

ESA Eastern Branch Executive Committee Meeting, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Sunday, 16 March 2003 Meeting Minutes (prepared by R. R. Youngman)

Members present: Tom Anderson, Donna Ellis, Maya Evenden, George Hamilton, Rayanne Lehman, Z B Mayo, Brian Nault, Sridhar Polavarapu, Mike Raupp, Mark Sarvary, Peter Shearer, Jim Steffel, Susan Whitney, and Rod Youngman

At 1:00 pm Susan called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to Harrisburg. Her first order of business was to request that the 15-minute break be increased to 30 minutes to allow the Executive Committee to view the public program: "It's a Bug's World" at the Whitaker Center. ESA President, Z B Mayo was introduced and given time to provide an update on current items taking place within the national organization.

Z B spoke about ESA's past debt and the changes that have taken place at the national office over the last 18 months. He said the current financial situation is in good shape and that most operations have been outsourced. The main problem now is declining membership. Since 1999, ESA membership has declined by about 20%. The decline is spread out fairly evenly among the branches ranging from 25% in the Southwestern Branch to 16% in the North Central Branch. The problem resides with membership services. ESA lost about 9% of its regular members and about 65% of its emeritus members as a result of the 1999 dues increase. Z B feels the key to turning the decline in membership around is to focus on membership services. He went on to say that ESA missed an opportunity and lost members by not having an insect physiology journal. Z B asked the question, "What will ESA's baseline membership be in the future?" He said he didn't know, but suggested it may be around 4000. He noted that declining membership seems to be a common problem among other societies. He then reported that the annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale was down by about 140 regular members, although the number of paying members was about the same.

Z B discussed the ongoing efforts to sell the ESA office building. He said there are no prospective buyers at this time; however, the completion of a four-lane road in front of the building may make it more attractive to a prospective buyer. Z B then raised the issue of ESA's electronic submission and Rapid Review process for manuscripts. He said it should greatly shorten the review process for publication. He concluded by saying the deadline for submitting ten minute papers and posters for the 2003 meeting in Cincinnati is 10 June.

Susan next asked for additional agenda items. Since none were offered she went on to discuss changes to the Eastern Branch Bylaws. She said the rules committee drafted the changes to the Bylaws, which included the following:

Electronic Voting:

Our present voting process is a hybrid of both paper and electronic voting. We need a true electronic voting system. Susan asked Z B if it might be possible to allow the branches to access the electronic voting system already in place at the national level. Z B responded that he would look into it. Susan then said our most recent election had 74 ballots which were printed off the branch website and mailed in.

Deleting Finance Committee and Meeting Site Selection Committee:

Susan said if the branch membership approves the changes to the Bylaws in favor of electronic balloting and deleting the Finance and Meeting Site Selection Committees with a date of 1 June 2003, the ballots will need to be returned to Mike Raupp.

Susan next discussed several unfinished business items. She said the Executive Committee agreed at its last Business and Planning meeting (17 June 2002) to drop the use of 'Graduate' from future references to the 'Graduate' Student Affairs Committee and 'Graduate' Student Paper Competition. With regard to Student Paper Competition, she suggested we be consistent with the national ESA policy, which requires that students entering the competition submit a 250 word abstract. Her suggestion was met with general agreement. Mike asked if the student competition abstract could be optional at the time of submission. Susan agreed and said the deadline for the abstract could be one week before the branch meeting. Susan told Mike he needs to make a decision before next year's meeting on whether the branch should allow students to enter both the ten minute paper and poster presentation competition.

Susan then suggested the branch eliminate the one-day registration fee. George disagreed and said the branch should continue to offer it because we usually get a fair number of one-day registrants during the course of the meeting. Mark asked if we should continue to charge symposium speakers the one-day registration fee. George said he feels we should continue to do so, and that the issue does not need to be fixed. Mike said he would like to keep it on hold until we know whether we have any workshops for next year that are likely to draw many non-members.

Susan next suggested the meeting program be placed on the branch website at least four weeks before the hotel reservation deadline in order to give government and industry workers sufficient time to make requests with their supervisors to attend the meeting. Susan went on to say that symposium organizers need to realize they must register for the meeting like everyone else because registration fees ultimately support the program enhancement funds

from the National office. The program enhancement funds the branch receives is based on a formula of total branch members and how many of those members attend the National ESA annual meeting. Susan then said our move to all electronic communications was successful, and our use of the branch listserve was well received. She pointed out that members are more likely to read electronic mailings containing one or two topic items than those containing a long list of topic items.

Break 2:50 to 3:20 pm

Officer Reports

President's Report: Susan Whitney

Susan's report focused on the proposed changes to the Eastern Branch Bylaws that she discussed earlier.

President Elect's Report: Mike Raupp

Mike thanked everyone for their hard work, and said he has begun to contact people to fill committee vacancies. He thinks Dug Miller will serve as program chair for 2004.

Past President's Report: Jan Nyrop, not present

Secretary and Webmaster Reports: Rod Youngman

Rod reported on several items he was involved in over the last 12 months as both Secretary and Webmaster. The first had to do with changing to all-electronic mailing. The branch membership was notified of this change in three ways. The first was an announcement from Susan to the branch listserve. The second included a 17 July 2002 postcard mailing that Rod sent to approximately 150 members who were identified as not being on the branch listserve. The postcard notified each recipient about the change and requested permission to add their e-mail address to the listserve. Twenty-three recipients responded and all requested to be added to the listserve. The third was the following announcement that Rod prepared for the August 2002 ESA Newsletter:

"In a major cost-saving effort, the Executive Committee of ESA's Eastern Branch at its June 2002 planning meeting decided to go to an all-electronic mailing and branch meeting registration format. The Eastern Branch will save nearly \$2,500 annually by doing away with the escalating costs associated with paper, printing, handling, and postage. All Eastern Branch members seeking information on upcoming meetings, call for papers, or any other branch business, should consult the Eastern Branch web site at <http://www.ento.vt.edu/EBESA/esaeb.html>. Branch information and notices will also be disseminated via the branch's listserve. Contact: Rod Youngman, Branch Secretary, youngman@vt.edu."

Rod briefly discussed the two dynamic web pages he helped create with Dr. Ben Cline and Dr. Carlyle Brewster (Department of Entomology, Virginia Tech) in time for the 2003 meeting. One web page is the electronic submission form for oral and poster presentations. The other web page is linked to the first and serves as the data storage and retrieval program. The page is password protected and is mainly used by the program committee in creating the annual meeting program. Despite a few minor glitches that were quickly remedied when the program was first released, member feedback on the electronic submission form was largely positive.

Rod next went over his 2003 Secretary expenses. He spent \$430.00 on custom framing for five award certificates and two engravings; \$75.15 for store-bought frames for committee chair certificates; \$119.54 for two award plaques; \$195.92 on printing and mailing costs for 150 postcards; and \$500.00 to develop the two dynamic web pages. These expenses totaled \$1,320.61. Rod pointed out that his 2003 expenses were \$971.66 less than his expenses for 2002, which totaled \$2,292.27.

Rod brought up a prior discussion he and Susan had about disbanding the Resolutions Committee. Susan outlined her reasons for doing so in a 25 Feb. 2003 e-mail to the Executive Committee. In essence, Susan's main reason for disbanding the Resolutions Committee was that most of the business of this Committee is being accomplished in other ways. Additionally, disbanding the Resolutions Committee helps us stay on time in our annual business meeting given the trend towards a shorter and shorter business meeting format.

Rod's last item of business was to point out the lack of response by some Potomac Division APS (PD APS) officers to at least one of their own student members. Rod said he was contacted by a PD APS student about her frustration at being repeatedly ignored by the PD APS officers she contacted on her requests for 2003 meeting information. Rod brought this matter to the attention of the previous PD APS President, Dr. Anton Baudoin, who looked into and resolved this matter for the student.

Treasurer's Report: George Hamilton

George reported that the branch finances are in good shape. He said we have enough reserves on hand to pay for a meeting that does not take place due to bad weather or some other catastrophic event. As of 1 July 2002, the General Fund totaled \$24,596.47. Combining the General Fund amount with the \$15,543.65 in receipts, less the \$2,370.84 in disbursements, the General Fund balance as of 16 March 2003 was \$37,769.29. George said our Reserve Fund balance as of 16 March 2003 was \$32,139.75. Overall, the total funds available to the branch as of 16 March 2003 was \$69,909.03.

George pointed out that the 2004 meeting will be at the OMNI Hotel in New Haven, CT from 7-9 March. Mike asked if there is insurance available to cover

the expenses if we do not meet the contractual number of room-nights. Z B responded and said he felt that such insurance at the national level was too expensive.

Governing Board Report: Brian Nault

Brian reported on highlights from his 14-20 November 2002 Governing Board Meeting. He said the biggest news is that ESA finances are now in the black largely due to massive downsizing. This enables the national office to begin replenishing lost surplus. However, the national office went into debt approximately \$1.2 million from overspending about one-half million dollars, with the remainder of the debt attributed to the downturn in the stock market. Jim Steffel suggested we contact the national American Phytopathological Society about marketing the Entomological Society of America Eastern Branch. Brian next commented on the following major changes in ESA functions and services:

1. No more merchandise for sale, except for ESA Handbooks.
2. Production and copy editing of ESA journals has been outsourced to Cadmus Professional Services.
3. Membership Directory is on-line and will always be current – within a month.
4. Election conducted using electronic ballots (1,502 electronic and 8 paper).
5. More standardization in the awards schedule and nomination packages.

Membership Dues: Dues were increased slightly to \$128 per person for full members; \$31 for students; \$64 for emeritus and student transition I; and \$96 for student transition II.

Declining Membership: Membership is down to about 5,900 members. Increasing membership is a top agenda item for the Governing Board, the branch and section leadership, and is the topic of a charge from President Mayo to the Membership Committee.

New Program: Brian announced that the Associate Certified Entomologist (ACE) program will be implemented later in 2003.

Member At-Large Report: Thomas Anderson, not present

Standing Committee Recognition (certificates) and Reports

Awards Committee Report: Jan Nyrop, not present

IDEP Committee Report: Donna Ellis

Donna Ellis reported that IDEP was branching out at this meeting by including weed and disease pests along with insect pests. She said we need to be aware of new pests fact sheets, and that we need to do more on including problem pests in the northeast for our members.

Membership Committee Report: Doug Pfeiffer, not present

Nominations Committee Report: Peter Shearer

Peter reported that the branch should go to an all electronic nomination and balloting format, and that we need to make a greater attempt to remind people to vote.

Program Committee Report: Faith Kuehn and Ames Herbert, not present

Susan commented that Faith is currently busy with the outreach program at the Whitaker Center, and that Ames was unable to attend the branch meeting this year. Susan said their report will come at a later date.

Public Information Committee Report: Maya Evenden

Maya said a major thrust of her efforts went to advertising "It's a Bug's World". Several press releases were sent to surrounding counties.

Rules Committee Report: Colwell Cook, not present

Susan commented that the rules committee provided appropriate wording for the proposed changes to the Bylaws.

Screening for ESA Awards Committee Report: Sridhar Polavarapu

Sridhar said he stepped in for Frank Drummond to head this committee and that a new committee should be formed. The response to the call for awards nominations was not good. He speculated it may have resulted from being included in an announcement with too many other unrelated items. He recommends the call for awards nominations be sent out by itself, and that we should directly contact individuals, such as department heads, government agencies, USDA, EPA, etc. He suggested we move the submission deadline from November to early January to give people more time to submit their awards package.

Student Affairs Committee Report: Mark Sarvary

Mark reported a strong increase in student representatives from the previous year. He said there was a strong pool of good candidates for student awards, but there was some confusion with the J. H. Comstock and Asa Fitch nomination process. Z B responded and said there is a committee addressing problems with the student awards. Mark said we have nine student speakers for the graduate student symposium. Student volunteers are pleased with the free rooms, and the branch support for Linnanean Games teams. He said the branch website needs to indicate how much money is available to support the winning team's travel to

the ESA national meeting. Someone said the amount was \$500.00. Mark further commented that the on-line volunteer form is confusing. Rod said he would look into creating a dynamic web page for the branch web site that can be used by any member wishing to serve in a volunteer capacity. Mike said he will plans to directly contact the Eastern Branch student representatives at each university.

Archivist-Historian Report: George Hamilton

George reported the archive has been removed from the former entomology building at Rutgers. George encouraged each of us to continue sending him archival material.

Auditing Committee Report: Jim Lashomb, not present

Ad Hoc Committee Recognition (certificates) and Reports

Board Certified Entomologists Report: William Wymer, not present

Corporate Support Coordinator: James Steffel

Jim said we have sixteen sponsors who should end up contributing a total of about \$5,000.00. He said we need to place a link to our corporate sponsors on the branch web site, and we should try to encourage local businesses to contribute to our meetings.

Linnaean Games Committee Report: Tim Mack, not present

Susan commented we have questions and enough teams to run the Linnaean games as scheduled.

Local Arrangements Report: Rayanne Lehman

Rayanne reported that, other than a few minor scheduling problems, the meeting was proceeding smoothly. She said the Hilton representative, Anne Simmons, was a tremendous help and resource for information. Anne interacted, on behalf of the outreach event, with the Whitaker Center to provide tables and a stage for Sunday's activity. An appropriate thank you letter will be sent to her from the Local Arrangements Committee.

Rayanne said her committee purchased a total of sixteen new 4' x 4' foam core poster boards for the meeting. She said the new boards will be added to the approximately 24 boards stored at the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), providing more than enough boards for posters and announcements. She said Bill Gimple and Mark Rothschild took responsibility for transporting the boards to the meeting, and she would like to recognize them for their efforts. Bill also arranged to borrow the session timers from ESA headquarters and the pointers from MDA.

Outreach Program Committee Report: Faith Kuehn, not present

Susan remarked that the outreach program was going very well.

Registration and Hospitality Committee Report: Tom Anderson

Tom reported that pre-registration for this meeting totaled 186. He planned to have the on-site registration desk staffed all day Monday and for part of Tuesday morning, after which it will become a self-service desk.

Student Paper Competition Committee Report: Don Weber, not present

5K Fun Run Committee Report: Rick Hoebeke, not present

Susan said the 5K fun run will occur as scheduled.

Webmaster Report: Rod Youngman

Rod said he presented his Webmaster's Report with his Secretary's Report.

Susan asked if there were any additional business items that needed to be discussed. No additional business items were offered.

Susan made a motion to adjourn.

The motion was seconded.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Voting members: Hamilton, Nault, Raupp, Whitney, and Youngman.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.