



SOUTHERN SECTION AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT PHYSIOLOGISTS NEWSLETTER

From the Chair: Jay Mellon

Greetings to my fellow plant biologists of Southern Section, ASPP. I am honored to serve as your Chair this year. Our major goal for the coming year is to put on a great annual meeting to be held on the campus of the University of Georgia in Athens. Dr. Ruth Alscher (Secretary/Treasurer) is busy working with the local arrangements folks to put this meeting together. Dr. Tim Sherman (Vice-Chair) has assembled what looks to be a “dynamite” symposium for this meeting. So, by all means, check your travel plans and consider joining us in Athens.

Within the last few years, there have been some questions raised concerning the relevancy of the sections to the entire ASPB experience. So, at the risk of “preaching to the choir”, I will try to describe my vision of how Southern Section activities fill a niche missing from the national organization. I have been associated with Southern Section for about 20 years and during that time, it has always placed special focus on the student experience. We promote student presentations by subsidizing registration and banquet fees for all participants in the student paper competitions (graduate/oral; undergraduate/poster). In addition, winners of the competitions receive cash awards. We are currently considering adopting additional student benefits such as providing travel funds for competition winners to attend the ASPB Annual Meeting (national). It is through the diligent collective efforts of our Treasurers and Financial Advisor over the past 20 years that Southern Section has stabilized its financial position to allow us to offer these benefits to participating students. So, why not take advantage of them? National meetings have grown so large that the opportunity for oral presentation of results no longer exists. Poster presentations have become the dominant mode of scientific communication for most

national meeting attendees (e.g. ASPB). That being the case, some students may feel that developing oral communication skills is no longer important. Let me remind folks of that opinion that no matter what path your career takes, developing public speaking skills is important. So, why not enter the paper competitions and give it a try? We offer students a knowledgeable and friendly atmosphere in which to communicate their research results. A number of Southern Section officers began their scientific careers by participation in these competitions. Who knows what great things you can achieve? Of course, we also welcome participation by faculty, principal investigators, and postdoctoral researchers. Southern Section provides a more relaxed “family” environment for scientific communication. Try it. You’ll like it.

Dr. Randy Cameron, a former Chair of Southern Section, conducted a survey of members last year to try to address falling attendance at sectional meetings. Most of the answers he received were familiar. Probably the most frequent response given concerned limited travel budgets placing a higher priority for national meetings over regional ones. We can all relate to this constraint. But, I would point out that national meetings are considerably more expensive per attendee. For the cost of a few attendees at a national meeting, the entire lab can attend a Southern Section meeting, provided students take advantage of the potential benefits we offer and share room accommodations. Another popular survey response relates to the long distance of a given meeting site from the responder’s location. This is always a tough one for us. Southern Section comprises a very large geographic area and we can not be in all places at once. That is why we try to move meeting sites around the region so that no one

portion of the section always has to make a long trip. However, determination of a given meeting location is ultimately made by a vote of the membership. Typically, only about 10% of the members exercise their power of decision on this matter. So, if you want a location closer to you, please exercise your voting power. About 75% of attendees for a given meeting normally originate within a radius of 200 to 300 miles from the meeting site. That is to be expected. So, if you reside within a 3 to 5 hour drive of Athens, GA, why not consider joining us for the 2002 Southern Section meeting? We promise to give you your money's worth.

Previous Chairs Mel Oliver and Cindy Putnam-Evans have discussed the issue of plant biotechnology as a modern social issue in their letters to the membership. Because of its importance, I will briefly mention it again. ASPB President Dan Cosgrove covers this topic in the July/August, 2001 issue of *ASPB News* in his letter (p. 1) to the membership. I urge you to read it, if you have not already done so. Antagonists of plant biotechnology typically use nonrational scare tactics to frighten the public at large. Never is there any data to support their positions. The public is encouraged to believe that genetic modification of crop plants is not a good thing. Never mind that humans have been modifying plant species for their own purposes for at least 10,000 years. It's just that plant biotechnology employs tools that allow for rapid production of diverse products for testing. That power frightens some people. The overall goals of improved crop yield and quality remain the same. Since this issue has proven to be controversial, it behooves plant biologists to take the initiative and offer a balanced, rational approach in whatever forum is feasible, be it discussions with family or friends, or a public one (civic meetings, etc.). To refrain from entering this debate will surely lead to additional constraints on plant biology research.

Finally, I would like to close by stating that this year's Southern Section Officers, along with the rest of the Executive Committee, are committed to serving the needs of the section membership. If you have concerns, questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, if you are looking to get more involved in section activities, give us a call. We are always looking

for folks to serve on our various standing committees. There are also some procedural matters relating to our constitution/bylaws (e.g. name change) that need attention. Please give these constitutional amendment propositions your careful consideration and vote for your preference. I look forward to renewing old friendships and making some new ones in Athens in 2002. See you there!



National ASPP News

ASPB (formerly ASPP) Executive Committee Report - 8/1/2001

Joyce G. Foster, Southern Section Representative

The following notes summarize ASPB Business activities which may be of particular interest to Southern Section members. Executive Committee actions occurred during meetings held in conjunction with the 2001 Annual Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island.

2002 Budget

Income: \$5,978,981 (dues, subscription, annual meeting, publications, allocations from investments)

Expenses: \$5,960,053 (administrative costs, society operations, publications, professional programs, textbook expenses)

Net Gain (Loss): \$18,928

Reserve Fund Allocations Good Works and Exploratory Programs (\$83,650): Digitization of back content of journals, exhibit expenses, student travel grants, Education Committee (NSTA), minority travel to section meetings, Best Paper Award, education bookmarks, IAPP website, undergraduate fellowships, ASPB presence at Uruguay meeting.

Recurring Special Programs (\$133,353): Free memberships, free/discounted subscriptions/books, free speaker annual meeting registrations, free emeritus annual meeting registrations, free MAC tickets-travel awardees, "free" member journal subscriptions (electronic), student travel grants.

2001 Membership As of 7/11/01: Total: 5,424 [regular, 3,678; student, 724; postdoc, 635; other (life, corresponding, complimentary), 387]. Of the total, 3,219 members are from the U.S. Foreign members: Canada, 222; Australia, 113; Germany, 208; Japan, 442; Korea, 113; United Kingdom, 167; other countries (< 100/country), 940.

Journal subscriptions (hard copy) by individual members: 1,484, both journals (659 domestic); 358, *The Plant Cell* only (211 domestic); 459, *Plant Physiology* only (241 domestic).

SS-ASPP members paying 2001 dues through ASPB: 299. Incentives for recruitment efforts are being offered to promote a 30% increase in membership by the end of 2001.

International Committee

A change from *ad hoc* status to Standing Committee status for the International Committee will be considered on the next ballot by the membership.

Board of Trustees

A comprehensive and formalized investment policy has been adopted to provide guidelines for the investment of funds held by ASPB. To manage investment risk and to optimize investment returns within acceptable risk parameters, funds are divided into three separate investment pools (Operating Fund, Short-Term Reserve Fund, and Reserve Fund), each guided by written investment "Procedures". Each fund may include Society and Education Foundation components.

Future investment advice will be obtained from a firm with more diversified and accountable investment management strategy.

Publications

Development of a book publishing partnership is underway with John Wiley and Sons. Among benefits to ASPB and its members are: global marketing of products, market-level royalties to authors; royalties to ASPB of 5% of net receipts; and 30% discount to ASPB members. Wiley will assume responsibility for the textbook (*Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of Plants*), remit 60% of sales receipts, and retain 40% of receipts to cover sales, marketing, and distribution.

Newsletter

Ideas for new columns, suggestions for topics for feature articles, and contributions for existing columns are needed. Send submissions to Nancy Winchester at headquarters.

Plant Biology 2002

The 2002 Annual Meeting will be in Denver, Colorado August 3 - August 7.

General Business Meeting

At the General Business Meeting, two constitutional changes were adopted by the membership.

Section Officers' Meeting Attendance at the Section Officers' Meeting held during the ASPB annual meeting was dominated by the Southern Section. Discussion focused on ways to revitalize the sections. SS-ASPP offered to post its Operations Manual on its web site so that other sections could benefit from experiences of the Southern Section. Southern Section representatives expressed dissatisfaction with the section reorganization proposal offered by Jon Monroe and published in the November/December 2000 ASPP Newsletter.



Other news...

By Ruth Grene (formerly Alscher)

The 2002 Annual Meeting News

This coming year's meeting will be held in Athens, GA during the weekend of March 2-4, 2002 at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education on the campus of the University of Georgia. The Center specializes in conferences of all sizes and needs and should make for a wonderful site. Pictures and more information about the Center are available at its' web site <http://www.gactr.uga.edu/>

(Local coordinator – Scott Merkle) This year, in addition to providing financial help to students making oral presentations, additional money will be available to minority students to offset costs of attendance. Application for these

awards will be available later in the Fall on our web site.

The Annual Symposium will take place on Monday, March 4, 2002. The general theme will be "**Mechanisms for Regulation of Plant Metabolism**"

Invited speakers:

Dr. Rob Ferl, Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology Program, Horticultural Sciences Department, University of Florida:

Title: "*14-3-3 Proteins and the Final Resolution of Signal Transduction Events*"

Dr. James Mahan, Plant Stress and Water Conservation Lab, USDA-ARS, Lubbock, TX:

Title: "*Thermal Dependence of Enzyme Inhibition; implications for Herbicide Efficacy and Resistance.*"

Dr. Michael E. Salvucci, Western Cotton Research Laboratory, USDA-ARS, Phoenix, AZ:

Title: "*Regulation of Photosynthesis by Rubisco Activase, a AAA+ Protein*"

The Southern Section Web Site

The web site for the Southern Section is up and running. <http://www.ss-aspp.org/>

The site contains information about meetings (past, present, and future), current officers (contact info, brief bio, and picture), current and past newsletters (it's too easy to lose those paper versions!), news of interest to society members and students, and links to relevant sites (i.e. ASPP, regional university's departments with plant biology programs, etc.). We also have provisions for online voting, submission of titles and abstract for meeting presentations, feedback from the members. Please send feedback and suggestions to Tim Sherman (tsherman@jaguar1.usouthal.edu)

Meeting Site Selection for 2003

Two site proposals have been submitted:

1. **Auburn University** – Local Coordinator, Robert Locy

Auburn University Hotel & Conference Center is a medium size convention center complex immediately adjacent to Auburn University in downtown Auburn, AL. Centrally located three miles from Interstate 85 between Atlanta and Montgomery, the Auburn University Hotel & Conference Center is situated in a charming university campus environment, within safe walking distance to many shops and restaurants in the quaint, historical downtown Auburn area, "The Loveliest Village On The Plains." We are a convenient destination from Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport (95 miles), Columbus, GA (35 miles), and Montgomery (65 miles). Chewacla State Park is just a few minutes away as are great walking and hiking trails. Three major golf courses are located within 8 miles of the Auburn University Hotel & Conference Center, which was the host hotel for the 1997 Nike Tour Championship and the 1998 LPGA Tournament of Champions.

2.. University of North Texas, Denton, TX

The University of North Texas (www.unt.edu) is located in Denton, a friendly college town with a population of more than 70,000. The UNT campus is 37 miles northwest of Dallas, 35 miles northeast of Fort Worth and 27 miles from the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (also regional air service from neighboring states via Love Field Airport in North Dallas, about 30 miles from UNT). UNT is the leading university in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, offering almost 100 bachelor's, more than 120 master's and 50 doctoral degree programs in nine schools and colleges. Nearby Ft. Worth offers world-class museums and performance hall, while maintaining the western atmosphere of its Texas heritage.

The Radisson Hotel is across interstate 35 from the UNT campus, and offers excellent accommodations for about \$90.00/night (recent AAAS regional conference rate in cooperation with UNT). In addition, other nearby motels offer convenient, inexpensive lodging. A number of restaurants are close by, and UNT catering services can provide a range of food and beverage services from refreshments during meeting breaks to sit-down dinners in the atrium of the EESAT building (see below). A special events coordinator, Ms. Kim Wendt, can assist

with on-site planning, and a number of plant biologists (ASPB members) in Denton can serve as local contacts (Drs. Kent Chapman, Rebecca Dickstein, Camelia Maier, Robert Pirtle).

Texas Woman's University also is located in Denton. The Samuel R. Noble Foundation Plant Biology Division is about 70 miles north of Denton in Ardmore, OK. The Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) is located in downtown Ft. Worth. For more information, contact Kent Chapman by phone, 940-565-2969 or by e-mail, chapman@unt.edu.

**Proposed location for most meeting activities—
Environmental Education Science and
Technology (EESAT) Building, UNT**

Recently Constructed (Completed Fall 1998)

Features of EESAT for hosting a small research conference include the following:

Two 120-seat amphitheater style classroom

One 150-seat amphitheater style classroom

Two 60-seat classrooms, three 40-seat continuing education workshop rooms

One 24-seat distance-learning classroom

Exhibit Hall- 3,000 sq. ft.

Planetarium/Sky Theater- 110 seats

Atrium - three stories, 8,000 sq. ft. (Multi-purpose area)

Outdoor Environmental Learning Area 7,000 sq. ft.

Distance Learning Center with full satellite downlink and uplink capability

Two items are to be voted upon by

Candidates for Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Dalton Gossett

Dalton R. Gossett: B.S. in Biology, 1968, from Southwest Texas State University; M.A. in Biology, 1970 from Southwest Texas State University; Ph.D. in Plant Physiology, 1973 from Texas A&M University. After graduating from Texas A&M, I conducted post-doctoral research at the University of Kentucky. In 1975, I joined the faculty of the Biology Department at Newberry College in South Carolina where I served as Department Chair from 1980 until 1987. In 1987, I accepted the position of Professor and Chair in the Department of Biological Sciences at Louisiana State University - Shreveport. My earlier research efforts centered around the study of calcium

nutrition in crops such as cotton, tobacco, soybeans, and tomatoes. My recent research endeavors have been associated with the study of the

biochemical, molecular, and physiological changes in the antioxidant system that occur during environmental stress, with particular emphasis on salt stress in cotton. I have been an active member of the Southern Section of ASPP since 1971.

Dr Caryl Chlan

I am currently an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (formerly known as USL). Studies in my laboratory focus on the expression, regulation and evolution of seed storage proteins and pathogen response genes in cotton, Arabidopsis and tobacco. I received my PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Georgia in 1985, a MS in Microbiology from UGA in 1979 and a BS in Microbiology from Clemson University in 1976. I have been active in the ASPP Southern Section for the last 12 years. During this time I have served on the constitution committee and been the chair or a member of numerous student competition judging teams.

Please cast your votes for officer and the meeting site for 2002 on the ballot at the end of this newsletter. You may cast your vote electronically or you may mail it to Dr. Cindy Putnam-Evans by December 8, 2001. Please remember to affix postage to the ballot

**Proposal for An Amendment to the
Constitution and Bylaws of the
Southern Section**

In accordance with the Constitution of the Southern Section of the American Society of Plant Physiologists the Executive Committee presents the following amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws for approval from the membership by ballot.

Proposed Amendment A: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern Section will be amended to reflect the change in the name of the parent society from the American Society of Plant Physiologists to the American Society of Plant Biologists as ratified by the vote of the membership.

The specific changes to the Constitution and Bylaws are as follows:

Title to read; CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE SOUTHERN SECTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS.

Article I to read; The name of this organization shall be the SOUTHERN SECTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS, hereafter referred to as the Section.

Article II, to read; Said Section is organized exclusively for scientific and educational purposes and shall remain such an organization without the object of financial gain. Its purposes are to encourage and promote the growth and development of plant biology as a pure and applied science of the life processes of plants and to promote the welfare and good fellowship of plant biologists generally, and particularly, in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Article III, Section 1, to read; Membership is open to plant biologists and other scientists residing in the states of the southern geographical area listed above and to any other person or organization in sympathy with the purposes of the Section

Article IV, to read; There shall be an annual meeting of the Section, at any time or place as determined by the organization, which does not conflict with the annual meeting of the American Society of Plant Biologists.

Article V, Section 2, to read; An elected representative of the Section serves as a member of the National Executive Committee of the American Society of Plant Biologists. Three elected

members serve as members of the Executive Committee of the Section.

Article V, Section 3, to read; Terms of the office begin at the close of the annual meeting of the Section. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer serve for one year. The term of the elected member representing the Section in the National Executive Committee of the American Society of Plant Biologists is three (3) years. The term of the elected members of the Executive Committee of the Section is also three (3) years, with one elected each year.

Proposed Amendment B: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern Section will be amended to remove the restriction that officers of the Section cannot reside in the same State.

The specific changes to the Constitution and Bylaws are as follows

Article VI, sec. 2 to read; Nominations for the officers of the Section, a member of the Executive Committee and, when needed, the National Executive Committee Representative will be made by the Nominations Committee. In selecting nominees for each elected position of the Section, the committee will solicit the input of the membership and will screen all received nominations to ensure uniform representation of active members. Possible nominees will be consulted by the committee for their willingness to serve if elected

Bylaws. Section 2 Duties of Committees. Part b, to read; The Nominations Committee, chaired by the immediate Past Chair of the section, suggests nominees for all elected positions of the Section. The committee solicits the input of the membership of the Section, screens all received nominations to ensure uniform representation of active members, and contacts all nominees regarding their willingness to serve, if elected. The committee prepares the ballot with the candidates for each position and administers the voting by the membership in a timely fashion.

Proposed Amendment C: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern Section will be amended to remove references to subscription costs to the Membership Dues.

The specific changes to the Constitution and Bylaws are as follows

Bylaws. Section 3 Membership Dues, to read; Membership dues shall be set by the Executive Committee. Information on the specific requirements for membership and for dues shall be included in the Newsletter of the Section.

2001-2002 SS-ASPP Officers

Chair

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Ballot

Please mail a printout of your completed ballot to

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Candidates for Secretary-Treasurer

Please vote for one

Dalton Gossett -----

Caryl Chlan -----

Candidates for Vice Chair

Please vote for one

Ruth (Alscher) Grene -----

Write-in -----

Candidates for Chair

Please vote for one

Tim Sherman -----

Write-in -----

Location for the 2003 meeting

Please vote for one

Auburn University – Local Coordinator, Robert Locy -----

University of North Texas, Denton, TX – Local Coordinator, Kent Chapman -----

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

Please vote by indicating Y or N in the space provided.

Amendment A -----

Amendment B -----

Amendment C -----