

President's Report

31 May 2012

Dear USAIN Members,

It is my pleasure to submit to you the following report on behalf of the USAIN Executive Council. As you will gather from the highlights below, the EC has had a busy year. In addition to the activities described, we met monthly via a conference call. Our annual face-to-face meeting took place in Burlington, Vermont preceding the 14th Biennial Conference. The Committees and Interest Groups also were busy with their responsibilities throughout the year and in preparation for the conference.

I am honored to have served as the President of USAIN during this 25th anniversary year and I look forward to an exciting year ahead under the leadership of President Val Minson.

Respectfully submitted,
Constance J. Britton, President 2013-2014

USAIN Highlights of 2013-2014

Action Plan Goal 1: Strengthen membership and increase participation in USAIN by members and other food and agricultural information professionals

- The Membership Committee was active in recruiting new members. They reached out especially to agriculture librarians at landgrant institutions who are not already members. There was a net increase of 8 new personal members in 2014.
- The EC conducted a survey of the membership in the fall. This year the survey questions focused on the Interest Groups, with the goal of trying to increase activities of the IGs in non-conference years. Various ways of communicating were explored. No immediate actions were identified and further exploration has been deferred until the new website is available.
- The Communications Committee developed an initial organizational entry about USAIN for Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Agricultural_Information_Network). The committee will be responsible for maintaining and updating the content, but invites others who have or would like experience with editing in Wikipedia to participate in expanding the information presented.

- The redesign of the USAIN website moved forward with the hiring of JesseJames Creative (JJC) to create the new website. The firm was chosen from those who submitted proposals in response to an RFP from the USAIN Website Implementation Task Force. JJC has been working with a small group representing USAIN (President, Past-President, Chairs of Membership and Communications Committees) with input from the EC as needed. The new site will include a robust member database that will allow us to maintain member information more effectively and a CMS for accomplishing updates to the site more easily. It is the intent that the website will facilitate information sharing by committees and interest groups more readily. The current website is being maintained at Oklahoma State University until the new site is ready.
- The membership supported and the EC approved a new interest group: Agricultural Economics Research, Information, and Education Interest Group (AERIE).

Action Plan Goal 2: Advocate for public policy, legislation, and institutions which support agricultural research and information communities.

- The Legislative and Government Relations Committee distributed information about pending federal legislation that would affect access to publically funded research publications and data and called for action by our members.
- USAIN was a sponsor of a session at the IAALD World Congress held at Cornell University in July 2013. IAALD extended the member rate for registration at the Congress to USAIN members. In turn, IAALD was a sponsor of the 2014 USAIN Conference and we offered registration to the IAALD members at the member rate.

Action Plan Goal 3: Provide educational and professional development opportunities for members and others.

- The 14th Biennial USAIN Conference was held at the University of Vermont and offered programming around the theme, “Sustainable Agriculture: Stewardship of Our Information Ecosystem.” Attendance was strong with around 100 attendees and 10 exhibitors. As is our custom, we awarded two scholarships to attend the conference. Kathleen Monks was the recipient of the New to the Profession Scholarship and Madeline Jarvis received the Student Scholarship. Amy Paster received the 2014 USAIN Service to the Profession Award. The 15th Biennial Conference will be held in 2016 in Gainesville, Florida, hosted by the University of Florida.
- USAIN and AgNIC have collaborated with CRL to fund a series of small preservation projects known as Project Ceres. The Preservation and Digital Library Committee has managed the selection process and facilitated the project. In phase 1, 16 projects were funded at \$3,125 each; phase 2 generated 9 new projects with funding ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000.
- Several years ago, professional development was identified by the membership as a high priority activity for USAIN to provide. To develop plans and appropriate activities, a professional development special project committee was formed. The committee has been working to identify areas of interest and potential topics, suitable platforms for delivery, and possible collaborators. Initially, the committee has kept the membership informed of opportunities available outside USAIN by posting announcements to

USAIN-L. Early in the summer of 2014, a webinar on searching was presented by CABI personnel.

Other activities

- The Action Plan is USAIN's roadmap of actions and benchmarks that help us achieve the goals and objectives we have identified as important to our organization. Each Action Plan is developed in 3 year increments and is reviewed and updated in the final year. As a result of the review in 2013, the Action Plan was updated and reorganized to lay out the plan for 2014-2016. This plan helps focus the EC, the committees and the interest groups on articulated goals and suitable actions.
- A number of years ago under the leadership of President Sheila Merrigan, the EC began meeting monthly via conference call. Subsequent presidents have continued this practice as a way to keep the work of the organization moving forward. Due to the increase in the number of EC meetings each year, this has created additional work for the Secretary/Treasurer in terms of preparing minutes. The Bylaws Committee reviewed this situation and made a recommendation that we create two positions to handle the functions defined for the current Secretary/Treasurer. The proposed change to the Bylaws to have a Secretary and a Treasurer, to be elected in alternate years, was presented to the membership at the May 2014 business meeting in Vermont. The affirmative vote by those attending the business meeting sent the issue to the full membership for an electronic vote. The changes were approved by vote of the full membership in June 2014. The election to be held in fall 2014 will reflect these new positions.
- The Procedures and Rules, which spell out how we carry out business, state that we should conduct an internal and an external audit each year. Our management company, Long and Associates, handles the internal audit. The EC discussed the best way to handle an external audit. A full audit which would examine all revenue and expense transactions would be very expensive. Given the relatively few transactions that we make on an annual basis, we felt this would not be an effective use of our resources. We opted for a "compilation" by the accounting firm which handles our tax filing. The accountant reviewed the accounting principles being used and sought to identify any deviation from acceptable accounting practices. In addition, we requested that he prepare a set of recommendations that would allow us to manage our own review of our ledger. During the next year, the Secretary/Treasurer and the Budget Committee will be testing these procedures to see if they are workable and give us the peace of mind that we are doing due diligence with the organization's financial resources.
- During 2013/14 we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of USAIN. The occasion was marked in a number of ways: through a series of reminiscences by several members on various aspects of our history; by issuing an anniversary pin and logo designed by Megan Kocher; by the first public performance of a USAIN theme song called USAIN is YOU, lyrics by David Kruger. The yearlong celebration culminated at the Awards Banquet in Vermont with a beautiful (and delicious) cake.

Executive Council 2013-2014

President: Connie Britton

Past President: Eileen Herring*

President-Elect: Val Minson

Secretary/Treasurer: Claudine Jenda

Directors: Madeleine Charney, Peter Fernandez, Philip Herold*, Hope Jansen, Jenny Oleen*, Sarah C. Williams

NAL Representative: Chris Cole

Ex-Officio Members: Amy Paster, Archivist; Suzanne Reinman, Webmaster

*Term completed May 31, 2014

Incoming EC Members, June 1, 2014

President-Elect: Philip Herold

Directors: Leslie Delserone, Amy Shannon

Committee Chairs, 2013-2014

- **Awards and Honors:** Val Minson
- **Budget:** Claudine Jenda
- **Bylaws:** Eileen Herring
- **Communications:** Megan Kocher, Toni Greider (Interim)
- **Conference Planning 2014:** Elizabeth Berman and Val Minson
- **Legislative and Government Relations:** Suzanne Reinman
- **Membership:** Julie Kelly
- **Nominations and Elections:** Eileen Herring
- **Preservation and Digital Library:** Amy Paster
- **Professional Development (Special Project Committee):** Noel Kopriva

Interest Group Conveners 2013-2014

- **Agricultural Economics, Research, Information and Education (AERIE):** Mary Dugan and Julie Kelly
- **AgNIC:** Florian Diekmann and Rob McGeachin
- **Animal Health Information:** Sheila Bryant and Jessica Page
- **Collection Management:** Jodee Kuden and Natalie Waters
- **International Agriculture:** Marty Kesselman and Jim Morris-Knower
- **Social Issues/Rural Information:** Deva E. Reddy and Margaret Merrill
- **Technology Trends:** Netta S. Cox and Luti Salisbury