

## I.P.P.S.—Ready for the 21st Century

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It is indeed a privilege to be asked to speak to you this noon, and I assure you it is a great pleasure. There is no organization that I know of which ranks so high in my mind for the great work it does and for the ideals and motto to which it is devoted.

Mike and his Program Committee have scheduled an exciting variety of subjects and events, that will challenge all of us. I am glad to see that the committee believes in the axiom—“The mind can absorb no more than the tail can endure.” I am also glad to see that they have renewed the use of the GO - Caution and Stop sign that I developed some 20 years ago.

The topic for this little talk is “I.P.P.S.—Ready for the 21st Century.” I wish to announce it is not only ready but it is off and running. Membership is up and new regions are lining up to join. My recommendations are: keep doing what we are doing, only better. I will make some suggestions later.

There is only one problem on the horizon. Our international body is under investigation for living under a false motto. To seek and to share is what all members know and think. However, in our various publications, plaques and certificates, we have no less than three different spellings for the word we use for “share”—Imperture, Imperiture, and Impertire, only the last is correct.

Let us consider our organization in comparison to other trade associations. All that I can think of or name are formed for the sole purpose of control and protection of its trade. On the other hand, I.P.P.S. is a wide-open association and welcomes a wide variety of individuals engaged in the area of propagation, regardless of age, education or type of employment. We are outgoing, friendly and sharing. As a result, there is a tremendous feeling of comraderie.

This comraderie has resulted not only in greater productivity, but in better, healthier plants, and lower prices. In 1939, when I was working in sales, a 1-gal rose sold for \$1.50 while the cost of labor was 35¢/h. Today a healthier rose sells for about \$5.00 and labor costs are about \$5.00/h.

I remember our 1960 Charter meeting so well. Jim Wells, the first president and our most enthusiastic booster, replied to a question about what we should do about a member who would not share. In his beautiful English accent, he declared emphatically, “WE BOOT HIM OUT!” Now, my field trips to nurseries were more meaningful. At I.P.P.S. member nurseries there were no locked doors or roped off areas. One outstanding nursery was the Buena Park Greenhouses run by our late President Bob Weidner and his lovely wife, Evelyn. Not only were we well-received, but Evelyn often had punch and cookies while Bob told all and answered all questions in a positive way. My students and I shall never forget the hospitality and the positive information.

What a wonderful profession to be involved in and to realize that it is the oldest to have existed. Do I see some of you in the audience shaking their heads? Shame be he who evil thinks. For those of you who doubt the above statement I refer you to the “Good Book”, Genesis II, verses 8, 9, and 15. I now quote: “The Lord God planted a garden in the east in Eden and there he put man that he had just formed. And the Lord God made all kinds of trees to grow out of the ground; some were

pleasing to the eye and gave food. The Lord put the man in the garden of Eden to work and take care of it." Remember, this was before the Lord God created woman and before the darned apple tree was planted.

And now a bit of the fun times we have had. Curtis Alley and I always had our crazy hats. The Liar's Forum, where members told of strange things that had happened in their propagation houses, like the 18-inch diameter pepper tree cutting that rooted at Disneyland; the timer control light, only mine had a loud bell 10 sec after the red light came on. I can remember at an Eastern Region Meeting paying the doorman \$2.00 to put up under the American Flag a banner which read "W. R. I.P.P.S. is Best". It was all in good taste and the atmosphere seemed to be charged with the static electricity of good will.

I have been closely associated with the field since my graduation from Oregon State University Department of Horticulture in 1936 at the head of my class. I spent one year as assistant county horticultural agent, then three years with the California Nursery Co. of Fremont, working up from budding foreman to nursery manager. I was called to active military duty in February 1941 and served four years. The first year, before the shooting war, I was the landscape development officer for Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, California, the largest replacement Training Center in the U.S.A.

In 1946, I was called to Cal Poly San Dimas to head up the Ornamental Horticultural Department. It was a two-year school. We had 25 students, and I was the sole faculty. I built the department to 380 students with a faculty and staff of ten, a 4-year degree granting program and the second largest in the U.S.A. My first sabbatical leave was spent in Central Europe studying the institutions teaching ornamental horticulture and the horticultural firms that employed their students. In 1972, my second sabbatical leave was visiting Australia and New Zealand making a similar study. Our program became so well-known in the trade that we attracted students from Israel, France, Germany, and two from New Zealand. In 1976, I was selected as the outstanding Professor at Cal Poly Pomona from a faculty of 750. Following retirement I was the Host and leader of 17 International Horticultural tours. In 1989, my wife and I served with the Peace Corps in Western Samoa, assisting them with a botanical garden. In 1990, my wife and I served in North Yemen with VOCA (Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Activities). My work there was to advise the nursery industry.

For my Horticultural programs I have received recognition; two International, three National, and five from the state. I do not make these statements to brag, but merely to show a background that might give credence to some of the suggestions I make.

While attending the California Association of Nurserymen's meeting on September 1st in Monterey, I became more aware of the educational program they are developing called "Growing Seeds and Growing Minds". It can be programmed for any age child from kindergarten through high school. Since I first heard of it I have made a very careful study and believe it is a very worthy project. It seems silly to try to produce a better wheel. It is more important to get behind the program and see it implemented in as many schools as possible. I believe members of the I.P.P.S. can make some valuable contributions.

At birth a child's head is larger in proportion than any other part of the body. Doctors tell us that by age two the child's brain has developed. It is a great white

sheet, clean and ready to receive messages that it will call on for the rest of its life. Some computer experts say the capacity of the brain is many computer discs (with their millions of “bytes”). At two or three months the baby begins to smile and coo. This brings great joy to the parents and the child learns from this happy experiment how to get the parents’ attention. Like a scientist, the baby has learned from experience what works and how to use it. “Experience is the greatest teacher, it gives you the answers and then the question.” Parents go crazy when the baby first crawls. This is a pleasant feeling for the baby and so he does it again. Lo and behold it works. He can get his parents’ attention this way and in his brain this is recorded. When it comes to walking, the baby will try and fall, try again, and again and again, but once walking is mastered it will last a life time.

The brain is like a super computer. It is very user friendly and does not need a “mouse” to put the information in the properly designated lobe for recording. It automatically cross references each item as to touch, smell, pain, happiness, and sound. Furthermore, the information remains in the brain and needs only the proper stimuli to bring it back. Some responses are voluntary, others are involuntary. Time does not allow us to go further into a discussion of this wonderful organ.

A scientist is one who makes a detailed study of a certain subject or material. This is done by observation, tests, measurements, and experience. This may be recorded and considered. Then true evaluations are made and, from these evaluations, conclusions can be drawn. From these conclusions predictions can be made. So, if one knows all the factors, a prediction can be made as to the outcome.

Now think for a minute. Is not a baby a true scientist? It is mostly experience that the baby uses to evaluate, but he tries and tries and tries again and again.

This “Growing Seeds, Growing Minds” program can be developed for any age group and parents are encouraged not only to know about the program but to have the students carry on some of the experiments at home. With the teachers, the students, and the parents all involved in the same exercise, it not only enhances the learning process, but gives the parents and the child an interesting and even exciting project to work on together.

Another worthwhile point to remember is that in nature the matter of the I.Q. is of no concern to the plant or animal. The plant will grow and the animal can be trained with regular proper care.

I am so excited about the potential of this program, that I have already volunteered to work with the Claremont Unified School District, to work in any capacity as teacher, program coordinator, or advisor. Remember that the basic plan is that the students will actually be involved in the planning, the recording, the evaluation of the results, the conclusions, and the predictions. For the inner city youngster this experience may be his only contact with nature and the real world. It should be exciting enough to take him away from TV and artificial and passive entertainment.

Who was it who turned you on to “horticulture”? I am sure it was not an industry or college brochure, but a dedicated and excited individual who loved what he was doing.

What I am suggesting is that you get from the California Association of Nurserymen a copy of “Growing Seeds and Growing Minds.” Read it, make suggestions and volunteer with your local schools. I am sure this will bring you great recognition in your local community but also important, you are going to help many young

people get a better hold on true values in life. Last, but by no means less important, you will have a deep and inner satisfaction of having done a little to help our school systems.

### **REMEMBER**

The development of the brain occurs as challenges are presented. Learning comes as those challenges are met and conquered. The more the parents and the teachers are involved in helping the child identify the challenges and in rewarding the child for meeting these challenges, the more the child seeks recognition and praise by doing his own investigation of the challenges and solving them. The natural world of living growing things is the best possible laboratory. "For in nature there are no rewards or penalties, only consequences" (R.G. Ingersoll).

Maybe next year there can be a session where individuals who have worked in the program can give a report on what happened and what new phases should be considered.

I close this little talk by reading a statement written by Nobel Prize winning poet from Chile, Gabriela Mistral:

We are guilty of many errors and many faults. But our worst crime is abandoning the children. Many things we need can wait, the Child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed his senses are being developed. To him we cannot say tomorrow His name is today.

Thank you.