Report of the Business Meeting of the Southern Branch of the American Society of Agronomy

The meeting was held in Orlando, Florida on February 4, 2013 in conjunction with the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Philip Moore, President at 5:00 PM. Steve Hague asked Mark Reiter to take notes since Yoana Newman was attending an Animal Science business meeting. Current officers were introduced who were: Philip Moore, President; Steve Hague, Vice President & Program Chair; Yoana Newman, Secretary/Treasurer; Mark Reiter, Secretary/Treasurer-elect; and Becky Gilfillen, Past President. Minutes from the previous SB-ASA meeting were passed out and were reviewed by the members. Wes Wood moved to accept the minutes as written and the motion was seconded by Mark Reiter. The minutes were accepted by a voice vote; which was unanimous.

Joanna Newman led a discussion to gauge the interest in having a joint session between SB-ASA and the Southern Branch Animal Sciences group at SAAS. Joanna noted that there were several topics and papers presented in the Animal Science section that relate directly to Agronomy, and both groups would benefit by having a joint session. Also, it was noted that many of the Animal Science forage talks overlapped with interesting talks in SB-ASA and scientists often have to walk between rooms and possibly miss pertinent talks due to overlap. Through conversations, Joanna indicated that Animal Sciences had interest in this joint session as well. Possible joint symposium topics include: small ruminants, grazing, forages, crops, biofuels, fertilizer, and so forth. Further discussion on timing indicated that Tuesday morning might be the best time for a joint session with both groups to run all day if necessary. Rocky Lemus made a motion to continue working with Animal Scientists and a joint SB-ASA session for next year. Carl Crozier seconded the motion.

Student awards were announced by Program Chairman Steve Hague. Checks were not available at this time and will be sent to the winners at a later date. Steve Hague stated that all students did a great job and most contests had narrow margins between winners. All students should certainly participate again next year. Award winners’ placed as follows:

- Undergraduate poster competition:
  1. Jessica Epps, Abilene Christian University
  2. Hannah Robbins, Sr., Murray State University

- Soils graduate student poster competition:
  1. Biswanath Dari, University of Florida
  2. Said Hamido, Auburn University
  3. Sutie Xu, University of Florida

- Crops graduate student poster competition:
  1. Reagan Noland, Texas A&M University
  2. Joshua White, Mississippi State University
  3. Rockiell Woods, Alcorn State University

- Crops graduate student oral competition:
  1. Jason Sarver, University of Georgia
  2. Jennifer Corbin, Mississippi State University
  3. Laura Ann McLoud, Texas A&M University

- Soils graduate student oral competition:
  1. Audrey Gamble, Auburn University
  2. Danielle Dittrich, Texas A&M University
  3. Julius Adewopo, University of Florida
Steve Hague acknowledged that it is difficult to find judges for the student competition as these contests can be a substantial time commitment and many scientists have students that are also participating. However, dedicated judges are necessary for success. Judges this year included: Paul DeLaune, Mark Reiter, Sam Dennis, Auri Same, Wayne Ebelhar, Paul Woosley, Becky Gilfillen, Rocky Lemus, Gaully, Dexter Watts, Carl Crozier, Philip Moore, Hunter Perry, Jamie Foster, and Michael Nickademus.

Becky Gilfillen, Past President, thanked the professional awards committee for their help in award selection. Judges for the professional awards committee included: Becky Gilfillen, Chairman, Paul DeLaune, Nathan Slaton, and Carl Crozier. Awards given included:

- Professional Career Award - Wayne Ebelhar, Mississippi State University. Wayne served the Southern Branch very well over his career. Wayne thanked the society and his research team for all of their support. Wayne’s plaque had a printing error on it and Becky stated that she would send it back for correction.
- Early Career Award in Research: Two winners were awarded this award.
  1. Scott Tubbs, University of Georgia. During Scott’s speech he stated how important it was to be plugged in with the southeast regional ASA. A great opportunity for students and young faculty.
  2. Dexter Watts – USDA-ARS Soil Dynamics Lab in Auburn, AL.

Philip Moore opened the floor up for nominations for Secretary/Treasurer-elect for 2013 to take office in February 2014. Nominations included:

1. Rocky Lemus was nominated by Carl Crozier and the nomination was seconded by Bisoondat Macoon.
2. Paul DeLaune was nominated by Philip Moore and the nomination was seconded by Sam Dennis.
3. Dexter Watts was nominated by Mark Reiter and the nomination was seconded by Sam Dennis.

Philip Moore then announced that the floor was closed for nominations and that voting would take place electronically. Following nominations, it was announced that several academic and professional positions are available around the Southeast. Philip Moore announced that he was looking for a post-doc to work on a project. Mark Reiter announced that he had an assistantship available for a PhD or MS student. Mark Reiter stated that if you have a position to raise your hand and several other faculty did. Students were encouraged to speak with someone regarding graduate school or a position after the business meeting concluded.

The President’s gavel was then passed from Philip Moore to Steve Hague. The business meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Report submitted by Mark Reiter, 2012 SB-ASA Secretary/Treasurer-elect.