

## Message from the President

*Marvalee H. Wake*

Our meeting in Chicago set the stage for many expanded ventures, several to be realized at our meeting in January, 2002, in Anaheim, and some for January, 2003, in Toronto. We are committed to following up on our stimulating and innovative town meeting on the teaching of evolution; our Public Affairs Committee and our Education Council together are planning a session for Anaheim, and expect to involve public school teachers in the Southern California area. We have a committee charged with implementing the recommendations of Dianna Padilla's Task Force that investigated ways of increasing our membership of under-represented minority colleagues. Several of our other committees are well along with their work, especially for the Anaheim meeting, but also for the efforts of the society as a whole.

Our new management team at BAI, with Brett Burk as our Executive Director, is proving highly responsive and willing and able to provide both the critical management input that we need, as well as some new ideas that will increase our ability to meet our many commitments, and to increase our communication with like-minded societies. Brett and his colleagues are managing our meeting plans, finances, and other important parts of our organization, and some new structures that will result should increase our efficiency.

Another large number of excellent symposia will take place at the Anaheim meeting. John is doing some innovative planning with regard to scheduling symposia, papers, start- and end-times, etc., so we look forward to seeing how these experiments work. The Anaheim venue has been checked out by John and by Sue Burk, our BAI meetings manager, and they find that it should meet our needs very well, including feeding arrangements!

I'm especially pleased that Anaheim will be our site for an attempt to increase our communication with international colleagues. We are inviting officers from similar societies (national and international societies with focal interests in zoology and biology, biological education, organismal biology, evolution, ecology, etc.) from around the world to attend the meeting. We will introduce them to our approaches to integrative and comparative biology via the science at our meeting, and learn more about theirs through discussions with them—multidisciplinary science, with emphasis on integrative and comparative approaches, is characterizing the way that biologists are working in many parts of the world, and it seems timely to share perspectives on the complex questions that we all are asking. We will also have a society-wide symposium that will include participants from several countries, as well as the US, discussing "The Promise of Integrative Biology". I anticipate that some new collaborations, at both the societal and the individual levels, might result. Also, we will be re-instituting the discussion meeting for Chairs and Deans of biology/zoology departments and colleges, or their sub-units. Sharing of problems, solutions, and ideas has been very profitable in the past, and it's time to do it again, because both old and new issues are apparent to us all.

One of our society's primary modes of expression is through publication of our journal, the *American Zoologist*. Our new editorial consortium at the University of Washington, under John Edwards' leadership, is exploring ways of further increasing the appeal of the journal while maintaining high scientific quality (the results of the vote whether or not to change its name should be available shortly). But in addition to the *American Zoologist* being our "flagship" publication, we sponsor or support several other journals, such as the new "Development and Evolution" publication. It's important all of you who are interested in them to support them by subscribing to them, especially to help launch the new ones; being sure your institutional libraries are getting them would also help.

I'm excited by the potential that SICB has to continue to make a significant impact on much of biological science through its emphasis on integrative and comparative approaches. Our work with students, our outreach to members of the public and to other scientists, and our emphasis on major issues to which we

can offer our expertise puts us in a position of leadership. However, it's important that we have more and more of our membership involved in our efforts. If you are interested in working with colleagues for SICB, please let me know—I'm sure I can find a committee that would be appropriate to your interests, and that would welcome your input. Also in that vein, our Membership Committee has a campaign under way to increase our membership, so if you know of potential new members, please encourage them to join SICB.

Our society is in a splendidly healthy state, thanks to the efforts of many people, especially our Past President Martin Feder and our Past Treasurer, Kimberly Smith—I encourage you all to help the society continue to grow and to expand its activities, its expertise, and especially its science. I welcome your suggestions about ANYTHING having to do with the society and will pass them on to the appropriate folks—please let me know your ideas!

Cordially,

Marvalee