

◆ Highlights of the 49th Annual Meeting

Devora Krischer 2006 Program Chair

With a theme of “Working Toward a Sustainable, Equitable World”, the 2006 annual meeting truly represented a global outlook. Speakers came to Tampa from five continents, and the world of the sciences was better represented than ever.

First on the agenda was a last-minute session that addressed the recent upheavals at the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (CMAJ). Claire Kendall, former CMAJ associate editor, and her colleague, former editorial fellow and Associate Editor Sally Murray, gave their take on how the episode affected editorial independence. CSE President Richard Horton moderated a lively discussion on how to tighten editorial guidelines to avoid future problems.

Then world-renowned scientist E O Wilson gave the keynote address on his current passions, conservation and biodiversity. His manner was conversational, charming, and laced with personal anecdotes (“But I digress . . .”). Using vividly illustrated slides, he lucidly explained how biodiversity is declining, from large trees and mammals down to the billions of microbes in a cubic inch of soil. Afterward,

Wilson inscribed copies of his just-published book, *Nature Revealed: Selected Writings, 1949–2006*.

The plenary speakers gave us unique perspectives on how the biologic and physical science can literally change the world. On Monday morning, Gary Toenniessen described how bioengineered rice is tailored to fit even microclimates in very poor areas. He emphasized the importance of biodiversity, describing crossing the best domestic rice with increasingly rare wild species from China. The result was “super rice” with amazingly high yields in dry, normal, and very wet (even submerged!) conditions.

On Tuesday, Frank Tugwell described how Winrock International is improving life and creating viable economies around the world. With relatively modest investments and simple technologies that can often be manufactured locally, the foundation establishes self-sustaining businesses that provide electricity to a remote island and allow rural women to grow crops during the dry season.

The retreat organized by the Task Force on Science Journals, Poverty, and Human Development was a centerpiece of the meeting. Chair Paul Bozuwa and task force



Wilson signing copies of his book.

members assembled a stellar group of speakers on concrete efforts that are being made—and new ones that are being formed—to help scientists, researchers, and journal editors in the developing world. Speakers addressed ways to improve access to scientific literature, build research capacity, and assist journal staff to enhance their skills and physical facilities. In addition, two African editors presented their own perspectives.

Other well-attended and SRO events included the Ethics Clinic, the session on influential women in science and scientific publication, and several Web-related and new technology sessions.

Fascinating panels on finding a recycled-paper stock

for your journal, technologic advances to alleviate poverty, fundamentals for governing-board members, and how veterinary medicine affects global health—and others—rounded out the program. For further coverage of the annual-meeting sessions, please see the reports in this issue of *Science Editor* and forthcoming issues.

This exciting meeting would not have been possible without the efforts of a large and dedicated Program Committee. Their ideas and connections with extraordinary speakers made this conference truly memorable. Many thanks to all who helped plan and to everyone who attended!