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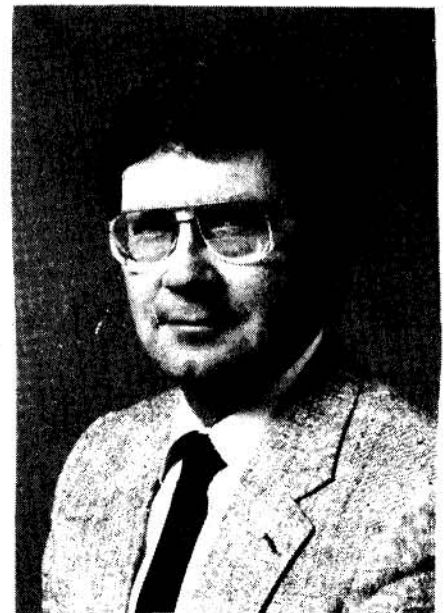
Aurora Sporealis



David W. French
November 10, 1921 - January 11, 2000



Carl J. Eide
August 20, 1904 - April 9, 2000



Richard A. Meronuck
August 1, 1941 - March 18, 2000

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Aurora Sporealis is mailed annually to former and current faculty, staff, graduate students and old timers who worked in the Department of Plant Pathology. Items for the next volume can be sent to:

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FEATURE ARTICLES

In this volume of the *Aurora Sporealis* we feature articles on three exceptional plant pathologists who passed away this year. The cover story is dedicated to Drs. Carl Eide, David French and Richard Meronuck. They will be sadly missed by their families, colleagues and friends.

Check out the Old Timer News! We received a number of letters and E-mails from graduates and old timers. Please write to us with your news for the next issue of the *Aurora Sporealis*.

The department has had an outstanding year in terms of faculty hiring, student recruitment, and participation in local, national and international events. Read about these happenings in the Departmental News section. Finally, we ask for nominations for the E.C. Stakman Award to be given in 2001 (see enclosed nomination form). Also enclosed is information on the Department of Plant Pathology Endowments.

The Department is in the process of establishing an Endowed Chair in Urban Tree Health. Please join the Department of Plant Pathology in establishing this new position to protect the health of our urban trees.

We sincerely appreciate any gifts you can make to these funds and thank you for your past support and encouragement.

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

Dear Friends of the Department:

Greetings from Minnesota!! It's *Aurora Sporealis* time. I look forward to sharing Department news with you and the changes that have occurred over the past year. Additionally, I invite you to read the other topics in the *Aurora* to learn more of faculty, student and department activities.

As you may know, the University of Minnesota had been on the quarter system for many years. However, last year the entire University converted to semesters. Although there were a few fairly major glitches, mainly with student registration, most of the conversion went quite smoothly. The faculty spent a great deal of time revising courses and preparing for the conversion. Actually, the switch to semesters along with revision of courses and majors provided an opportunity for the department to bring plant pathology to additional undergraduate students, as some of our course offerings are now a requirement in several undergraduate majors. Thus, we now have the opportunity to introduce more students to the science of Plant Pathology than ever before.

Let me brief you on what has happened in the department this past year as well as some of our plans for the future. First, I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Brian Steffenson has accepted the Lieberman-Okinow Endowed Chair in Cereal Disease Resistance. Brian will assume his new position November 27, 2000. Brian's primary focus will be unlocking the genetic potential of disease resistance from wild relatives of small grains through cooperative research with the Institute for Cereal Crop Improvement at Tel Aviv University and the Lieberman Germplasm Bank. Additionally, Brian will be involved in our graduate teaching program. We are pleased and excited to have Brian in the department.

Dr. Hala Toubia-Rahme joined the department October 2, 2000. This position is located at the Northwest Research & Outreach Center, Crookston. Hala received her Ph.D. from Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique de Toulouse, France. She then accepted a position as consultant in the Barley Pathology in Germplasm Program at ICARDA and then joined Brian's Steffenson's group as a postdoc in 1998. Hala's responsibilities include teaching and extension. Her extension responsibilities focus on developing educational programs via applied research on diseases of small grain. She will also teach an introductory Plant Pathology course at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. Hala's expertise, in the area of small grain diseases is a welcomed addition to the small grains initiative working

group as we continue our quest to effectively manage Fusarium head blight and other diseases of small grain.

As you know, Dr. Ward Stienstra, soybean extension pathologist, retired July 1, 1999. I am pleased to announce that Dr. Dean Reynolds has now filled this position and will be joining the department October 2, 2000. Dean recently completed his Ph.D. at Iowa State University where he researched the soybean cyst nematode. Dean's responsibility will include development of comprehensive educational programs on soybean diseases and their management.

This past summer I had the opportunity to visit China for 3 weeks. The purpose of the trip was to further develop faculty and student exchanges with Agricultural University of Hebei and to seek potential areas of collaboration between our faculty and faculty at Hebei. A similar objective was explored with Southwest Agriculture University at Chungqing and the Chongqing Agricultural Bureau. Future graduate student training opportunities for Chinese students would mirror the successful model that the University of Minnesota had in place with Morocco for many years. This model would require the students to take their courses in the department here at the University of Minnesota and conduct their research in China on a disease that has significant impact on a crop that is important to China's agriculture.

We have embarked on another important mission and that is the establishment of an endowment in the area of Urban Tree Health. Healthy trees are an asset to every community. To keep trees healthy and to maintain our urban tree heritage, we need to continue our research in this area. This endowed chair would provide an opportunity for the University to hire a scientist to focus research attention on the complex disease situations that continue to devastate our urban forests. To accomplish our goal, we need your help and support to raise the funds needed for this Endowed Chair in Urban Tree health. Please join the Department in establishing this new position to protect the health of our urban trees.

To the relief of many, Fusarium head blight (FHB) on wheat and barley was less severe this growing season in the Red River Valley. Yields were up, but protein down a little. There was no shortage of inoculum however; environmental conditions were less favorable for disease establishment and development. The elevated mood of the growers is evident and it's good to see a smile on their faces. With the scab epidemics in the past, there has not been much to smile about; it's good to have a break.

