

Welcome®

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Good morning and welcome to the 56th Annual Meeting of the International Plant Propagators' Society Eastern Region in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have an outstanding program and an action-packed 3 days planned for you.

I would like to inform you that we have members attending from the Southern and Western regions as well as Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Netherlands, Great Britain, plus five attendees from China. We also have members and representatives from Quebec where next year's meeting will be held.

I would like to ask all the new members to stand as well as all of you who have signed up to be their buddies during the meeting. Please meet each other at the registration desk at the break. It's important that we spend time with our new members and make them feel welcome among us. That also holds true for all of the students that are attending. The students are the next generation of I.P.P.S. members. We welcome you and hope you find your time here interesting and rewarding.

I would especially like to thank the Local Site Committee for a superb job organizing this meeting. Those of you who participated in yesterday's tours know what I am speaking of.

The local site committee includes Dale Deppe, Gail Berner, Kraig Brolick, Shirley Bruin, Mike Corbett, Jeremy Deppe, Lloyd Jurries, Tom Kimmel, Tim Wood, and Gary Van Slooten.

Please also thank Darrel Apps for putting together a tremendous program. It takes countless hours to put together this event. Darrel has brought us an impressive array of the most interesting subjects and speakers available. This is also the first year we have had the involvement of our new program coordinator, Charles Heuser.

Charles has been an invaluable asset following up with all speakers and making sure all details of our program fell into place. Thank you Charles.

Thanks also to Brian Maynard, our second Vice President. Brian was in charge of our poster session. This year we have close to 30 posters. Brian has also put the foundation in place for our meeting in Montréal next year. The program is nearly complete a year ahead of time. It was especially important since we are trying to acquire a grant that will allow us to have the ability to offer simultaneous translation in Montréal. Also I want to inform you that we are well on the way to having our program and tours set for our joint meeting with the Western Region in September 2008.

Special thanks also have to go to our executive director, Margot Bridgen, for all the work it took over the course of a year to put this meeting together. Margot is the reason why things work so smoothly around here.

This year we have a new team of AV operators. Dave Sanford and Scott Clark have been relieved of their duties and were offered help with providing our AV needs. This year I would like to thank Bob McNeil, Paul Capiello, Win Dunwell, Chris Cash, Scott Clark, Bob Geneve, Dave Sanford, Brian Maynard, and Mark Bridgen.

At this time I will announce the names of those members who have passed on within the last year.

- Robert Mori of Mori Nurseries, Ltd. in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. He had been a member since 1977.
- Chico Haramaki, Penn State University, a member of 48 years, since 1958.
- Edward Rezek, Coniferare Gardens, Malverne, New York, member since 1972.

Is there anyone who knows of others who have passed on?

Let us please honor them with a moment of silence.

I would now like to call on Jim Johnson to conduct our awards ceremony.

Please respect our speakers by turning off your cell phones.