NOTES FROM THE 21ST ANNUAL MEETING

FACTS OF FUNDING

Dr. Wendell F. McBurney, Associate Dean of Research and Sponsored Programs and Associate Professor of Science Education at Indiana University, Purdue University at Indianapolis led this discussion which was attended by about twenty people.

A former high school teacher and NSF Institute participant, McBurney emphasized that funding of some sort is essential if we are to develop and implement new ideas. Funding is survival. The notion that funds have "dried up" is a myth. Although it is true that grant funds, federal and private, have been redistributed. One of the most important facts of funding then is locating the proper sources of funds.


Once a potential source of funds has been found, one should ask himself honestly the following questions: Is my institution fundable? Am I fundable? Is my idea fundable? Of these, the last is perhaps the most important because funding is "idea dependent". McBurney stated that any really good idea is fundable somewhere. A proposal even with a sensational idea behind it is often not funded due to poor attention to technical details. One large foundation, McBurney noted, rejects nine of every ten proposals because they are poorly written.

One important aspect of obtaining funds is learning the agency. According to McBurney, one should establish "a non-offensive dialogue" with the agency. A visit if possible or most certainly a phone call or two may be extremely useful in establishing contacts. A person should get on the agency's mailing list so that he receives ALL agency publications. Even after a given grant has terminated, a good rapport should be maintained with the funding officers.

In closing, Dr. McBurney noted the following areas as currently being fundable: 1) women, 2) handicapped, 3) two-year colleges, 4) the young investigator, and 5) NSF institutional grants.

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EVOLUTION AND SOCIETY

The section, "Evolution and Society" was attended by eleven people from nine colleges. The discussions were rather "free for all" and wide-ranging.
Some of the thoughts that were expressed during the discussions are as follows:

1. Many college biology teachers do not use evolution to unify their courses.
2. Evolution should be taught in an "every day way".
3. Biology teachers should show through their teaching what science really is.
4. Students have little trouble with concepts centered on evolution of plants, but have difficulty with the evolution of man.
5. Students who have difficulties with evolution should not be "put down" by the teacher.
6. Biologists should keep an open mind about the theory of evolution. After all, other theories have come and gone in the past.

Ben Olson from Purdue gave a rather detailed account of happenings in Indiana, and noted that courts had decided that BIOLOGY: A Search for Order in Complexity, a Creation Research Society publication, could not be used as the sole text in public schools.

The Biology of Ultimate Concern by T. G. Dobzhansky and Evolution and Christian Thought Today edited by R. L. Mixter were mentioned as books that had been used to help students having difficulty with the theory of evolution.

Submitted by:
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SANDHILL CRANES

"Some Diurnal Ecology of Sandhill Cranes" served as the topic for a session lead by John C.W. Bliese and attended by twenty people from thirteen colleges. Bliese presented evidence that diurnal flocks of Sandhill Cranes, Grus canadensis, during their staging along the Platte River in spring, had characteristic shapes which were correlated with size. Most flocks were longer than broad, and their long axes were typically oriented parallel to the roads and their attending traffic. The flocks did not seem to be oriented by wind direction or by the direction taken by rows of corn stubble. Flock size varied from one to over four thousand, but most had fewer than one hundred, in great contrast to the thousands that aggregate on the roosts at night on the submerged sandbars of the Platte River.

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