
A highlight of the year 1978 is the report of the ad hoc Committee for Long-Range Financial Planning. This committee, composed of C. E. Carlson, R. G. Creech, and R. H. Maier, was appointed by then President M. D. Thorne during 1977 and has performed a monumental task for the three Societies. The report is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Another long-needed study was commissioned in 1977 by President Thorne. The study, on Employee Fringe Benefits, was finished in 1978 and the report was considered at the December meeting of the Executive Committee. Parts of the report were approved, and other parts were referred to the Budget and Finance Committee.

For several years, questions and suggestions have been made to the Budget and Finance Committee about the feasibility of improving the record-keeping system and perhaps developing a computer program. The frequent breakdown of the Societies' addressing machine during the year brought the question to the forefront. C. E. Carlson, business manager, and M. O. Openshaw, director of ARCPACS, spent several months studying alternative systems and made recommendations that would best serve the needs of the Societies. On 26 Jan. 1978 an agreement was signed with Autem Corp., a distributor of Wang terminals, to buy a Model MVP computer and software.

In response to requests from two heads of Agronomy Departments, a salary survey was made up for Agronomy professorial staff at Grant Universities. The results are being compiled, but the practice may become routine in the future.

Numerous letters and inquiries were handled during 1978. Some of them ended up in other places, such as Congress, popular or trade magazines. Frankly, Agronomists are generally satisfied with the Society, because we have found that only a half-dozen letters or calls were of the unpleasant variety in the long run. Constructive lessons were learned from the experience.

In summary, thanks to each of you for your patient and helpful assistance during the year. Special thanks should go to Dr. Ray Williams and to Matthias Stelly, the Executive Vice President, for being so patient and understanding, even though I was often insensitive and tended to get off-message. For several years, questions and suggestions have come from the ARCPACS office.