



July 2009

President's Annual Report

The *Botanical Society of America* has made great strides in the past year and continues to improve its services to our membership. My report can only touch on some of these recent accomplishments.

As you know, 2009 marks the first time since the inception of our society that the *BSA* Bylaws have been rewritten. The resulting significant changes in our governance will improve the efficiency of our society's operation and increase the lines of communication between the membership and all *BSA* officers. On behalf of the entire membership, I want to thank the Bylaws committee, chaired by Scott Russell, and facilitator Janice Dahl CAE, President and CEO of *Anchor Management*, who provided the committee expert governance and advice.

In addition, our Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Pamela Soltis, has prepared an extensive and thoughtful document outlining the steps that must be taken to ensure the prosperity of the *BSA* in the 21st century. The committee will present its report to the membership during our annual meeting. I encourage everyone to attend the presentation and participate in the planning process.

The *American Journal of Botany's* recent recognition by the Special Libraries Association as one of the ten most influential journals of the past 100 years in the fields of biology and biomedicine testifies to the intellectual vigor of our membership who serve as authors and reviewers and to the long-term commitments to excellence by our editorial board, the *AJB* Editor-in-Chief, Judy Jernstedt, the *AJB* Managing Editor, Amy McPherson and the *AJB* Production Editor, Richard Hund. I am pleased to announce that Judy has been offered (and has accepted) a second term as the *AJB* Editor-in-Chief. Thanks are due to the *AJB* search committee, chaired by Scott Russell, which evaluated nominations for this important post and made a unanimous recommendation.

The BSA is a society founded to support botanical research and the scholarly development of science. The *AJB* is our primary mechanism for this purpose. Therefore, I ask that you carefully consider where you publish your research. Ask yourself how the publishers of other journals support science and education. Please publish in journals sponsored by scientific societies and non-profit organizations like the *BSA*.

The persistent financial crises both here and abroad have posed significant challenges for the hard-working Financial Advisory Committee chaired by Harry Horner. Thanks to their oversight, the *BSA* endowment has not suffered as much, proportionally, as have the endowments of other scientific societies. We all owe much to Harry and his committee. Thank you one and all.

Our Society's membership continues to grow primarily because of student member renewals and new student memberships. This is happening thanks to your support and the continued creative efforts of our Membership & Subscriptions Director, Heather Cacanindin. Remember, when renewing your membership this Fall that you have the ability to provide gift memberships to your students for only \$10. This is proving to be a great way to support the future growth of the *BSA* and our society's journal.

On another topic, did you realize there are now ten scientific societies participating in the *BSA*-led *PlantingScience* program? Thanks are due to all who support this effort, especially the scientists serving as mentors. Under the direction of *BSA* Education Director Claire Hemingway, and with the assistance of Education and Outreach Coordinator Jennifer Potratz, we are supporting and fostering the study of plants to an ever-increasing group of teachers and students. Additional information regularly appears in Claire Hemingway's "*BSA* Science Education News and Notes" in the *Plant Science Bulletin*.

In collaboration with the *ASPB* and *CBA*, *BSA* co-sponsored the *ChloroFilms* project inspired by Daniel Cosgrove. This video contest was designed to encourage the production of informative, creative, and entertaining videos to promote a greater appreciation and understanding of plant life among the general public. This project was successful in bringing the awareness of the importance of plant life to a broad, worldwide audience. I am very pleased to report that A new *ChloroFilms* competition

is being planned for this year, and that the BSA will continue to participate as a sponsor.

At this time, I would like to recognize and thank our Conference Director, Johanne Stogran, our Director of Finance & Administration, Wanda Lovan, Manager of Technical Development, Rob Brandt, and Executive Director, Bill Dahl, whose continued dedication and hard work are responsible for the success of BSA's annual meetings and everyday operations. I also thank our Program Director, David Spooner, for his hard work to ensure we have a great scientific program here at Snowbird and elsewhere in the years he continues to provide us with his extremely valuable service as our Program Director.

The BSA continues to work with other scientific societies to promote the study of science, in general, and the plant sciences, in particular. As your President, I served as the *BSA* representative on the *AAAS* Council and participated in the crafting of *AAAS* position papers, perhaps most notably those dealing with evolution and creationism/ID. I also attended the 2008 meeting of the *Council of Scientific Society Presidents* and participated in discussions dealing with scientific publications, the international exchange of scientists, and a variety of other topics relevant to the success of the *BSA*. In addition, I have worked to open lines of communication among the presidents of other scientific societies by creating an informal “council of presidents of plant science societies”. The first meeting of this group occurred last year during our annual meeting, and I am very pleased to say that another gathering will occur this year, here at Snowbird. It is my sincere hope that this becomes a *BSA* tradition for our annual meetings.

In closing, I extend my congratulations to each of our newly elected officers and offer my deepest thanks to those officers who will be leaving the Board of Directors or the Council this year. It has been a remarkably wonderful experience working with each of you. Thank you for making my term in office so easy and pleasant.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kurt Niklas".