BSA IT Report, July 2023

Here is a summary of the projects and tasks I have worked on since last July 2022.

CiviCRM Upgrade

For a couple of years, we had an issue with our CiviCRM software failing upgrades. This was getting to be a serious problem, so prior to renewal season I tackled the problem and was able to get our CiviCRM installations for 4 societies – BSA, SEB, SSE and ASPT – upgraded to current versions of CiviCRM.

Society Renewal Seasons

Once the CiviCRM upgrades were accomplished, we were able to make the modifications needed for the 3 societies which we perform membership services for: BSA, SSE and SEB

Evolution Society publisher switch to Oxford Press.

This required changes to how SSE members are authenticated to access their *Evolution* journal with Oxford Press's authentication system. I worked with the publisher and Society to help make this a seamless transition.

Ethnobotany branding switch

Last year, SEB voted to change their name to the Society of Ethnobotany (still "SEB" though!). Much of my work for this was performed last year in acquiring the ethnobotany.org domain name, but implementation of the changes happened in pieces over the entire year this year. Most of the content changes were identified by SEB members themselves, and web site changes done by Amelia, but certain "code" and configuration changes were managed and performed by me.

CiviCRM for IAPT

IAPT, spearheaded by Pat Herendeen, has decided to switch their membership database from a very old custom solution to CiviCRM. I have worked on this in pieces between Fall and now, as I have had time. It should be complete soon and BSA will bill IAPT for providing this service.

Awards Management

Our awards system is still going strong, and needs a certain amount of support from me during the year. This is for BSA (including committee nominations as well) plus SSE, SEB, ASPT and SSB.

Botany 2023

You are already aware that the big change for Botany 2023 this year is our new platform, XCD. I was involved in the early part of this migration in helping the XCD folks understand how our conference works from a technical point of view, and sending them data from our old system. We are still using our old "main" site system for the public Botany 2023 site, and for symposium colloquium proposals.

Elections

I manage the forms and tabulation for society elections for the BSA, SEB, and SSE. This is a system I created a couple of years ago, and I am pleased to say it is working out very well. Every year I tweak it and add features, so it continues to improve.

SEB Conference 2023

While the BSA has switched to XCD, SEB is still using our old system for abstract submission, and I continue to install, configure and maintain it yearly. Perhaps this is a good time to mention the issue that this probably can't continue forever, as the system is very old and decrepit (20 years!). SEB probably can't afford XCD. Also, one deficiency of XCD is that maintaining archives of old conferences will eventually become very expensive, and one way of managing that would be to build our own archive for conference data. PERHAPS, that archive could be extended to create a very simple abstract submission system for SEB, which is basically what they use our old system for.

Amazon Server Cost Analysis

Heather asked me to look for cost savings relating to our server usage. I did some very useful research and see a way to get both better performance and lower cost, using newer technologies Amazon offers. However, the upgrade process was tricky, and I had to put it aside for other priorities. I will return to this project soon.