Facing the Challenges

Greetings to everyone as we begin a “new year” for our society, just three weeks ago (as I write my first letter), we completed another very successful annual meeting. Those of you who were able to attend know the tremendous efforts put forth by our Alberta hosts to assure a memorable time. Those who were unable to be present missed a wonderful opportunity to renew old acquaintances, meet new friends in the potato world, and enjoy a great experience in the beautiful city of Calgary. I am looking forward to a productive year for The PAA and am committed to the challenge of continuing to move The PAA forward with zeal and professionalism.

My opinion is that The PAA has been, and continues to be, on the right path as a society. I plan to continue building on what we have accomplished. We again have a dedicated group of officers, committees, sections and working groups to address the important issues and challenges we face, to make appropriate changes when and where necessary, and to have the wisdom and understanding to make prudent and measured decisions for the good of our society.

What are these challenges facing our society? I view them to be in three areas – membership, outreach, and finance. A strong historical attribute of our society is that we are built around one commodity. We must also realize that today this is causing some of our challenges. Our various disciplines and interest groups (research, education, extension, breeding and certification, utilization and marketing, and so on) are all within and fundamental to these areas and are very important components of the Society, but these still deal with only one commodity.

Our membership numbers have declined over the past few years, but with some novel approaches and dedicated efforts we can all give this some attention in the coming year. Positive results have been attained in our Sustaining memberships. Each member can encourage colleagues working peripherally with potatoes of the benefits of membership in our society. If half our members would sign up one new member, figure what that would do for our total membership!! Also I plan to initiate effort and a program to contact non-renewing members in this next year. Outreach involves our publications, website, relations with other societies and potato associations, section activities and conferences plus involvement with other groups. Our editorial board has moved our publications ahead and are dedicated to increasing their professional acceptability level. Discussions are ongoing for improvements in our electronic journal processing and website – look for further information in future newsletters. Initial efforts were taken at our recent annual meeting to correct concerns of the financial status of the society. Additional ideas and discussion must take place in the year ahead. Fantastic growth has occurred in our Endowment Funds, but we must expand our contributions and hopefully see our members moving into higher donation categories. One of my main goals will be to work with the Endowment Fund committee to expand use of our funds to finance more student awards, travel grants, and other professional recognitions.

Several of our standing committees need new members so please consider your interests and contact me soon to volunteer. As a closing note, any time you have a suggestion, idea or concern to share, please send to any one of the officers or board members. They are identified on the back page of this newsletter. All of us welcome your input at any time!

Thank you for this opportunity to serve the society as your president. I approach the challenge with great interest, enthusiasm and sense of cooperative effort. Working together we will move ahead and become even better.

Larry K. Hiller
PAA President; 2005-2006
PAA 2005 Meeting Wrap-Up


The City of Calgary welcomed a total of 192 Conference Attendees and 28 Accompanying Persons to the 89th PAA Annual Meeting. Conference Attendees enjoyed hot weather and warm western hospitality during the third week of July. Thirty guests chose to attend the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede on Sunday before the conference and had a great afternoon. Among the conference attendees, there were 142 PAA members, 20 non-members, 13 Graduate Student members, 3 student non-members and 10 daily registered guests. Both the BBQ and the President’s Awards Banquet were fully attended. Entertainment at the BBQ included a western gunfight with incoming President, Larry Hiller receiving a special welcome. The conference was truly an international event, with guests from seven countries. The majority of attendees came from the United States and Canada but there was representation from Mexico, Brazil, Korea, the Netherlands and the UK.

Conference attendees had the opportunity to hear 88 presentations and to view 34 Posters. On the final day, 45 participants enjoyed a full day of Agriculture tours to southern Alberta to see the irrigation system infrastructure, tour the Lethbridge Research Centre and to visit Miyang Company potato production facilities. On Wednesday evening at the President’s Awards Banquet, Larry Binning, Wisconsin and Dr. George Tai, Fredericton were awarded Honorary Life Memberships.

The LAC was pleased to welcome the many attendees to the 89th conference and extends a thank you to all presenters, attendees and guests. Special thanks to members of the PAA Executive Committee for your guidance and mentorship, to the many Sponsors for their generous support, to Peter Woloshyn, Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development and Dianne Colley-Urqhart, City of Calgary for their warm welcomes, to Lori Wing for your invaluable assistance and to all the volunteers for your commitment and hard work. It was a pleasure to host your conference in Calgary this summer; we cherish new friendships and wish you well.

PAA 2005, LAC Co-Chairs
Christine Murray
Vern Warkentin

Final Letter From Your Outgoing President

It is with a sense of great hope and renewed enthusiasm that I submit my final letter to the membership. The Potato Association of America is moving forward and positioning itself as an organization to stay strong into the future. The Annual Meeting in Calgary, Alberta was very positive. Members supported several initiatives designed to help the AJPR become more accessible, to help redesign the website for more focus on critical potato issues, membership needs and function as a better out-reach vehicle, to help in the planning of future PAA events, and, finally, to assist in obtaining new members and keeping the membership strong and active. All steps along the path to keeping the PAA at the forefront. It should be noted that good progress was made in several points of the PAA Vision goals. This must be a priority for The Association into the near future.

I wanted to also take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee and the PAA staff for their service and hard work this past year. The PAA is fortunate to have highly qualified individuals willing to take on the tasks required to keep The Association functioning smoothly. There are many items which will need to be addressed in this next year. I have no doubt that incoming President, Larry Hiller, along with the Executive Committee, PAA staff, Editorial Board, and various committees will be up to the task. As PAA members, it is our responsibility to support these individuals and to provide needed assistance when feasible. Let us keep in mind that our Association is only as strong and vibrant as the membership wants. Additionally, the quality of the Journal, the Insider newsletter, the website, and other venues that are seen by the public must remain high and the content focused to reach the maximum numbers of individuals. This is the legacy that will keep the PAA vibrant into the future.

Thank you for the wonderful year and I look forward to service as the Past President for 2005-2006.

Rob Davidson
President, 2004-2005
Position Announcement

Research Professional 1 (REQ: FF 92419302)
Close Date: 9/23/05 by 4:30 PM (Alaska Std Time)
Department: School of Natural Resources and Agric. Sciences/
Dept. of Plant, Animal and Soil Sciences
Grade: 78,316.61 - $18.71/ Hour or DOE
Employment: Term Funded, Full Time, Non Exempt
Job Summary: To conduct research to enhance disease resistance
and membership of both associations for their consideration and
and should be ready to be presented to our Board
atmosphere was that we have something on the move and that

Typical Duties:
* Study of plant defense gene regulation in plants during
plant-microbe interactions
* Study the interactions among plant pathogens, bio-
control agents and plants
* Conduct molecular sequencing of selected marker and signal
genes
* Con unl seed potential disease survey for bacterial, fungal and
viral diseases
* Maintain technical laboratory equipment
* Publish data in journals and as abstracts
* Interact with producers and farmers
* Assist in training students and technicians in laboratory safety
protocols
* Supervise student assistants and one research technician
during travel to various research and farm locations
during the summer field season.

Minimum Qualifications: Required: Masters Degree in Plant
Pathology, Molecular Biology or Biochemistry or related scientific
field. Skilled in the operation of laboratory equipment,
microscopes (phase contrast, interference and fluorescent),
centrifuges, electrophoresis, spectrophotometer, ELISA plate
reader, photography etc. Ability to complete research tasks
assigned, work independently and keep clear, precise and accurate
data. Proof of a valid drivers license is required at time of hire or
ability to obtain transport. Preferred: PhD or 5 years experience
in combination with a Masters Degree.

Application: Please follow specific instructions provided on each
vacancy announcement. Applicants must submit a separate
application packet for each position. All application packets
must include:
* A signed UA Applicant Form: (USE only the current
version found on the UAF HR website @ http://www.uaf.edu/
uafr/Emp_Opp.html)
- mandatory when applying for any UAF position. A separate
Applicant Form is required for each position for which you
apply.
  * Vitaes, Please Note: The Resume Form may be used as a
    substitute for resume.
  * Cover Letter addressing your education and qualifications
    as they pertain to this position.
  * Names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers
    of three (3) professional references.
Please submit application packet to:
UAF Human Resources, ATTN: Hilary Huffman
3295 College Road, Room 108
PO Box 757860
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7860
Phone: (907) 474-7700 Fax: (907) 474-5859

* If you choose to fax your application packet, you must transmit
by 4:00 p.m. Alaska Standard Time (AST) the day the position
closes or the day before the review for Open Until Filled positions.
* All finalists may be subject to a background check.
* If you have questions regarding this specific vacancy
announcement, please contact Hilary Huffman, CES/SNRA
Recruitment Technician, (907) 474-2401, fnhjh@uaf.edu.
* The University of Alaska Fairbanks is an EO/AA employer
and educational institution.

EAPR MEETING IN BILBAO SPAIN

The annual EAPR meeting in Bilbao, Spain was very well
organized and had an excellent program and a good choice of
excursions for us to enjoy. I for one, however, regretted that I had
to miss the PAA meeting in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. At their
business meeting, we stressed that it was important that our annual
meetings never overlap again. There were 16 participants from
the U.S. included in a total of 396 participants from 44 countries
and 5 continents. Their scientific program included 9 keynote
speakers, 127 oral presentations, 159 posters, and 4 workshops.
There were 3 PAA members who made oral presentations and 8
members in attendance at their posters.

The meeting in Spain provided a venue to revisit the issue of
PAA/EAPR collaboration. As was stated in our minutes of the
PAA presented in Scottsbluff, NE, Aug 2004, "It was decided
that EAPR and PAA members should continue efforts to
enhance the collaborative relationship and opportunities to 'work'
together. As such, the membership of PAA has tasked the
president and designated members of PAA to further develop
plans that will provide closer ties between the two associations.
Their 'proposed' plans would then be presented to the
membership of both associations for their consideration and
comment." There were 7 points of action proposed. Ed Lulai,
Joe Guenthner and I met with the EAPR officials and discussed
these points. There were several useful exchanges. The general
atmosphere was that we have something on the move and that
we need to continue our dialogue. A 'working document' is in
preparation and should be ready to be presented to our Board
and membership before the end of the year. It was indicated
that during our Annual Meeting in Wisconsin in 2006, that
representatives from the EAPR Council would be in attendance

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Members in the News

It is with deep sorrow that the Snack Food Assn. and PAA had to say good-bye to one of its Honorary Life Members on May 2, 2005. Wilbur A. Gould passed away in Ft. Myers, Florida, after a long illness. Wilbur received his HLM status in 1990 after spending his whole life in the food industry and in processed potato products, primarily potato chips and french fries. He authored the original “Quality Assurance Manual” for the Snack Food Assn. and was senior author on other publications in the same area. Not only did Wilbur receive the HLM award but also several others including 3 national honorary societies, Phi Tau Sigma, Sigma Xi and Gamma Sigma Delta. He is survived by his wife, Jessie, of 65 years, and 3 children, Ronald, Rebecca & Jacquelyn.

PAA members Jose A. Caram de Souza Dias (Brazil) and Bill Campbell (Alaska) have been nominated for “The Potato Innovation Award,” which will be presented at the Potato World Congress 2005 in Emmelord-Holland on Sept 7, 2005. They were nominated for this award under the sprout/seed-potato idea section. Over the past 3 years they have been researching the idea of using only sprouts detached from virus-free seed-tubers as “seed-potato” for screenhouse production of virus-free minitubers in Brazil, demonstrating to the world seed-potato market that this new idea of exporting/importing only sprouts can be a less expensive and much more healthy system for moving potato propagative (“seed”) material (AJPR, Vol. 82:61, 2005).

During the UMaine’s 2005 Academic Honors Convocation, May 6, 2005, Dave Lambert, plant pathologist on the UMaine faculty since 1986 from the Dept. of Plant, Soil & Environ. Sc. received the Presidential Public Service Achievement Award for his efforts to educate the potato industry about potentially damaging diseases have helped potato growers in Maine and beyond.

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New Membership Contest Sponsored by Syngenta Crop Protection, Inc. Results

Our first membership drive contest sponsored by Syngenta gained us 12 new members...[1] Individual member and [11] Graduate students. Susie Thompson was the winner by bringing in 3 new Graduate students. She was presented with a plaque and $100 gift certificate at the Annual Meeting Banquet.

Sam Thornton, Syngenta rep, said they will continue to sponsor this program next year. The contest will start 7/01/A05 to 05/31/A06. The levels are: each PAA member that signs up 2 to 4 individual or grad student members will receive a plaque. To receive credit for the memberships, remember to fill out the line on the membership application that says "sponsor's name", and submit the application certificate. And any PAA member who signs up 5 or more individual or grad student members will receive a $100 gift certificate. The member who signs up the most new members will receive a plaque. To receive credit for the memberships, remember to fill out the line on the membership application that says "sponsor's name", and submit the application prior to the May 31st deadline. The contest winner will be announced at the Annual Meeting Banquet.

Mike Thornton, Chair

PAA Individual Membership Committee

Balboa, Spain.

...Cont. from Page 3

As a PAA member observing the changes that may and will occur in the next decade, our two potato associations will have a better chance to endure, provide solutions, and successfully promote the potato on a global basis by working together, not separately.

Joe Sowokinos
Past PAA Director