Report of the President

This has been a busy and productive year for your president and the society. In November, President-elect Pam Diggle and I continued a “tradition” established by Judy Skog and met individually with all the staff members of the society to be sure we knew exactly what everyone does, what their successes have been and what problems they face. Our conclusion was that we have a truly wonderful staff who are working hard every day to support and develop the BSA. One of the great rewards of this last year has been to work with them. In December I joined Pam and Bill at the fall meeting of the Council of Scientific Society Presidents in Washington, DC. In February I chaired the spring Board meeting, held at the Society’s office at the Missouri Botanical Garden. I have also served as an ex-officio member of several important committees, including the Merit Award committee, which this year identified three outstanding scientists to receive the award.

Other major areas of involvement have been education, publications, and information technology. Our education efforts saw changes in leadership this year, with Phil Gibson replacing Beverly Brown as chair of the education committee, and Marsh Sundberg replacing Susan Singer as the Director at Large for Education. We are grateful to Beverly and Susan for their service to the society, and to Phil and Marsh for stepping in. I have participated in a number of thoughtful discussions about the education mission of the society and how to build on the successful programs we have implemented in recent years. The major grant supporting PlantingScience was up for renewal this year, and Claire Hemingway ably led the effort to submit a proposal for renewal, in collaboration with ASPB and BSCS. The grant was unfortunately declined, leading to the need for focused discussion of the future of the program; this will continue over the coming year.

In terms of publications, our journal AJB continues as perhaps the most visible aspect of the Society. I have continue to be impressed with the quality of the journal staff, who turn out a top-notch publication month after month, and at the same time manage to stay abreast of the rapidly changing face of scholarly publishing. The Society has initiated a search for a new editor of AJB to take over when Judy Jernstedt steps down in 2015. The search committee was chaired by Carol Goodwillie, Director at Large for Publications, and as of this writing the search is nearing a successful conclusion. This last year also saw the conversion of AJB Primers Notes and Protocols to a new on-line journal, APPS. The conversion was managed with lightning speed by Beth Parada, and Theresa Culley has become the inaugural editor.

Information technology is clearly a challenge for the BSA at the moment. Much of my time over the last year has been spent discussing the ever-increasing needs for IT support in all activities of the society, and how best to deploy our resources to meet those needs. It is clear that everything in which the Society is engaged is dependent on IT. Discussions with Board and staff members have been thoughtful
and constructive, but this remains an area in which work will be needed in the future.

While I’ve highlighted education, publications and IT, I need to mention also the annual meeting, which always runs like clockwork, thanks to Johanne Stogram, Heather Cacanindin and all who work with them. Maybe they run into problems in making it happen so smoothly every year, but those challenges never seem to cross the desk of the President. In addition, there have been important efforts to continue to build the endowment, and I’ve participated in a number of thoughtful discussions of the best way to make this happen.

I want to close this report by thanking everyone in the Society, on the Board, and mostly Bill and the rest of the superb folks on the staff for making my year as President a pleasure and I hope reasonably successful. It’s been great to work with you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kellogg