
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In early October, Board Member Brian Ellsworth, P.Ag. (Sr.) and I met with Dave Antle, Assistant Deputy Minister Policy OMAFRA, at the Ministry Offices in Guelph. We took the opportunity to talk with him about why OIA feels that the current legislation under which it operates is outdated and needs to be reviewed. We discussed how during the last 50 years since the Ontario Institute of Professional Agrologists Act was proclaimed, other provinces in Canada have updated and changed their legislation, with Alberta being the most recent in 2007. Their legislation now requires 'mandatory' registration of those practicing Agrology in that province. We presented to the ADM a document that contained previously created papers that had been prepared by OIA to support right to practise legislation. Also included, were excerpts from the legislation of other provincial Institutes of Agrologists which defined the practise of Agrology, who is entitled to practise Agrology in that province and how offences of those not entitled to practise are handled. We tried to impress on him that Ontario is now behind the other provinces as they have moved forward to address the changing face of the profession of Agrology. And, we felt it was the right time for the Government of Ontario to show leadership in this area.

Dave Antle indicated that with an election set for October 2011, any action by the Ministry and the Government on this matter would not be a priority. He did indicate that he would circulate our document to other Ministry officials and to other related Ministries. Both Brian and I told him that OIA would be very willing to cooperate in any way to start the dialogue on resolving this issue that has been a longstanding problem for this Institute.

The ADM did make one comment that I want to respond to in the next couple of paragraphs. He asked us how has agriculture changed over the 50 years since our Act was passed that would warrant a new piece of legislation. I think those of us who have been long-serving Agrologists could provide a very detailed answer. There are no shortages of examples how farming in Canada has changed and how agriculture is now perceived. Fifty years ago certain terms or words did not exist let alone being even thought of. These include genetically modified organisms, herbicide resistance, biofuels, zero tillage, robotic milking machines, BSE, animal rights, impact of livestock on climate change, growth hormones, 'certified' organic, 'natural' foods, locavores, WTO agricultural agreements, the carbon footprint of agriculture, factory farms and so the list goes on.

The face of agriculture has undergone so many changes that the need for Agrologists is even more warranted today than it was 50 years ago. Both the farming community and general public need to be assured that there are qualified professionals who are working for their best interests. They need to know that their food is safe, it's nutritious, the impact of agriculture on the environment is minimized, and that farming and food production is sustainable. We need Agrologists to play these vital roles. And, we need the legislation that

will allow us to do this the right way. OK, so much for the soap box rant. I'll stop now but I do hope that you agree with me.

On other notes, Registrar Kingsmill and I are off to Truro, Nova Scotia November 3-5 to meet with the Registrars/Executive Directors and Presidents of the other Institutes and Agrologists. We have a series of meetings planned to continue the dialogue of creating a national voice for the profession of agrology. We'll report back on how things went in the next POST.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce Hobin, M.Sc., P.Ag.
President

OIA AT CANADA'S OUTDOOR FARM SHOW

On September 14th, the first day of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock, OIA staff once again arranged a special networking and professional development opportunity for members. Following an excellent breakfast served by the Lions Club we heard a presentation by Mr. Clare Riepma. Clare outlined technological innovation within the sustainable energy sector and spoke at length about his experience in planning, designing and constructing biogas solutions for farms and industries throughout Canada. Following his presentation we were provided with a VIP tour of the on-site anaerobic digester. Those attending learned about new processes and new technology involving anaerobic digestion and the production of energy from manure and waste products.



It was good to meet the many OIA members that dropped by to say hello at our exhibit in the Healthy Living Expo. The continuous comments on how the OIA is on the right track were appreciated. Our exhibit provided an excellent opportunity to meet farmers and promote the exceptional value received when Professional and Technical Agrologists are utilized. Ontario's weak legislation governing the competency of agrology practitioners was clearly an area of concern with the public. The demand for consumer protection and qualification-based agrology practitioners in Ontario, on par with most other provinces in Canada, will be increasingly difficult for the

province of Ontario to ignore as we approach a provincial election a year from now.

MENTORSHIP

Most of us can think of at least more than one person in our lives who served as an adviser, teacher or coach. The purpose of mentoring has long been held within the profession of Agrology. Without the guidance and coaching of an experienced professional the next generation of qualified professional practitioners is lacking. A key element of the mentoring relationship is to provide support and guidance to Articling Agrologists that expand networks of contact within the profession.

Mentorship builds interest in the OIA and enhances OIA membership, and contributes to an increased value of qualified professionals and the profession within Canada (vital more than ever given labour mobility legislation and the need to be a licensed agrology practitioner to work in most Canadian provinces). For the A.Ag. he/she receives career development, personal support, as well as reinforced commitment to ethical practice and understanding of the importance of life long learning. Plus they are exposed to new networks.

Articling Agrologists within each scope of practice are in need of your guidance. To learn more about becoming a mentor please contact Pat Joannie, OIA's Project Manager, at 1-866-339-7619 x-231.

CALL FOR OIA BOARD NOMINATIONS

Time is here for all OIA members to begin to think about standing for election to the OIA Board of Directors. As an alternative, if the Branches choose to nominate an individual to serve on Provincial Council (OIA Board) please forward the name of this individual to my attention. All nominations need a seconder and the acceptance of the individual to be nominated. To be an OIA Board member is to be a champion and be willing to implement a vision for the OIA to move forward. You must serve to represent the collective interest of the OIA membership in providing direction and guidance in a manner that supports the protection of the public interest; to promote and advance the interests of the Institute and the professional designation; to maintain standards of transparency and fairness with staff and OIA members; as well as to provide direction that supports the long-term sustainability of the OIA and represents the interests of the public served by licensed professionals. Not all Board meetings or committee obligations require travel to Guelph but participation is a key requirement. For a complete job description please contact the Registrar.

As approved at the April 2010 AGM the process for election to the Board will change to electronic voting in February 2011 versus the voting being held at the Annual General Meeting. As a result, the deadline for nominations, complete with a seconder, will be January 31st, 2011.

MIKE JENKINSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

As Members are aware, the OIA established a \$1,000 annual scholarship to honour Mike Jenkinson (OAC BSA 1963) who demonstrated and promoted professionalism in agriculture through his work and involvement in OIA. Michelle Arseneault has been named the first recipient of the \$1,000 academic scholarship. Congratulations Michelle on behalf of all OIA members and the OIA Board of Directors.

CREATING VALUE FOR OIA MEMBERS

Members should be aware that we continue to offer discounted auto and home insurance premiums through RBC. We also have a new agreement for a professional errors and omissions liability insurance program through HUB International Insurance. Please visit the OIA's new web site for more information.

WORLD CONGRESS OF AGROLOGISTS COMING TO CANADA

It was exciting news to hear that Canada was selected as host of the next World Congress of Agrologists. The World Congress takes place every four years and Quebec City will be host city of this prestigious event in September 2012. The Congress pertains mainly to professional agrologists. Although the content might have scientific undertones, it is not a scientific congress, but a professional one.



All provincial institutes of agrologists are collaborating in the preparation of the Congress with The Asociación Mundial de Ingenieros Agrónomos/World Agronomists Association (AMIA). However, the Ordre des agronomes du Quebec (OAQ) has assumed the leadership of the organization committee.

Speakers and delegates will be attending from all over the world. Translation services will be available in French, Spanish and English. At this point in time a preliminary program has been developed. The OAQ welcomes any professional agrologists who are interested in speaking on the different topics in agriculture. If you are interested in speaking please contact: Jean-Paul Laforest, agr., Ph.D., Dean, Faculté des sciences de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation, Université Laval, through Laval's website at: <http://www.fsaa.ulaval.ca>.

OTTAWA BRANCH MEETING



At a recent Ottawa-St. Lawrence OIA Branch event, Past OIA President and current OSL Branch President, Don Good, P.Ag., provides some of the finer points when reviewing a horse racing program.

IN MEMORIAM

On August 4th George "Alan" Fisher lost a courageous battle with cancer in his 81st year. Alan graduated from the University of Guelph in 1952, and worked for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture for 35 years. He worked as an economist and yet he managed to find time to run the farm. Alan was also active in his community as most professionals are know for, having volunteered for Meals on Wheels, the Cancer Society as a volunteer driver and canvasser, was an inaugural member of the Kent County Agriculture Hall of Fame, was a board member of the Morpeth Cemetery and was an elder at the Morpeth United Church. Alan's application to the OIA goes back to October 1960 and at the time of his passing he was an OIA member in good standing. Our condolences are extended to Alan's family and his many friends.

We also report the passing of 93-year-old horticulturist Dr. Emil Andersen. Known as a pioneer, professor, researcher, lecturer, mentor, traveler, volunteer and gardener, Emil won the Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA) resident-of-the-year award this past March. He was recognized not only for his Millennium Forest Project and his involvement with The Orchards Retirement Residence, but for lifetime achievements as well. His work in his mother's garden put Emil on the path to becoming a distinguished horticulturist. His knowledge and expertise eventually caught the attention of the Ontario Horticultural Research Institute in Vineland, where he was offered the position of chief research scientist in charge of breeding for a wide range of vegetables and fruit trees. Emil joined the OIA in July 1967 and remained a frequent participant in Niagara Branch meetings. Our condolences go out to his family and colleagues.

Members of the Ottawa-St. Lawrence Branch are very saddened at the passing of Marsha King, P.Ag., at the age of 56. A very active long time OIA member and former Branch Executive member Marsha will be remembered for her kind heart and sense of humour. It is difficult to express sadness at the passing of a friend but the following comment on Marsha's passing may best describe what her family, colleagues and friends are feeling at this difficult time. "You left your mark. You will live on through the legacy of your good deeds. Sleep tight dear Marsha. You will be missed."