

## **From the President; a successful meeting in Charleston....**

Judging by attendance, quality of the presentations, and enthusiastic participation by the attendees, our 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting held in Charleston, SC, August 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004 was a rousing success.

Dr. Randy Woodson, Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture at Purdue University, opened the meeting by tracing his first contact with growth regulators, spraying B-9 on chrysanthemums in his parents ornamental nursery, through his work with ethylene, and later as a Dean at Purdue, directing research resources. As he did so he outlined the development of plant growth regulation from a purely applied research arena to one that now also includes basic research, including manipulation at the molecular level, to produce advances in plant growth regulation.

Symposia organized by Drs. Brian Whipker, Ed Stover, Sonja Maki, Hanne Rasmussen and Ron Smith supported Dr. Woodson's historical analysis and predictions for the future. Invited and contributed presentations and posters covered treatments now successfully used in production through investigations of proteins regulating expression of genes encoding plant growth regulators. A final industry session focused on how the products of this research are being used.

Students Shannon Hill of Virginia, and Timothy Spann and Holly Johnson of University of California, Davis, all won student travel awards. The latter two also won presentation awards. Drs. Tomas Ayala Silva and Jorge Fonseca were honored with Young Scientist awards. We hope to see more of these young scientists in the future.

Our long time member and Executive Director, Dr. Tom Tworkoski, was awarded the Valent BioSciences PGRSA Quarterly Best Paper Award.

This meeting also embodied some "firsts" for PGRSA. For the first time, the abstracts and agenda were online in an interactive format, prior to the meeting. When all the papers have been assembled the conference proceedings will be produced as an interactive CD, and also possibly online in an interactive format.

The meeting started and finished with highlights of historic and modern Charleston. The preconference tour emphasized Charleston's fame as a seaport city. Participants toured the Hunley; the Confederate submarine that first successfully sank a sailing ship. They also toured Patriot's Point, the largest navel museum in the world, with total access to submarines, a destroyer and the aircraft carrier, Yorktowne. A final reception was held in the "Old Exchange," the most important historic building in Charleston. There, as we ate, we admired the rooms where George Washington thanked the people of Charleston for not giving in to the British forces.

The successful 31<sup>st</sup> meeting closed as hurricane Charlie moved in. Leaving us looking forward to the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting, to be convened in sunny, dry California July 24-27, 2005 by Dr. Sonja Maki. We look forward to seeing all of you there....

Louise Ferguson Ph. D.  
31<sup>st</sup> Meeting Convenor and President