

Message from Your Editor

We are in a time of transition, on our planet and in our organization. We are facing a frighteningly destabilizing climate, along with (and due in part to) population pressure never before seen in human history. Movement of invasive exotic organisms is destroying natural ecosystems. Weapons development and distribution has reached an alarming level. Economic crises and misdirected religious zeal are making Earth a very dangerous place. Our growing ability to modify our environment genetically, chemically and physically is outpacing our concomitant knowledge of the effects of our actions, reasonable caution, and the buffering capacity of our planet.

In another irreversible transition, as of our journal publication date we lost three outstanding oak people this past year. George Ware, the keynote speaker at our very first conference; Dick van Hoey Smith (see inside back cover), founding member and first recipient of our Lifetime Service Award; and Hugues Vaucher, author of the famous book on tree bark. Our board is in transition as well, with most of the experienced “old guard” retiring from service recently or soon. As we continue to grow as an organization we seek new energy and fresh ideas from our members. I hope some of you will see this as your opportunity to do what you can do best to make the world a better place: step forward and contribute more of your time and talent to the Oak Society and its mission. Contact any board member (refer to the new member directory being published now) with your offer to become more involved.

As an incentive, we offer some outstanding material in this issue of our journal. I won't try to summarize everything here because you can read the table of contents. I extend my heartfelt personal appreciation to all who authored, reviewed, and assisted in other ways with this publication. You will see here our best efforts to provide a useful mix of popular and scholarly work. Our annual oak gallery this time features the art of our ancestors (see inside front cover). Hopefully, when you finish this issue it will be reason enough to say, “Yes, the IOS is the world leader on a subject of high interest to me, so I resolve to become more involved and help push the wagon!”

Read on, and enjoy—and remember to ink the Seventh Triennial IOS Conference in France into your calendar for October 2012!

Guy Sternberg