Special Message From the President

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Since writing the first President's Message, I have been amazed at the amount of society business that needs attention. Some has been routine; however, much of the business concerns possible major policy changes and new projects proposed by our members. I wish to discuss here 2 items which need to be considered by all members, and in the next message I will discuss our financial situation.

For several years, many members have criticized our annual meetings as a program not designed to meet the major interests of our members. Last year in Daytona Beach our program was greatly expanded, and this year Vice-President White is considering many new ideas for program expansion. While we work towards a program of broader interest, we are also concerned with program length. Therefore, we have initiated for the Sixty-Fifth Annual Meeting a poster session open to all members. We encourage everyone submitting papers to consider the poster session as a means of presentation. Each presentation will be provided with a standard folding table before and during the poster session. The poster session will not interfere with planned student activities.

As our program expands, the number of convention hotels which can meet our needs becomes more limited. After careful consideration of all possible motels in the Sarasota area, I have decided the best facility is The Colony located on Longboat Key. The Colony is a condominium-style resort with complete convention facilities. As given in the first announcement of the annual meeting, "suite rates will be $55.00 for a one floor suite (2 sleeping areas), and $85.00 for a 2 floor suite (2 bedrooms, 2 baths, plus sleeping area)." At first glance these prices might seem high; however, compared to rates for standard motel rooms in motels that can meet our needs, these prices are most reasonable. A one floor suite includes a master bedroom with one king or 2 double beds, one bathroom, living room with twin hide-a-beds, and a complete kitchenette. A 2 floor suite includes an additional large bedroom and bathroom. I can see many possibilities such as several singles in a one floor suite or 2 couples in a 2 floor suite. In addition to sharing suite costs, some meals can be prepared in the suite. The Colony plans to send to each member a special package of promotional material. This material will explain the accommodations and additional services such as a free child care program.

Unfortunately, we have had to raise registration fees again this year to offset the actual costs (mostly inflation) of holding our annual meeting. Pre-registration at the cost of $25.00 for full members and $10.00 for students will cover all general costs including banquet. Additional banquet tickets can be purchased for family members at a cost of $6.00 each. Student members entered into the student contest will receive a free banquet ticket. Therefore, registration for these students is $4.00 (pre-registration) or $6.00 (at-the-door registration). Registration at meeting time will be slightly higher at $30.00 for full members and $12.00 for students. This higher registration at the door is to encourage everyone to pre-register. Pre-registration of all attending is needed for effective cost-conscious planning.

I look forward to a great annual meeting in Sarasota and hope to see everyone there.

—W. L. Peters

President, Florida Entomological Society