessary for survival of animals and man. He also addressed the great need for effective, economical weed control mechanisms. Dr. Koop's attendance was made possible by Monsanto.

In conjunction with the 1991 summer WSSA executive board meeting, presidents of all regional weed science societies joined the WSSA board for informal discussions. The societies agreed that becoming more closely linked through committee commonality and direction would enable more effective communication on critical issues facing the Weed Science community. The need for increased communication within the Weed Science community as well as with external decision makers was also stressed within the theme of the Presidential address, "Winds of Change".

During 1991, leadership of WSSA and leaders of all regional weed science societies met with key leadership in EPA, CSRS, APHIS, and environmental interest groups in Washington D. C. to discuss the importance of Weed Science. At this time the WSSA shared a Congressional Science Fellow with the Agronomy societies. Also during 1991-92, the WSSA decided to formally link with the Agronomy societies to participate in the Registry of Environmental and Agricultural Professions (REAP), thus creating the first voluntary certification process available for weed scientists.

It was a genuine pleasure to have been a small part of WSSA history. The WSSA membership has always been truly outstanding and dedicated in working tirelessly as committee members, editors, reviewers, presenters, and board of directors to enhance the role and vision of this great professional society, The Weed Science Society of America.