

Presidential Address

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Welcome to the 20th Annual Meeting of The Aquatic Plant Management Society, Inc. The past 12 months have been rewarding, frustrating, exciting, encouraging, discouraging, joyous, maddening, and satisfying for your President. I have experienced these and many other emotions in my conduct of the presidential affairs of this Society. I sincerely thank you for giving me the opportunity. I think it was a normal year. I was, however, constantly reminded of the quote about pleasing some of the people all of the time or all of the people some of the time, but one can surely not please all the people all of the time. And I found a few that you could not please any of the time.

Briefly, I would like to discuss with you a few matters concerning our Society about which I think you will be interested. I would like the membership's thoughts and feelings on these matters.

First, some questions came up this year as to the objectives and directions of the Society for the future. After considerable personal thought and serious discussions with many of you, I have come up with what I feel to be the general direction in which we should be, and are, heading. The directions are the same as those set forth 20 years ago when the Society was formed, only the scope has changed. I quote from Article II of our Certificate of Incorporation:

"The general nature of the objects of this society shall be to assist in promoting management of aquatic vegetation, to encourage scientific research, to promote university scholarships and to extend and develop public interest in the movement."

The only change from that article developed 20 years ago was to amend it to read "management of aquatic vegetation" rather than "control of waterhyacinths and other noxious aquatic weeds." This was to make the wording consistent with our revised name. As I see it, our original mission was to promote placement of tools into the hands of the user for the effective and safe management of aquatic plants. This is still our mission and it should remain so. I will agree that the scope has changed. Over the years, the membership has increased and broadened to include those involved with every conceivable aspect of aquatic plant management, here and abroad. These include field operations; local, state, and Federal management; scientific research; government regulation; industry; and many others. Therefore, the APMS, Inc., has evolved into an international organization through which aquatic plant management technology, developed by researchers using needs and ideas coming from the field, will be transferred back to field personnel as they go about their day-to-day management of aquatic plants.

Our Society is unique, a fact which was apparent to me

when I joined this organization in 1972. It is the only organization of its kind where the membership is made up of such a wide spectrum of interests including the man in the boat trying to kill hydrilla, the scientific researcher, the manager, the bureaucrat, the student, the industrialist, the salesman, and I could go on and on. The very fact that we come from so many different walks of life makes for potential problems. We have all seen and heard these potential problems discussed over the years. But let us stand back and look at one thing, the ultimate purpose for which we are here—the management of aquatic plants. The researcher must listen to the field man to see what needs to be researched, what will work and what will not. Operators and researchers must listen to industry when they tell us what we can afford, what they can produce at a price we can pay that can solve the problem and still yield a reasonable profit. We must all listen to each other if we really want to succeed in the management of aquatic plants. The APMS is the forum by which this can be accomplished on a national and international scale. This is why we are here, so let us get to the job at hand.

Earlier, when I stated the objectives of the Society, I talked about aquatic plant management, i.e., aquatic plant management for society, for the world—not Lee County, not the Jacksonville District, not the State of Florida, not the Southeast, not the Midwest, nor any other specific locale—but the world. We have evolved to the point of being the center of technology for aquatic plant management. By virtue of this evolution, APMS, as an organization, cannot feasibly act as the technology transfer agent for solving specific and local problems in sufficient detail to be maximally efficient. There is not enough time at annual meetings, for example. Herein lies the responsibility of the affiliate chapters. The APMS, through its annual meetings and other activities, provides the forum for interchange of ideas and technology for solving specific needs through the activities of the chapters. Members of the local chapters know best their particular problems and how to apply general technology to those specific problems.

The concept of local or regional chapters is a relatively new one for us and I think should be carefully and thoughtfully worked out for the mutual benefit of all. The division of responsibility and authority between APMS and the chapters must be clearly defined so that aquatic plant management as a field will benefit. APMS should assume a leading role in welding together the overall problem and the overall solution. The affiliate chapters should assume the lead in applying the technology at the local level to solve individual problems and in providing feedback for further research and development.

Last year when I became President, I appointed a special

committee on new chapters. I suggest that this committee continue to function and work with the chapters to develop a master plan for establishing the relationship between them and APMS and to see that every effort is made to let the system benefit local interests while adhering to the purposes of APMS. There is a definite mutual benefit to be derived from close cooperation and coordination between the APMS and local or regional chapters. What we do not want, and should not tolerate, is the development of splinter organizations going off in every direction. This could be catastrophic to the aquatic plant management movement. We must all work together.

A particular matter of concern that I keep hearing about is the trend of our annual meetings to be held at ever broadening locations—to other sections of the United States and perhaps eventually even outside the United States. I think this is good. This is the responsibility of APMS as I see it. It does not imply that we are overlooking the many problems in the State of Florida or in the Southeast, or in any other region, but rather that we are endeavoring to gain insight and input from all areas with aquatic plant problems and to respond to the overall need. I think of the possibility of solving Florida's problems with knowledge gained from other areas of the country. Hopefully, we can also place Florida's knowledge and capabilities in the hands of those in other areas. If we do this we have succeeded in accomplishing our goals. If we want APMS to become *the authority* in aquatic plant management, we must observe and listen to what others have learned and what others are doing to solve their problems.

For example, remember our annual meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 3 years ago. We attracted many delegates and gained a good number of new members from the northern mid-section of our country and from Canada. Likewise, I have heard a significant amount of positive response for our plans for the Las Vegas meeting 2 years from now. The western sections of the United States and Canada have an increasing interest in aquatic plant management. We will see many new faces at the Las Vegas meeting. I understand that with tighter money and travel restrictions some of us will not be able to always attend meetings held outside our area. By the same token, others who live and work in the north, west, and southwest cannot always attend meetings here in the southeast.

But, over the years, if we move about enough we will enhance our stature of being international in scope by making the annual meetings more accessible to more interested potential members. I believe this is what we must do, even though it does cause some individual hardships from time to time.

As many of you are aware, Past President Raynes and I appointed a Policy Council of seven members representing a cross section of APMS to consider several major issues that we must address in the administration of this Society. The

Policy Council's charge was to develop and present to the Board of Directors a plan for consolidating the two offices of Secretary and Treasurer into one office of Secretary-Treasurer, and to recommend to the Board the manner in which the plan would be properly implemented and adequately financed. The time has come when the administrative affairs of the Society must be paid for by the Society. As with any newly formed organization of this type, the Hyacinth Control Society, and subsequently the Aquatic Plant Management Society, was dependent on the donations of time and facilities of the officers and dedicated members. This was appropriate, necessary, and certainly most appreciated, but the time has come for us to pay our own way in the conduct of the administrative affairs of this Society. For the present, and assuming adoption of a plan, this means for example that arrangements must be made for the Secretary-Treasurer's office to pay for typing and other secretarial services, for storage of our journals, and for other expenses that are necessary for conducting the normal business of the Society.

In order to accomplish this, we will be forced to have an increase in dues. It does not appear that this is unreasonable since the original dues—set in 1961—20 years ago when the Society was formed, have not increased. The amount of increase and manner of implementation will be considered at our business meeting tomorrow. I also will be happy to discuss the matter with any member.

In summary, permit me to emphasize briefly the salient points that I have discussed this morning and that I feel are the most important issues for us to consider at this point in the history of the Aquatic Plant Management Society, Inc. Our objectives, as such, have not changed; our scope of endeavor has. We must accept an ever broadening responsibility as we continue to evolve. We must clarify the relationship between APMS and our affiliate chapters for overall enhancement of the aquatic plant management movement. We must strive to support this movement with positive attitudes about the locations of future annual meetings. We must support the Board of Directors with constructive suggestions and criticism, and offer to serve on committees. Finally, we must accept our responsibility of becoming a financially independent organization, dependent on no one for the gratuitous conduct of our normal day-to-day operation.

These are only a few of the important issues which have arisen over the past year. We have not solved all of them but we are working on them and we need your help and input. Again, I thank you for your confidence and I pledge continued dedication and support to the APMS, Inc., as your Past President. Let us proceed with making this the tremendous organization it was intended to be, the center of technology for aquatic plant management here and throughout the world.