

Business Meeting ISBE, Cornell 2008

The Business Meeting was a roaring success, with a one-hundred-fold increase in attendance compared to the meeting at the ISBE conference in Tours. This year there were over 1000 eager attendees, compared to about 10 in Tours. Never in the history of human endeavour has a “Business Meeting” attracted such a large crowd, and never has a committee-initiated change in strategy had such a large effect on anything. The trick? Well, the Executive considered replacing the numbing name “Business Meeting” with something like “Free Wine and Grants”, but opted for taking hostages (serendipitously befitting Barton Hall, which was adorned with military posters). Instead of being held in a room away from the action, we stormed Wednesday lunch.

An inevitable consequence of the hostage strategy was that the meeting was brief. Our new President, Pat Monaghan, welcomed delegates and thanked the local organizing committee, particularly Sandy Vehrencamp, the overall chair, and Jack Bradbury, who was in charge of IT, for a wonderful and well-organized meeting. Pat explained the rationale for having the meeting over lunch, emphasizing that we wanted as many people involved in Society decisions as possible.

Pat raised three issues on which members could provide feedback. First, the Website was being re-vamped, and Pat asked anyone to send ideas for changes to Mariella Herberstein, the Newsletter Editor and coordinator of the web upgrade. Second, the Society could do with a new logo, and again any designs could be sent to Mariella. Finally, the location of the 2012 Conference had not been resolved, so she invited suggestions.

Walt Koenig gave the Treasurer’s report. The Society was in a sound financial position, with income, primarily from

the Journal, of over \$50,000 US per year. Previously the income had been banked (mercifully not invested in Wall Street), but this year for the first time we offered travel grants which were open to applications from throughout the world. We received 171 applications, and were able to fund 68, primarily senior PhD students and recent post-doctoral researchers. The Executive thought this was a good use of Society resources, and so intended to double the money available for the next meeting, partly because it was in Perth, Australia, and so will be expensive for many participants. Walt asked for any ideas on other uses of Society funds.

Rob Brookes reported on the fortunes of *Behavioral Ecology*, the Society’s journal, because Mark Elgar, the Editor-in-Chief, was unable to attend. Submissions continue to rise, as does the Impact Factor, which is now about 3.0. Rob emphasized that *Behavioral Ecology* is **our** journal, and all profits return to the Society and therefore help members by providing travel grants and other benefits such as this Newsletter. Over the last two years, 30% of papers were accepted, with an identical success rate for papers with women and men as first authors, which may in part be attributed to the double-blind editorial process. Rob urged everyone to consider *Behavioral Ecology* as their journal of choice, and in particular the Editors would like to see more reviews and forum articles.

Pat Monaghan again asked for questions. She was greeted by the sounds of foraging, digestion and contented social murmur. A delightful Business Meeting.

Rob Magrath
ISBE Secretary