The 2012-2013 academic year is now over. As I sit at my desk, looking out my office window, I see a partly cloudy sky with a forecast of thunderstorms for the second half of the week. However, I know they won’t be of the magnitude that racked many of the mid-western states in May. Images of the storm damage and flooding are difficult to view because of the human toll and the long road ahead for recovery. I’m sure some horticultural business owners — greenhouses, garden centers, landscaping firms, fruit and vegetable producers, and many others — may have lost their homes, their businesses and livelihoods, or perhaps, both.

At times like this I encourage our chapters and members to identify local service learning projects to help communities. We may not be able to help communities devastated by the May storms, today. As horticulturists, we can be a valuable part of our communities. While it may seem trivial in the face of the mid-west devastation, events like these remind each of us that we are members of a larger community and are capable of serving those in need. Projects may be elaborate and take time and effort to plan and implement or they may be as simple as a day of service helping a local school with spring clean-up. If any chapters do volunteer work throughout the year, feel free to share photos and information. Send news stories about members and chapters to Karen Panter to share in future issues of the Lotus Leaflet.

On another note, come and celebrate our 90th anniversary during the annual business meeting for PAX National (Wednesday, July 24, 2013 from noon until 1:30 P.M.) at the annual conference of the American Society of Horticultural Science, J W Marriott Desert Springs Resort and Spa, Palm Desert, Calif.

Registration for the lunch is required. An agenda is included in this issue. Besides standard committee reports, findings from discussion with the attorney about incorporation and establishing not-for-profit status for PAX National and its chapters (additional information will be distributed before the meeting via email) and exploring a closer relationship with ASHS will be discussed. New business includes a proposal to change the composition of the Fellows Committee (included with the agenda) and initiate a strategic planning process.

I look forward to our annual meeting and seeing the entries to the annual photography contest.

With warmest regards,

Mary Lewnes Albrecht, PhD, PAX National President, Zeta 166
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