

Aurora Sporealis

December 1993



Clyde M. Christensen

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University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108**

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

Dear Friends:

Another year has passed and I am pleased to state that the Department of Plant Pathology at Minnesota is doing well. Although we have taken some financial setbacks like most other major universities, our faculty, staff, and students, have risen to the challenge. We are an excellent department and we take our responsibility to serve the citizens of the State seriously.

I believe we will need to work somewhat differently than we have in the past. Traditional sources of funding for the University are shrinking steadily. A larger portion of our research financial support now comes from State agencies such as the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute, and from commodity groups. These funding sources point to the need for developing partnerships with producers, private businesses, State agencies, and faculty from other disciplines. This type of support also calls for an interdisciplinary focus on solving problems in agriculture which is very positive.

We have again had some changes in our faculty. Dr. Roy Wilcoxson retired after an extremely productive and successful career. Roy and Iva have been spending the last year in the Chicago area working for the Mormon Church and are due to return back to the Twin Cities in September where they will continue to make their home. At the 1993 annual meeting of the American Phytopathological Society, Roy was elected a Fellow of APS. Dr. Elwin Stewart has left the Department to become Head of the Department of Plant Pathology at Pennsylvania State University. Elwin's contributions as a teacher and researcher in mycology will not be easily replaced. Both Roy and Elwin have left their mark on the Department and we thank them for their many positive contributions.

We have been given permission to hire a Small Grains Pathologist to refill the Wilcoxson position. We are currently in the middle of that search process. The deadline for applications was December 1, 1993. The devastating Head Blight (scab) epidemic on wheat and barley has provided further evidence of the importance of refilling this position in the Department.

An extremely important event in the last year was the revision of our curriculum in the Department. One of the primary reasons for the curriculum revision had to do with the need to become more involved at the undergraduate level than we have in the past. We want to provide disease management information and education to a broader segment of our population than has been done in the past. As a discipline, we have not been aggressive enough in promoting plant pathology to the general public, especially the urban sector. We need to have more opportunities to explain how plant pathologists contribute to society. In addition to traditional students, we need to be more aware of the site-bound, non-traditional students who live throughout Minnesota and work full time and are unable to come to the Twin Cities Campus. I believe we are now on the verge of overcoming some of these distance delivery barriers with the development of such technology as two-way interactive television. The new curriculum that was established includes several courses that should be more attractive to both traditional and non-traditional students.

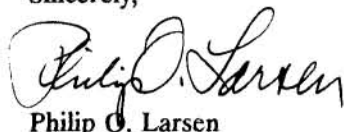
The quality of our graduate student population continues to be excellent. They are collectively a highly motivated, energetic group that enrich the Department through their activities and enthusiasm. In September, they organized a symposium on managing plant disease in a sustainable agriculture. This symposium was the fifth in a series of graduate student-coordinated symposia that the Department has sponsored.

We regret to report that Dr. and Mrs. Clyde Christensen passed away October 11, 1993. The contributions of Dr. Christensen to the Department and to the University in teaching and research resulted in his being awarded the Regents' Professorship, the highest award that can be bestowed upon a faculty member at our University. He will be remembered for his significant contributions to society in the areas of grain storage pathology, forest pathology, and mycology. In accordance with the wishes

of their family, contributions to the Department in memory of Clyde and Katie Christensen will be used to purchase new publications for the Plant Pathology Library.

Let me finish this letter by again telling you how much we appreciate the moral and financial support of all of our alumni and friends. I am truly humbled whenever I speak to alumni of this Department and learn of their loyalty for this institution. It encourages all of us in the Department to do the very best we can to provide quality education, research, and Extension programs for those we serve. We are extremely grateful for your continued support. As always, I invite each of you to come and visit the Department whenever you can. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading the following pages of this year's *Aurora Sporealis*. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of Dr. Richard Meronuck, the office staff, and all who contributed to writing and assembling the 1993 edition.

Sincerely,



Philip G. Larsen

Dear Friends:

We lost a good friend and colleague this summer with the passing of Clyde Christensen. Clyde was well known in teaching, and research in mycology, forest pathology, grain storage pathology and mycotoxicology. I remember him as my advisor when he would show me all the grain storage fungi once, and expect me to remember them. He wanted good science and he wanted the "good science" to be done quickly. When he was writing, one would find his office door closed and hear his typewriter. Sometimes I found it necessary to talk to him during these writing sessions. If I knocked on his door he would fling the door open so quickly that it would scare me to death! Then he would look at me sternly and ask me what was on my so called mind. He always wanted to know what was on his students mind and I found that he respected those ideas.

I had the opportunity to work with Clyde for a few years after his retirement. During this time he conducted a series of experiments which significantly contributed to my extension programs and we also wrote a book together. It was good having him work in this capacity as we continued to satisfy our curiosity about things we always wondered about.

Clyde was a prolific writer he has about 222 publications to his credit. I always found his writings to be both informative and

entertaining. One remembers his writings after reading them.

I will miss Clyde, his friendship, humor and counsel.

Sincerely



Richard A. Meronuck
Editor

Memorial Fund for Clyde and Katherine Christensen

Clyde Christensen, Regents' Professor, had a long distinguished career at the University of Minnesota. His career represents scholarship of the highest standards. Katie supported these efforts to her fullest, which Clyde always acknowledged. In memory of Clyde and his scholarly pursuits, the above memorial fund is established. The purpose of the fund is the acquisition of scholarly journals and books specifically for the Plant Pathology Library in the College of Agriculture.

All contributions to this fund should be sent to:

University of Minnesota Foundation
Attn: Sue Shepard
201 Coffey Hall
1420 Eckles Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

