Letter From Your President – September 2014

As we change leadership from my friend and colleague Mary Lewnes Albrecht to me, I’m reminded of the changing seasons. Up here at 7,200 feet we’ve already experienced a freeze and the foliage of our deciduous trees and shrubs has started changing color. Winters are long here and once the snows start, we won’t see much of the ground again until April.

Changing seasons and leadership is always somewhat bittersweet, especially for organizations like Pi Alpha Xi where leadership serves two-year terms. Those of us on the PAX Board of Directors grew accustomed to Mary’s amazingly capable and organized leadership style. I can only hope to be half as effective as she was in the role of President. The flip side to that, abaxial side if you will, is I can put the skills she taught me to very good use!

Many of you know me, but many don’t. In a nutshell, my title is Horticulture Specialist at the University of Wyoming. My position at the UW is half extension (greenhouse and high tunnel crop production in particular, horticultural crop production in general), 25% teaching (three courses), and the remainder research. Though I’ve been a Pi Alpha Xi member for years (Chi 66, Colorado State University, 1978), we still don’t have a chapter at UW, a subject of some consternation to many of you.

Our goals for the next couple of years are fairly simple. The first is to ensure membership on our standing committees is stable and functional. I’ve asked many of you to help out on several committees needing representatives. Also, we happily have the potential for at least two new chapters and will be working with those advisors to help turn this goal into reality. Our largest goal, however, is to continue our presence with our current chapters and to ensure we are serving our best and brightest horticulture students to the best of our collective ability.

Should questions or concerns arise please don’t hesitate to contact me, or any of us on the Board of Directors: Vice President Stephanie Burnett, Secretary/Treasurer Tina Cade, Immediate Past President Mary Lewnes Albrecht, and Past President John Peterson.

Best wishes to all in the new academic year!

Karen Panter
Pi Alpha Xi President
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