

# NORTHEASTERN WEED SCIENCE SOCIETY Newsletter

## April 2001

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### Comments from the President

*Jeffrey Derr, NEWSS President*

We had another successful meeting in Cambridge. Thanks to Dave Mayonado (Program Chair) for organizing the 55<sup>th</sup> NEWSS annual meeting and to all the volunteers for their time and effort implementing the program. I am always amazed at the amount of work completed by our board, section chairs, and other volunteers in the Society. Thanks also to the presenters. As Brian Olson mentioned in his Presidential address, we continue to have a high number of presentations per attendee. I look forward to all of us helping Scott Glenn put together the program for the 2002 meeting.

The 56<sup>th</sup> annual meeting will be held January 7-10, 2002 at the Loews Hotel in Philadelphia. As you plan your research efforts for this year, think about what you could present at the Philadelphia meeting. You may want to take some pictures of winter weeds now to enter in the photo contest.

Frank Himmelstein, University of Connecticut, has graciously agreed to host the NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest this year. The contest will take place on July 31, 2001. I would like to express my appreciation to Frank for taking on this important activity for undergraduate and graduate students. See this newsletter for additional details on the weed contest.

The names and addresses for the current officers and executive committee officers are listed on the back of this newsletter. We have a dedicated group of people serving on the board. Please contact us with any suggestions you have for the operation of the society. If asked, please consider serving on the board or a committee. Andy Senesac will be leading the search for Vice President and Brian Olson will chair the awards committee this year. Both Andy and Brian look forward to receiving your nominations.

Prasanta Bhowmik has agreed to replace Nate Hartwig as the NEWSS rep on the WSSA Outstanding Young Weed Scientist Award Committee. Tim Dutt has agreed to replace Renee Keese as the NEWSS rep on the WSSA Industry Awards Subcommittee. I agreed to serve as our rep on the WSSA membership committee.

The Northeast Region of the American Society for Horticultural Science has decided to continue meeting with us in 2002 and 2003. Both groups benefit from this cooperation. I would like to thank Carolyn DeMoranville for serving as liaison between our two organizations.

To expand upon the theme of cooperation between NEWSS and other societies in the Northeast, Scott Glenn, Betty Marose, Art Gover and I met with representatives of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Exotic Pest Plant Council (MA-EPPC). We are planning an invasive plants symposium at the 2002 meeting with their assistance, building on the program Dave Mayonado put together for Cambridge. Besides affecting forestry and non-crop areas, invasive plants are impacting turf and ornamental areas, and are also infesting cropland. Pulling together native plant societies, horticulturists and weed scientists will benefit all of us as we need to be part of the effort to address these weeds. Thanks to Art Gover, Larry Kuhns, Will Mountain, and Scott Guiser, among others, for their useful suggestions on an invasive plants session and special thanks to Art for coordinating our discussions with MA-EPPC.

Dave Mayonado and I were able to participate in one of the activities for National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week in Washington D.C. Rob Hedberg, our rep in Washington, was an important part of the planning for this week. I was glad I came to the opening session. There were representatives from government agencies and private organizations from across the country. It is important for NEWSS and the other weed science societies to be involved in this effort on invasive plants.

I think Rob's comments at our annual meeting were very appropriate. He referred to "Invasive plants, formerly known as weeds." Rob continues to do an excellent job representing the regional and national weed science societies in Washington, D.C.

During our visit to D.C., we were treated to lunch by IR-4, which was meeting with Congressional staffers. Thanks IR-4! I hope your funding will be resolved to your satisfaction.

While in D.C., Rob arranged for Dave and I to meet with staffers for Senator Warner of Virginia, and Senators Sarbanes and Mikulski of Maryland. We discussed the importance of invasive plants in the Northeast, mentioned the activities that were occurring for Weed Awareness Week, and discussed how NEWSS can serve as a source of information on invasive plants. One item discussed that week was Senate Bill 198, Harmful Nonnative Weed Control Act of 2000.

Steve King, a Ph.D. candidate in Weed Science at Virginia Tech, has agreed to serve as webmaster for NEWSS. I would like to thank Steve for agreeing to help out with this very important resource for the society. Please send me any additions, comments or suggestions that you have for the website.

## **The NEWSS Gavel and the Kilmer Oak**

Jim Parochetti asked me in Cambridge if I was familiar with Joyce Kilmer. Having forgotten most of what I learned in high school English classes and without a lifeline, I could only provide a vague answer. So I did a little searching on the internet to learn about this poet, as well as the Kilmer oak, which he mentioned.

Alfred Joyce Kilmer (yes, Jim, I now know that Joyce Kilmer was a man) was born in New Brunswick, NJ in 1886. He graduated from Rutgers College in 1904 and from Columbia in 1906. He was a poet, and is known especially for his poem "Trees", which includes the famous line "I think that I shall never see A poem lovely as a tree." He was killed in action in World War I in France, where he is buried.

The Kilmer oak, a 300-year-old tree that grew on the Douglass campus of Rutgers University, may have been the inspiration for the poem "Trees". Weakened by age and disease, it had to be removed in 1963. The NEWSS President's gavel was made from the Kilmer oak. It was presented to the Northeastern Weed Control Conference (the original name for NEWSS), commemorating the Rutgers University Bicentennial (1766-1966). This is another example of the rich legacy for NEWSS.

*Jeffrey Derr*

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**Visit the NEWSS website frequently for the latest Society news and activities, and for links to many other weed science sites.**

**<http://www.ppws.vt.edu/newss/newss.htm>**

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## **2001 NEWSS Executive Committee**

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The 2001 NEWSS Executive Committee: (front row, L to R) Bob Sweet, Scott Glenn, Jeff Derr, Brian Olson, Dave Yarborough, Dave Mayonado; (back row, L to R) Betty Marose, Tim Dutt, Mark VanGessel, Todd Mervosh, Carrie Judge.

**Awards Presented at 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

(See photos on last several pages of newsletter)

**Distinguished Member Award:**

**Ronald L. Ritter**, University of Maryland

**Award of Merit:**

**Nathan L. Hartwig**, Pennsylvania State University  
**Edward R. Higgins**, Syngenta Crop Protection

**Outstanding Educator:**

**C. Edward Beste**, University of Maryland

**Outstanding Researcher:**

**Robin Bellinder**, Cornell University

**Student Paper Presentations:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Robert E. Nurse** and C. Swanton (Univ. of Guelph). Predispersal weed seed predation in soybean fields.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (tie): **Steven R. King** and E. S. Hagood (Virginia Tech) and R. Chandran (WVU) Effect of johnsongrass control method of the incidence and severity of virus diseases in glyphosate-tolerant corn.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (tie): **W. Andrew Bailey**, H. P. Wilson and T. E. Hines (Virginia Tech). Weed management in snap bean with fomesafen.

**Poster Presentations:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: **W. Andrew Bailey**, H. P. Wilson, and T. E. Hines (Virginia Tech). Evaluation of methyl bromide alternatives for yellow nutsedge control in plasticulture tomato.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Steven R. King** and E. S. Hagood (Virginia Tech). Evaluation of alternative control methods for annual ryegrass in typical Virginia crop rotations.

**Photo Contest:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Rob Richardson**, Virginia Tech  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Joe Neal**, North Carolina State Univ.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place: **Mark VanGessel**, Univ. of Delaware

## 2001 NEWSS Committees

**Awards Committee:** Brian Olson (Chair), Rich Bonanno, Dave Vitolo, Joe Neal, Tom Vrabel.

**Nominating Committee:** Andy Senesac (Chair), Steve Hart, Betty Marose, Garry Schnappinger, David Spak.

**Resolutions Committee:** Ted Bean (Chair), John Jemison, Katherine Jennings.

### Other Committee Chairs:

Past Presidents Committee: Jim Parochetti

Student Paper Contest Committee: Rich Bonanno

Poster Judging Committee: Ben Coffman

Photo Contest Committee: Jim Saik

Collegiate Weed Contest: Frank Himmelstein

## Awards Chairman Calls for Nominees

This announcement serves as the first call for nominations for the following Society awards:

- Distinguished Member Award
- Award of Merit
- Outstanding Educator
- Outstanding Researcher

Nominations are due in September 2001, so this is a good time to consider nominees for these awards. Please refer to the nomination form enclosed in this newsletter for the awards criteria. Completed forms should be sent to Brian Olson, Awards Committee Chairman.

## Call for Vice President Nominations

The Executive Committee is requesting suggestions from the membership for nominations to the office of NEWSS Vice President. The Vice President serves as chairperson of the program committee and automatically succeeds to the office of President Elect. By general rule, the person elected Vice President at the 2002 meeting should be selected from members who are employed in the private sector (industry, consulting firm, etc). Nominations should be sent to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee:

Andrew Senesac  
Long Island Horticultural Research Lab  
3059 Sound Avenue, Riverhead, NY 11901  
Phone: 516-727-3595 / Fax: 516-727-3611  
Email: afs2@cornell.edu

## Procedures for the NEWSS Archives

The Past President of the society will compile information from the previous year for the NEWSS archives. If you have articles, pictures, or other items for the NEWSS archives, send them to Brian Olson, P.O. Box 753 Geneva, NY 14456. Robin Bellinder is maintaining the archives at Cornell University.

## Sustaining Membership

Approximately 30 companies provide financial support to NEWSS in the form of sustaining memberships. The most current list of Sustaining Members can be found in the back of the 2001 Annual Meeting Program and in the front of the NEWSS Proceedings, Vol. 55. The Society wishes to thank these companies for their continued efforts. These funds are utilized for many different NEWSS activities. Any company that would like information on becoming a Sustaining Member should contact Carroll Moseley (see p. 3 for contact information).

## 2001 Weed Science Field Days

The current schedule of field day tours - contact the person listed to check details or for possible changes.

### **June 26**

9:00-4:00 Painter, VA Henry Wilson

### **June 27**

8:30-12:00 Georgetown, DE Mark VanGessel  
2:00-4:00 Salisbury, MD Ed Beste

### **June 28**

8:30-12:00 Wye, MD Ron Ritter  
1:30-3:00 Beltsville, MD Ron Ritter

### **July 6**

Valatia, NY Russ Hahn

### **July 10**

Bridgeton, NJ Brad Majek

### **July 11**

Landisville, PA Bill Curran

### **July 12**

Rock Springs, PA Bill Curran

### **July 17**

Aurora, NY Russ Hahn

### **July 18**

Freeville, NY Robin Bellinder

## Articles for NEWSS NEWS

Please email articles or notices for the NEWSS newsletter to Todd Mervosh, Public Relations Representative ([tmervosh@caes.state.ct.us](mailto:tmervosh@caes.state.ct.us)). Otherwise, send a hard copy, plus the file stored on diskette to:

Todd Mervosh, Conn. Agric. Exp. Stn., 153 Cook Hill Road, P.O. Box 248, Windsor, CT 06095.

The deadline for inclusion in the August newsletter is **July 20, 2001**.

## **2001 NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest**

The 2001 NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest will be held at the University of Connecticut research farm in Storrs, CT.

The contest date will be **Tuesday, July 31**. Monday, July 30 will be the travel day for contestants and volunteers - an orientation will be held for all participants that evening.

An entire floor of rooms has been reserved in a new, state-of-the-art residence hall on the UConn campus. If anyone prefers to stay in a motel, accommodations can also be arranged within a few miles of campus. Plan to participate as either a student, coach or volunteer at the 18<sup>th</sup> NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest.

The Contest is open to all undergraduate and graduate students. Please contact Frank Himmelstein or Todd Mervosh by **May 31** to enter a team in the contest, or if you are willing to assist as a volunteer. We need many volunteers, so please consider helping out with this great educational and fun-filled event. Contest rules and regulations will be mailed soon to team coaches.

Frank Himmelstein  
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Email: fhimmels@canr1.cag.uconn.edu

Todd Mervosh  
Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station  
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Phone: 860-683-4984  
Email: tmervosh@caes.state.ct.us

## **2002 Annual Meeting Program**

Listed below are the section chairs and chair-elects for the 56th Annual Meeting of NEWSS to be held January 7-10, 2002 at the Loews Hotel in Philadelphia, PA. You will receive more information, including the call for titles, in the August issue of the newsletter.

### **Program Chair**

Scott Glenn

Phone: 301-405-1331  
Email: dg11@umail.umd.edu

### **Agronomy Section**

Chair: Rick Schmenk

Phone: 717-464-9660  
Email: rick.schmenk@syngenta.com

Chair-elect: Mark Isaacs

### **Biologically-Based Weed Control**

Chair: Jerry Baron

Phone: 732-932-9575 x605  
Email: jbaron@aesop.rutgers.edu

Chair-elect: Antonio DiTommaso

### **Industrial, Forestry, and Conservation**

Chair: Richard Stalter

Phone: 718-990-6269  
Email: biosju@stjohns.edu

Chair-elect: Stratford Kay

### **Ornamentals**

Chair: Leslie Weston

Phone: 607-255-9998  
Email: law20@cornell.edu

Chair-elect: Hannah Mathers

### **Poster Section**

Chair: Annamarie Pennucci

Phone: 603-895-8480 / Fax: 603-672-6332

Chair-elect: Tracey Harpster

### **Turfgrass and Plant Growth Regulators**

Chair: Karen Novosel

Phone: 215-299-6100  
Email: karen\_novosel@fmc.com

Chair-elect: John Isgrigg

### **Vegetables and Fruit**

Chair: Albert Ayeni

Phone: 856-455-3100  
Email: ayeni@aesop.rutgers.edu

Chair-elect: Hilary Sandler

## **2001 WSSA Meeting Report: Toronto**

*Tim Dutt, WSSA Representative for NEWSS*

The 2001 WSSA meeting was held February 11-14 in Greensboro, NC. The meeting attendance was 603 out of a current regular membership of 1,431. The program consisted of 247 papers, 97 posters, 6 symposia, and a special session on New Developments from Industry. Symposia were held on Gene Flow Implications, Dormancy in Weed Seeds, Grower Forum on Sustainable Weed Management, Weed Science Extension and Outreach Methods, Role of Biotechnology in Minor Crops, and Invasive Plant Species. WSSA is financially sound, but operating expenses are currently exceeding revenues. Membership and journal subscriptions dropped about 4% compared to the previous year. The WSSA Board is considering a recommendation from the Finance Committee to increase annual meeting registration fees.

Charlotte Eberlein is the new President who will preside over the 2002 WSSA meeting to be held in Reno, NV. The 2003 meeting will be in Jacksonville, FL; the 2004 meeting in Kansas City, MO; and San Antonio, TX is under consideration as the site of the 2005 annual meeting. The WSSA Board of Directors decided (based on a membership survey) to move away from weekend meeting dates to a Monday through Thursday format for the 2005 meeting. They will look into doing this for next years meeting in Reno, but with contracts negotiated through 2004, this may not be possible until 2005. When they go to this new format, committee meetings will be held on Monday and throughout the week.

The Strategic Planning Committee completed a draft of the next WSSA Strategic Plan (2001-2005), and made it available along with a survey to members attending the meeting. Most surveyed were in agreement of the mission statement, and there was high support for an extensive member survey and to review the WSSA governing structure which includes consideration of an Executive Director position. The importance of the Web site also came up very strong in the survey at the meeting. The Strategic Planning Committee will draft a member survey to be presented to the WSSA Board at the summer meeting. There is a need for good Regional input in designing the survey. The NEWSS Board should provide input into this survey.

The WSSA Board will select a new Director of Publications to replace Anne Legere who has served for the past 6 years. Candidates have been identified to serve a 3-year term, and the selection will be made prior to the summer Board meeting. The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Herbicide Handbook* is progressing well and is expected to be printed

by November 30, 2001. Current plans call for a 10<sup>th</sup> edition to be published about six years later. The Board decided that WSSA join BioOne, contract with Allen Press for a member web site, and increase regular member dues \$10 annually to pay for this additional service. BioOne is a collaboration between societies and libraries with research interests in the biological sciences; subscribers receive access to all electronic journals of the BioOne member societies. Member societies also have the option of establishing a web site for members, so individuals or libraries can subscribe to that society's journal(s) only.

Leslie Weston has been named the new Director of Education. A special committee will be named to investigate developing a full-time Director of Education position to be phased in over the next 4 to 5 years. Hiring someone with a 9-month academic appointment is one possibility under consideration. The current education focus is on Invasive Species Workshops (1 ½- 2 day workshops) geared to higher or intermediate level audiences. They will try to bring in outside groups at WSSA meetings, and offer CEU's at these workshop/short course format sessions. The focus will be on "invasive weeds of the West" at the Reno meeting, and "invasive aquatic weeds" at the Jacksonville meeting.

A resolution to increase funding for IR-4 is being worked on for possible WSSA Board approval by the summer meeting. Another resolution was proposed by the Resolution Committee to add site of action to herbicide labels and requesting funding from EPA for training of herbicide resistance management. However, a formal written resolution on this has not been submitted to the Board to date for further consideration.

Ernest "Del" Delfosse, ARS National Program Leader for Weed Science, will be leaving this position soon, and a search will begin relatively soon to find somebody interested in taking the position. USDA/ARS is gaining positions in Weed Science with many currently open in crops, ecology, and invasive species. Rob Hedberg, Director of Science Policy, is seeking inputs on what types of Weed Science positions should be added to ARS. Most positions currently have been in biological weed control. If you have inputs on this, talk directly to Rob Hedberg.

The WSSA Board of Directors summer meeting will be held July 28-30 in Reno, NV.

## **Invasive Plant News**

Submitted by *Laurie Anne Albrecht*

### **Invasive Plants Conference**

The Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council is co-sponsoring an Invasive Plants Conference on August 14-15, 2001. The conference will be held on the campus of Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, PA. For a complete brochure, contact Jan McFarlan at the Morris Arboretum at [ilm@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:ilm@pobox.upenn.edu) or 215-247-5777, ext. 149.

### **Jetbead: A New Invasive Threat**



Jetbead (*Rhodotypos scandens*) infestation in a West Chester, Pennsylvania woodland.

Jetbead (*Rhodotypos scandens*), a native of eastern Asia, appears to be on the move in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. The deciduous shrub was introduced as an ornamental in 1866. It has escaped cultivation and is finding its way onto roadsides, waste places and disturbed woodland sites. The species is found in most states from New Hampshire west to Wisconsin, south to South Carolina and Alabama. Major invasions have been reported in northern Illinois and southeastern Pennsylvania. In one park in the latter state, jetbead has formed a dense monotypic stand in a heavily shaded woodland area. It continues to spread by seed elsewhere in the park, forming thickets as new plants establish. The largest colony stretches as far as the eye can see.

Incidences of jetbead infestations may be underreported because of problems with identification. Jetbead is a mounded, bosely branched shrub that grows from 3-6 feet tall. Leaves are opposite, simple, ovate, 2 1/2 - 4" long, doubly serrate, acuminate, with rounded bases and deeply impressed parallel veins. White four-petaled flowers appear in May and June. In the fall, hard, shiny, ellipsoidal, black drupes form in clusters of three to four above four large, toothed sepals. The fruits often persist through winter.

Like many invasive plants, jetbead reproduces both by seed and vegetative means. It tolerates many different light exposures, soil types and environmental conditions. The shrub leafs out early and holds its leaves late, giving it a competitive advantage over other species. Jetbead has high seed viability and is mostly pest-free. The fruits may attract birds. Sarah Reichard of the University of Washington reports only one non-invasive characteristic: a dormancy mechanism that requires both scarification and stratification for seed germination.

Jetbead is not widely known outside botanical circles, and is not yet well established in the trade. Researchers have performed little work on the species since Flemion investigated seed germination in 1933. This offers an opportunity for weed scientists to study the plant's biology, ecology and management in advance of a possible onslaught. Among the many areas to be studied are the rate and mechanisms of spread, and the conditions that facilitate invasion.

Laurie Anne Albrecht (Coordinator, Jetbead Initiative Project, P.O. Box 1035, Westtown PA 19395) is documenting jetbead spread and writing weed fact sheets for various organizations. Please contact her if you discover populations in the field, or if you are interested in conducting jetbead research. Also, contact Laurie if you wish to receive more information, e-mail updates, or digital images of plant parts for identification purposes:

[albrecht@dca.net](mailto:albrecht@dca.net) or [laalbrecht@worldnet.att.net](mailto:laalbrecht@worldnet.att.net) (in process of changing e-mail address so please try both).  
Phone: (610) 399-6811 / Fax: (610) 399-1625.

## **Washington Report, March 1, 2001**

*Rob Hedberg, Director of Science Policy*

### **Transition to a New Administration**

The new administration got off to a fast start as Cabinet level Department Secretaries and Agency Administrators were quickly selected and approved once the election was finally settled. However, the critical second and third tiers of political appointees will take much longer. Some key positions will probably remain vacant for as long as seven or eight months into the new administration.

Political considerations cause some delays but cumbersome security clearances and background checks cause the major delay. These obstacles put the nation's business on hold and can discourage leading candidates who are reluctant to put their work and life in limbo for six to nine months while being vetted. A good editorial on this subject,

"*Staffing Science Policy-Making*" by Daryl Chubin and Jane Maienschein was included in the November 24 issue of *Science*. Hopefully, some of the obstacles will be resolved before the next new administration so that important positions can be filled more quickly in the future.

### **Transition to New Budget Priorities**

At the time of this writing the President has just released a Budget Blueprint that outlines general priorities for the FY2002 federal budget. The Agriculture Department is slated for overall cuts to \$17.9 Billion from \$19.4 Billion in FY2001. However, the FY2001 budget includes \$800 Million for disaster related funding and the core operations budget is pegged at \$18.6 Billion for USDA. Although the new budget is still lower than this number it was portrayed as an increase over the FY2000 budget of \$17.1 Billion.

Several details of the blueprint are worth noting. One is that USDA research will be redirected to new emphasis areas such as biotechnology, new products and "improved protection against emerging exotic plant and animal diseases as well as crop and animal pests." This is promising news for weed scientists who are involved in biotechnology or targeting invasive species. The document also outlined the administration's intent to eliminate funding for "approximately 300 congressionally earmarked projects for research, education and extension grants to land grant universities" because this "research is not subject to merit based selection". These earmarks have often been criticized but they are also a popular way for legislators to "do something for the folks back home".

Within the Department of Interior the National Park Service (NPS) will receive additional science funding for the benefit of natural resource protection. This could provide a significant increase for invasive plant research. Much of this research will be done within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Department of Interior's science agency. There will also be continued high levels of funding to reduce wildland fire risk and damage. Because many fires are associated with invasive plants this may provide new opportunities for weed science and weed management.

The budget also proposes an "unallocated National Emergency Reserve for unforeseen disaster needs". This concept is supported in the Invasive Species National Management Plan so that "rapid response" funds are readily available when new invasive plant problems such as tropical soda apple, giant hogweed or culerpa are detected. Lack of such funds has historically impeded effective control of incipient infestations in the past and such funding may provide needed help in the future.

### **Transition to a New Congress**

There are several changes in committee leadership in the new 107<sup>th</sup> congress, especially in the House of Representatives. However, the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and the Ranking Minority Member remain Larry Combest, (R-TX) and Charley Stenholm (D-TX) respectively.

James Hansen, (R-UT) replaced Don Young (R-AK) as chair of the House Resources Committee and Nick Rahall II, (D-WV) has replaced George Miller (D-CA) as Ranking Minority Member. This committee oversees the nation's public lands through the National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee now chaired by Joel Hefley (R-CO) who assumes Hansen's position on the subcommittee.

The House Committee on Energy and Commerce, formerly the House Commerce Committee, oversees the EPA. This committee chairman is now W.J. "Billy" Tauzin (R-LA) who replaced Thomas Bliley (R-VA). John D. Dingell, (D-MI) remains the Ranking Minority Member.

For the Appropriations Committee, C.W. 'Bill' Young (R-FL) and David Obey, (D-WI) have retained the Chairmanship and Ranking Minority Member positions respectively. At the time of this writing the key subcommittee assignments have not been determined.

On the other side of the Hill in the Senate, Dick Lugar (R-IN) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) remain Chair and Ranking Minority Member respectively of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

The Senate Appropriations Committee is still chaired by Ted Stevens, (R-AK) and Robert Byrd, (D-WV) remains the Ranking Minority Member. On the Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee Thad Cochran (R-MS) and Herb Kohl (D-WI) also remain Chair and Ranking Minority Member respectively.

Meanwhile, Conrad Burns (R-MT) has become Chair of the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee in place of former senator Slade Gorton (R-WA). Robert Byrd remains Ranking Minority Member of this subcommittee.

Finally, Christopher Bond (R-MO) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) remain Chair and Ranking Minority Member respectively for the VA- HUD Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees EPA appropriations.



## **Contacting Your Legislator**

Charlotte Eberlein asked me to provide some brief pointers on contacting federal legislators. Although this may seem daunting, politicians thrive on interaction with their constituents and have developed systems to make this easy for everyone. From our side we also have a responsibility to teach legislators about our work just as we educate so many other audiences. If we don't reach out to legislators they may never be informed about our work, or worse yet, others may misinform them.

The best place to find current contact information is the congressional websites, [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). Several minutes of exploring will produce all the information you need in order to call, write, e-mail or arrange a meeting. As you explore this information take a few minutes to get to know your legislators. Check their web page links, identify their hot button issues and determine what committee assignments and leadership roles they have.

Each method of contact has its place but there is no substitute for personal meetings that can enhance all future communication with an office. Letters, phone calls and e-mail rank as second, third and fourth choice options for sharing information and concerns. Letters can state positions clearly and be duplicated accurately. E-mail has the same features but it has been overused to swamp offices with cookie cutter position statements. Phone calls are always good for time sensitive information and interactive discussion. Whichever method is used, most offices keep careful tallies of the comments and communications they receive.

Contact with congressional offices typically involves staff so it is important to identify the correct staff person for the concern at hand. If this is not known, call the office and ask for the name of the legislative assistant for agriculture or natural resources or other issue of concern.

Next, ***Keep It Short and Focused***. Legislators and staff are extremely busy. They won't read two pages to find the important sentence, and they don't like using valuable meeting time for rambling discussions. Determine before hand exactly what points you want to make, make it pertinent to their state or district, deliver that message, then stop. If they want more information, let them ask you. Let them know you respect their time, and that you are available as a resource if questions arise in the future.

## **National Invasive Weed Awareness Week**

The second National Invasive Weed Awareness Week (NIWAW) was held February 26 - March 3, and brought many people to Washington DC, especially from western states. Among the many events was a meeting of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee to discuss implementation of the new National Management Plan for Invasive Species, and an extremely well attended meeting of FICMNEW (Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds).

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) sponsored a reception to recognize recipients of Pulling Together Grant awards and Senator Burns (R-MT), Chairman of the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, for his efforts to fund weed management. Several groups that came for the week also made many visits to legislators and key agency offices. The Nature Conservancy also organized a congressional briefing that was addressed by Senator Craig (R-ID) regarding the Harmful Non-Native Weed Control Act (S-198) he introduced along with Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD).

In addition to helping organize the entire week, WSSA took the lead role organizing several important events during the week. One was the All-Taxa Roundtable, jointly sponsored by WSSA, NFWF and ESA (Ecological Society of America). This session explored opportunities for coalition building and cooperation among a broad range of invasive species interests. Over seventy people attended this successful session, including biological science program leaders from several different Departments and Agencies and a variety of non- governmental organizations.

WSSA also arranged to hold the premier viewing of *Invasive Plants: Impact and Prevention*, at the National Zoo that drew over 200 people. This film was produced by iTV (Information Television Network) for broadcast on CNBC. Copies of this useful documentary are available by contacting iTV at 888-380-6500 or visiting their website at [www.itvsus.com](http://www.itvsus.com).

## **Legislative Committee Report**

***Jerry Baron, Legislative Committee Chair***

President George W. Bush announced on March 23 he will nominate Linda J. Fisher, a former executive of the Monsanto Co. as well as an official with EPA to be deputy EPA administrator of Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances (OPPTS). Fisher most recently served as vice president of government affairs for Monsanto.

In another matter, a new position of "associate administrator for agriculture" at EPA has been discussed by officials in the agency, industry, and agriculture. This position could serve to elevate the role of agriculture in environmental decision making, sources said. The position also could be a potent link between Congress and EPA on behalf of growers, an industry source said. In addition, a "liaison" position between USDA and EPA has been discussed, sources said. Jean Mari Peltier, of the California Citrus Quality Council is the inside candidate for this new position.

In its preliminary assessment of atrazine, EPA has indicated that the health risks from exposure to atrazine does not present significant risk issues, although there are concerns for workers and toddlers in a few exposure scenarios.

In one of the final actions of the Clinton Administration, EPA agrees to deadlines for screening endocrine disrupting substances and cumulative risk assessment. In signing a consent decree, it settles litigation from National Resource Defense Council and other plaintiffs. In the first step, EPA has agreed to determine if certain pesticide chemical classes share a common mechanism of toxicity. The common mechanism of toxicity determination must be made for methyl carbamates and chloroacetanilides by June 30, 2001, the thiocarbamates and dithiocarbamates by December 31, 2001, and the triazines by March 31, 2002. With the endocrine disrupting substances, EPA has agreed to publish and solicit comments on a list of pesticides for screening by December 31, 2002. By this date, EPA will must list and validate the acceptable Tier 1 tests for endocrine disruption.

However, EPA recently submitted an amended consent decree. EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman issued a directive outlining how the modified agreement will make the FQPA implementation processes more participatory, transparent, and science-based. The directive would require input from all interested parties, including the Committee to Advise on Reassessment and Transition (CARAT), on ways to optimize public involvement in FQPA implementation. Whitman also announced that during this process the committee will be co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary of the USDA and by the deputy administrator of EPA. The directive also requires that EPA solicit advice from its Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) on conducting cumulative risk assessments, and would allow consideration of new data as the agency develops risk assessments and pesticide re-registration eligibility decisions.

A detailed summary of the modified consent decree, copies of the revised agreement, and Administrator Whitman's directive to the pesticide program are available on EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/pesticides](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides).

EPA has identified some 350 potential new uses for 57 currently registered pesticides as approval candidates for its

fiscal year 2001 workplan. In addition, EPA plans to make 13 registration decisions on new active ingredients by September 30. For additional details see [www.epa.gov/pesticides/opprd001/workplan/newuse.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/opprd001/workplan/newuse.htm).

USDA will start collecting data this month on pesticide residues in treated drinking water. The data collection is an expansion of USDA's Pesticide Data Program (PDP) which until now has only examined residues in food. The data will be used by EPA in performing risk assessments under the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will collect the data in California and New York from water treatment facilities that are voluntarily participating in the program.

President Bush has nominated J. B. Penn, vice president of Sparks Company, as Undersecretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services; Eric M. Bost, chief executive of the Texas Department of Human Services, as Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services; and Tom Dorr, an Iowa farmer, as Undersecretary for Rural Development.

Following up on USDA's issuance of guidance for organic crop and animal production, EPA has issued guidance on the steps required to request and EPA stamp for a label announcing a pest control products compliance with the National Organic Program.

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Research Foundation, working along with the National Center for Agricultural Law Research and Information (NCALRI) at the University of Arkansas Law Center, released a new guide this week entitled, STATE ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AFFECTING VERMONT AGRICULTURE. The Vermont guide is the third of a new generation of guides recently placed on NASDA's website. Michigan and Massachusetts were released earlier this month.

A separate, updated guide on federal legislation affecting agriculture is also available. The guides are designed provide information on state and federal laws affecting agriculture for farmers, ranchers, landowners and others. The guides contain useful tips about state and federal statutes and a list of agencies and organizations to contact for additional information, but are not intended as substitutes for legal advice. The guides are located on NASDA's website at <http://www.nasda.org/>. To access the guides, go to "Foundation" and click on "State-by-State Environmental Guides Affecting Agriculture."

The House Budget Committee has approved a budget blueprint that provides for \$1.9 trillion in total spending for FY 2002 and includes a commitment to agriculture policy and funding. The budget resolution is an internal congressional document that sets general guidelines for budget writers and is not signed by the president. Generally, the new budget sets total discretionary spending at \$660.6 billion for the new fiscal year, compared to \$635 billion provided in FY 2001. For

agriculture, the resolution provides \$19.1 billion in budget authority and \$17.5 billion in outlays in FY2002. This compares to \$20.6 billion in budget authority for FY2001, excluding 2001 emergency payments.

This year's spending plan differs from past resolutions in that it sets aside a contingency fund of \$5.6 trillion from the total projected budget surplus over ten years, along with a "reserve" fund for FY2001 amounting to about \$90 billion for emergency spending. Money from the contingency fund could be tapped only from a request by the president or reports from the congressional committees of jurisdiction outlining why the funds were needed and how they would be spent. Although no specific number is set for additional FY2001 agriculture assistance, language in the budget specifically states that assistance will be forthcoming for producers of program crops, specialty crops, and other critical needs.

Some critics have said the budget makes deep cuts in agriculture and ignores the need for additional farm assistance this year. During debate, congressional Democrats offered an amendment that would add \$9 billion in FY2002, and \$4 billion per year thereafter, for a supplemental income assistance program for farmers. They reasoned this added funding would minimize the need for additional emergency spending for agriculture and would make the baseline spending assumption for agriculture more realistic. Majority budget writers disagreed and the amendment was defeated. They explained that the spending plan does not assume what amounts might be needed without policies that will be determined in a new farm bill.

Up-to-date scientific information on certain plants is now available on an improved, user-friendly, multilingual web site developed by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists. The site includes the correct common and scientific names of economically important vascular plants and information about their use. The upgraded web site adds some important improvements to the Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN) taxonomy area, including a new web page devoted to enhancing and expanding the *World Economic Plants, A Standard Reference*. Several search engines help users find information using various criteria such as genus, common name and economic use (food, fiber, forage, timber, fuel, spice, genetic, medical, ornamental and social uses). They can be accessed from: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/npgs/tax>.

House Agriculture Committee members have introduced a legislative package designed to help farmers capture more value for their products through producer-owned value-added processing. "The Value-Added Development Act for American Agriculture" and the "Farmers' Value-Added Investment Tax Credit" were introduced by farm-state Reps. John Thune (R-S.D.), Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.), and Dennis

Rehberg (R-Mont.). The first bill would establish a demonstration program to provide the technical and financial resources for producer-owned agricultural processing businesses. State-wide agricultural organizations would have flexibility to design Ag Innovation Centers to be used for engineering, applied research, scale production, market and "hands-on" business planning, consulting, equipment, and matching grants. The second bill would provide a 50 percent tax credit up to \$30,000 per year for producers who invest in value-added enterprises.

Check out USDA's Invasive Species Website at [http://plants.usda.gov/plants/cgi\\_bin/noxious.cgi?earl=noxious.cgi](http://plants.usda.gov/plants/cgi_bin/noxious.cgi?earl=noxious.cgi).

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### **Photos from the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of The Northeastern Weed Science Society: Cambridge, MA (Jan. 2-5, 2001)**



View from Cambridge Marriott across the icy Charles River to the Back Bay section of Boston.



Scenes from the Poster Session on Wednesday morning.



President Elect Jeffrey Derr presided over the General Session on Wednesday morning.



Past President Richard Bonanno presented the NEWSS awards to outstanding members of our Society.



Ronald L. Ritter, Distinguished Member award.



Nathan L. Hartwig, Award of Merit.



Edward R. Higgins, Award of Merit.



Robert Zaremba of The Nature Conservancy in Boston delivered the keynote address "Invasive Plants - Ecological Impacts, Early Strategies: Developing a Working Vision of Success."



C. Edward Beste, Outstanding Educator award.



(L to R) Rich Bonanno with honorees Robin Bellinder, Ed Beste, Ron Ritter, Ed Higgins and Nate Hartwig.



Robin Bellinder, Outstanding Researcher award.



Vice President David Mayonado moderated the General Symposium on Invasive Plants on Thursday afternoon.



NEWSS President Brian Olson addressed the Society on "Tradition Versus Change."



Speakers at the General Symposium on invasive plants: (L to R) Rob Hedberg, Les Mehrhoff, Beth Goettel, Dave Mayonado, Stratford Kay, Alison Fox, Bob Zaremba.



Rob Nurse received the 1<sup>st</sup> place award in the student paper contest.



Rich Bonanno (L) presented Ivan Morozov with a plaque and monetary gift in recognition of Ivan's contributions in creating and developing the NEWSS website.



(L to R) Dave Vitolo with recipients of 2<sup>nd</sup> place awards in the student paper contest: Steve King and Andy Bailey.



Passing of the Presidential Gavel from Brian Olson (L) to Jeffrey Derr.



(L to R) Photo contest winners Rob Richardson (1<sup>st</sup>), Joe Neal (2<sup>nd</sup>), Mark VanGessel (3<sup>rd</sup>); Brian Olson; Poster contest winners Andy Bailey (1<sup>st</sup>) and Steve King (2<sup>nd</sup>).



Speakers at the Graduate Student Mixer on career opportunities Thursday evening: (L to R) Rick Schmenk, Jim Steffel, Rob Hedberg, Jim Parochetti, Jeff Derr, Ivan Morozov (organizer), and Garry Schnappinger.



Attendees at the NEWSS Past Presidents' Breakfast Meeting: (seated, L to R) Ed Higgins, Jim Parochetti, Brad Majek, Bob Peters, Bob Sweet; (standing, L to R) Ray Taylorson, Max McCormack, Tom Vrabel, Dave Vitolo, Rich Bonanno, Roy Johnson, Joe Neal, Dick Ilnicki, Prasanta Bhowmik, Brian Olson, John Ahrens, Garry Schnappinger.

The Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS) held its 55<sup>th</sup> annual meeting January 2-5, 2001 in Massachusetts at the Boston Marriott - Cambridge. Two hundred people attended the meeting, and approximately 100 research papers and posters were presented. The conference theme was "Invasive Plants: A Growing Problem." Jeffrey Derr presided over the General Session, and Brian Olson gave the Presidential Address. Stephen Demski, Director of Extension at Univ. of Massachusetts, welcomed the NEWSS to Cambridge. Robert Zaremba of The Nature Conservancy in Boston presented the keynote address "Invasive Plants - Ecological Impacts, Early Strategies: Developing a Working Vision of Success." The following people spoke about invasive plants at the General Symposium: Robert Zaremba; Les Mehrhoff - Univ. of Connecticut; Alison Fox - Univ. of Florida; Robert Hedberg - National & Regional Weed Science Societies; Stratford Kay - North Carolina State Univ.; and Beth Goettel - Silvio Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge (MA). Other special events were a symposium on Forest Vegetation Management, and a Graduate Student Mixer featuring several speakers that discussed career opportunities for weed scientists.

The NEWSS Distinguished Member Award was presented to Ronald Ritter (Univ. of Maryland). Award of Merit recipients were Nathan Hartwig (Penn State Univ., retired) and Edward Higgins (Syngenta Crop Protection, retired). Other award winners were Robin Bellinder (Cornell Univ.), Outstanding Researcher, and Edward Beste (Univ. of Maryland), Outstanding Educator. In the student paper contest, 1<sup>st</sup> place was awarded to Rob Nurse (with C. Swanton), Univ. of Guelph; 2<sup>nd</sup> place (tie) to Steven King (with E. S. Hagood (VT) and R. Chandran (WVU), Virginia Tech; and 2<sup>nd</sup> place (tie) to Andy Bailey (with H. P. Wilson and T. E. Hines), Virginia Tech. Poster session winners were Andy Bailey, H. P. Wilson and T. E. Hines, Virginia Tech (1<sup>st</sup>); and Steven King and E. S. Hagood, Virginia Tech (2<sup>nd</sup>). Winners in the photo contest were Rob Richardson, Virginia Tech (1<sup>st</sup>), Joe Neal, North Carolina State Univ. (2<sup>nd</sup>) and Mark VanGessel, Univ. of Delaware (3<sup>rd</sup>). Ivan Morozov, a graduate student at Virginia Tech, was presented with a special award and gift for his important contributions to the Society in creating and maintaining the NEWSS web site.

Members of the 2001 NEWSS Executive Committee are: Jeffrey Derr, President; David Mayonado, President-Elect; Scott Glenn, Vice President; Brian Olson, Past President; David Yarborough, Secretary-Treasurer; Mark VanGessel, Editor; Jerry Baron, Legislative Chair; Todd Mervosh, Public Relations Chair; Betty Marose, Research/Education Coordinator; Carroll Moseley, Sustaining Membership Chair; Robert Sweet, CAST Representative; Timothy Dutt, WSSA Representative; and Caren Judge, Graduate Student Representative.

The NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest will be held July 31, 2001 at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT. Contact Frank Himmelstein (860-870-6932; fhimmels@canr1.cag.uconn.edu) or Todd Mervosh (860-683-4984; tmervosh@caes.state.ct.us) for information. The 56<sup>th</sup> NEWSS annual meeting will be held January 7-10, 2002 at the Loews Hotel in Philadelphia, PA.

# Northeastern Weed Science Society – 2001 Executive Committee

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