

NORTH AMERICAN SECTION

# **NAS/IUSSI NEWSLETTER December 31, 2010**



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## **NAS/IUSSI Officers**

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President: John Wenzel  
President-elect: Terry McGlynn  
Past President: Blaine Cole

Secretary-Treasurer: Colin Brent  
Web Master: Colin Brent  
Archivist: Chris Starr

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Dear NAS members:

I'm sorry to say that this is the end. My expiration date has been reached and like over-ripened fruit, it is time for me to be thrown out and replaced by someone less bruised and moldy (I can only assume this since I have never seen the incoming officer undressed, but unlike me they don't smell of decay). I'll continue working on the webpage and helping out where I can, but the mantle of responsibility is no longer mine. Before I go I want to thank all of you for making this position fun and fulfilling. I especially want to thank Stan Schneider who preceded me and made the early days comprehensible. Ed Vargo, Sanford Porter, Zach Huang and Mike Haverty also sustained my sanity along the way. The words of encouragement I received from so many of you were also greatly appreciated (although I would have preferred money).

We held our annual business meeting on December 14 in conjunction with the ESA meeting in San Diego. No cheerleaders this time, although there was a gymnastics competition at a nearby facility that gave me flashbacks to last year's meeting. In a room that was two sizes too small (thanks ESA organizers!), we convened for an informative hour, discussing an array of topics. One of the first items on the agenda was the treasurer's report, which you will find below. In summary, the IUSSI-NAS coffers are running low (most of our funds were directed towards student travel grants to the conference in Copenhagen and the Eickwort Award) and we will need to recuperate for the next couple of years. To further this remunerative process, we will keep our dues at their current level for at least the next year. The membership form is found at the end of this newsletter. The capitation fees normally paid to the Union will be eliminated due to the new agreement with Birkhauser, but retention of these fees will help us to rebuild faster in preparation for the upcoming breakaway meeting in 2012. Revised rates will be discussed at our next business meeting. In contrast to our regular funds, the value of the stock in the Nutting fund has risen tremendously.

After the treasurer's report, the election results were announced. Starting January 1, your new Secretary/Treasurer (sniffle) will be Jay Evans ([iussi.nas@gmail.com](mailto:iussi.nas@gmail.com)), and Theresa Pitts-Singer ([theresa.pitts-singer@ars.usda.gov](mailto:theresa.pitts-singer@ars.usda.gov)) will become the new President-Elect. Terry McGlynn ([terry.mcglynn@gmail.com](mailto:terry.mcglynn@gmail.com)) will step into the shoes of John Wenzel to become the new president. At this point I would like to thank Terry (and his mother-in-law) for throwing a delightful inaugural party

subsequent to our business meeting. Snacks, adult beverages, and great conversation saw us late into the night.

Once the election results were announced, President Wenzel opened a discussion on the election process. It has been pointed out on previous occasions that in an election there is always a 'loser' who has been rejected by a majority of their peers. While this year's *non-winners*, Andy Suarez and Amy Toth, were quite graceful in their defeat, some *losers* grow a bit disenchanted with the society and greatly reduce their participation. We hold elections every year and this chews through candidates quickly. While a number of variant electoral processes were discussed during our meeting, two basic approaches were proposed to reduce the rate of rejection. One was to form a rotating committee that was responsible for deciding who would hold office with no actual election. The other was to reduce the frequency of elections by coupling the different officer positions (i.e. the secretary/treasurer would become the next president, serving two years in each post). The latter option would have the added advantage of ensuring that there is a smooth transfer of responsibilities and institutional knowledge after an election. The officers welcome your input on this topic and we hope to put any changes to a vote at some point prior to the next election.

The winner of the Eickwort Student Award for 2010 was also announced. Barrett Klein is the recipient. Andy Suarez, part of the deciding committee, read the award statement which is found below. Barrett was unable to be present for the meeting and the award was accepted on his behalf by Ulrich Mueller. Unfortunately, we were unable to distribute a Nutting Research Grant this year. Because there was only a single application, it was decided that the call for applications should be reissued. Revised application information for the Nutting Grant is below. Please note that the grant is now open to both graduate students and postdocs studying termite biology, and that the new deadline is March 15.

Olav Rueppell provided us with the final component of the meeting agenda. He gave a slide presentation supporting a bid to host the upcoming breakaway meeting for our section in 2012. He has proposed holding it in North Carolina at a well-appointed meeting center relatively close to Greensboro that can provide room and board at a reasonable cost. He has also received a commitment from the many other social insect researchers in the state to help with organizing the meeting. If anyone would like to propose an alternate meeting location, please let your officers know as soon as possible to receive full consideration.

My final bit of business is to again call your attention to the membership renewal form. Please remit payment by March 15, ensuring that the checks are in US dollars. For the increasing number of you who are puzzled why we don't use Paypal or credit cards, let me just say that the cost of using those financial institutions is quite prohibitive. We are a tiny operation and our money is spent better on providing services to our members. Sorry for the inconvenience.

That's it for me. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Colin Brent

## **2010 TREASURER'S REPORT: presented by Colin Brent**

### **INFLOWS**

Membership Dues	\$3950.50
Donations	785.00

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<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>\$4744.50</b>
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### **OUTFLOWS**

IUSSI International (Capitation fees)	1775.00
Support for Student Travel	6000.00
Eickwort Award	1000.00

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<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>\$8775.00</b>
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Net Income/Loss	-\$4039.50
Balance Forward	\$6446.95

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<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$1802.45</b>
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### **2009 Memberships**

### **2010 Memberships**

Total Regular Members:	114	Total Regular Members:	139	+22%
Total Student Members:	35	Total Student Members:	85	+143%
Household Members:	2	Household Members:	7	+250%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>+53%</b>

### **Nutting Award Fund**

Start Value (Nov 31, 2009)	\$19,901.67
Contributions	\$11,527.00
End Value (Nov 31, 2009)	\$37,320.76

Net Value Change	<b>+88%</b>
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## **George C. Eickwort Student Research Award**

This award is given in memory of George Eickwort and is designed to recognize exceptional research and scholarly activity by students in the field of social insect biology. The award consists of a certificate, an honorarium, and a one-year subscription to *Insectes Sociaux*. This year's Selection Committee consisted of Phil Starks, Andy Suarez, Heather Mattila and myself (Kenna MacKenzie). Many thanks to the other members for their assistance this year – it was a very difficult decision.

### **General Statement**

This year the nominees for Eickwort Student Award were outstanding, and it was very difficult to narrow the field to just one individual. While we finally come up with the top two – we agreed that either individual was deserving of the award - we really had to work to come up with just one name. If it were allowed, we would have given two awards this year – it was just that close between the two top nominees. Thus, we would like to recognize a runner-up. Seth Ament, PhD (2010) in Neuroscience from the University of Illinois studied the relationship between nutrition and social behavior at the molecular level in honey bees in Gene Robinson's laboratory. He used a broad set of techniques and perspectives including field behavior, physiology, genomics, proteomics, bioinformatics, cis regulatory analysis and systems biology to address the problem, and was able to demonstrate the role of insulin in the timing of behavioral maturation. More recently Seth has been examining gene expression profiles in bees of different behavioral states. His accomplishments are many and as one of his references put it "Seth is the complete package. He is an extremely talented young scientist who has all the skills, talents and drive needed for success and possibly, stardom." Our congratulations, Seth.

The North American Section of the International Union for the Study of Social Insects is proud to announce that **Barrett Klein, University of Texas** was selected as the recipient of the **2010 Eickwort Student Award**. Barrett is not only a gifted scholar, but also an exceptional teacher, valued contributor to science outreach and an exceptionally creative artist with a number of exhibits at galleries. After a ten year career in scientific outreach producing scientific documentaries, illustrating scientific objects and preparing exhibits at the American Museum of Natural History, Barrett began his graduate studies in 2000 concentrating on the role of sleep in social insects. Speaking of Barrett, one of his references stated "Barrett stood out as a leader and an inspiration in a cohort of outstanding graduate students" during his time at the University of Texas.

**Barrett Klein** was a student of Larry Gilbert and Ulrich Mueller at the University of Texas in Austin. For his graduate research, Barrett focused on the study of sleep in social insects examining both *Polistes* wasps and honey bees. This research is the first to explore the interaction between sleep, learning capacity and memory consolidation in a social insect. Carrying out this research was a challenge as Barrett had to secure all his own funding and find a research location as the University of Texas was not

equipped for honey bee work. Barrett worked in Tom Seeley's laboratory at Cornell University and the BEEgroup at Universitat Wurzburg, Germany led by Jurgen Tautz. The results of this research are ground-breaking, demonstrating among other things that sleep-deprivation in honey bees impairs precise communication. Indeed, as a graduate student, Barrett was already recognized as an international figure in the field of insect sleep! Barrett has received numerous awards including an NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant, a Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Fellowship in 2008 (a highly competitive fellowship to carry research in Germany), and the Mitchell Award for Excellence in Graduate Research at UT-Austin, and is a sought out speaker on many topics. One of his references described Barrett as "...an unusually gifted, congenial and altruistic scholar, someone who truly lives and breathes the Eickwortian enthusiasm for research and teaching of insect behavior and morphology". The Award Committee agrees and is very pleased to announce that Barrett Klein is the recipient of the 2010 Eickwort Student Award.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**William L. and Ruth D. Nutting Research Grant**  
**Due March 15, 2011**

**Purpose:** To support research by graduate students and post doctoral fellows in the field of basic termite biology. Projects with an applied slant may be considered if the primary question is related to basic biology. The William L. and Ruth D. Nutting Award is named in honor of the late Bill Nutting and his ever-supportive wife Ruth. Bill was an outstanding termite biologist who made major contributions to termite biology, both through his own research and mentoring of students.

**Nature:** For 2011, the recipient will receive a research grant of up to \$2,500. The recipient of the award will be announced by April 15, 2011. Please note that this grant is to be given to an individual researcher and no overhead will be allowed.

**Eligibility:** Any graduate student or post doc who is a member of NAS/IUSSI conducting research in the termite biology is eligible. Contact the Secretary/Treasurer ([iussi.nas@gmail.com](mailto:iussi.nas@gmail.com)) for membership information.

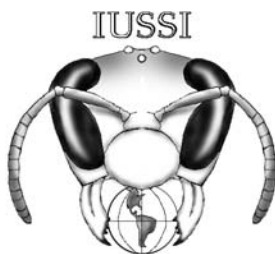
**Applications:** Proposals are due March 15, 2011. Late proposals will not be considered. They should be sent in PDF format to the Chair of the NAS/IUSSI Awards Committee ([kenna.mackenzie@agr.gc.ca](mailto:kenna.mackenzie@agr.gc.ca)) in the format described below. Parts 1-4 combined must be no longer than four single spaced pages with a 12 pt font. Questions should be directed to the Chair of the Nutting Research Grant Selection Committee ([mhaverty@berkeley.edu](mailto:mhaverty@berkeley.edu)).

- 1) TITLE.
- 2) SIGNIFICANCE. Applicants should include the novel aspects of the proposed research, expected contribution(s) to theory and applied (if applicable) aspects of termite biology, and relation to previous work. Proposals should include a clearly stated hypothesis and predictions, and the methods planned to test these. Taxonomic projects should also involve clear questions, hypotheses, and predicted evidence, and applicants for this type of project must demonstrate some understanding of taxonomic theory and methodology, especially molecular techniques. Similarly, applicants for survey projects must clearly identify the biological problems to be solved. Projects that merely involve "finding out what is there" (important as that may be) will not be funded.
- 3) RESEARCH PLAN. Include the particular species to be studied, methods, logistics, and an approximate timetable. Provide sufficient information to demonstrate the feasibility of the project.
- 4) CITATIONS. Provide these in the format used by the Entomological Society of America.
- 5) BUDGET. Include projected costs and justification of items where appropriate. State if any other supporting funds are available (this can impact feasibility).
- 6) CURRICULUM VITAE. The present position or years of graduate school, education, and publications must be included.

7) LETTER OF SUPPORT. This is to be written by the applicant's advisor to ensure that basic resources needed for the research will be available.

A report will be required from the successful applicant. The preference will be for an oral report (10-15 min) at the next annual meeting of the IUSSI/NAS. If the awardee is not able to attend this meeting, a written report (1 page) must be submitted for publication in the society newsletter.

**Nutting Award Committee:** Kenna MacKenzie is the chair of the IUSSI/NAS Awards Committee. Michael Haverty will chair the Nutting Research Grant Committee. The Nutting Research Grant Selection Committee shall consist of five members, including Michael Haverty, Colin Brent, Ruth Nutting, and two other members selected by the chair of the Nutting Award Committee.



NORTH AMERICAN SECTION

**MEMBERSHIP FORM 2011**

**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL INSECTS  
NORTH AMERICAN SECTION**

**Dues must be received by March 15**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS ADDRESS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

HOMEPAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE **CIRCLE** YOUR CHOICE BELOW

Regular Member: \$22.50    Student Member: \$9.00    Household Member: \$5.00

Students – have your advisor or chair certify your status below

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Advisor's signature, printed name, & Title

Donations (for Eickwort Award; Nutting Award; etc.):

Intended Use: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable (in US funds) to NAS/IUSSI. Please send it and this form to:

**Jay Evans  
105 Northway Rd.  
Greenbelt, MD 20770**

If you have any questions, please contact Jay at [iussi.nas@gmail.com](mailto:iussi.nas@gmail.com)  
For subscriptions to *Insectes Sociaux*, please contact [petra.stromberger@birkhauser.ch](mailto:petra.stromberger@birkhauser.ch)