Range Planning Committee, agreed to serve as a member of the committee to review initial candidates for the student research award program.

V. Funk discussed ongoing efforts to form an International Federation of Systematic Societies including new systematics organizations in Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand. The Council voted unanimously to support these efforts and to encourage V. Funk to draft a proposal for discussion by all societies involved.

Minutes of the Members’ Business Meeting, Society of Systematic Biologists, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 23 June 1998.—The meeting was called to order by President Miyamoto. The minutes of the 1997 Members’ Business Meeting were approved. Brief Editor’s and Program Chair’s reports were given by D. Cannatella and C. Simon, respectively. Results of the 1998 election, and winners of the Ernst Mayr Award and the President’s Award (David Swofford) were reported.—Liz Zimmer and David Mindell, Secretary.

Editor’s Report: Annual Meeting, 1998.—During 1997, 101 manuscripts were received; 47 were accepted for a rate of 47% (the rate for 1996 was 42%). During my term as Editor, 330 papers were submitted and 148 were accepted for a rate of 45%. The average review time for 1997 was 69 days, a decrease from last year’s mean of 89. I attribute this to the fact that I handled some extra papers rather than sending them to Associate Editors. Nine papers were in review for >4 months, and four of these for >6 months.

Issue 1 of 1998 contained a selection of five papers dealing with the issue of taxonomic sampling and large data sets. In issue 2 it is notable that three of the seven regular articles are botanical in nature, as is the cover photo. Cover photos/drawings have included crawfish, chaetognaths, sea urchins, alligators, characiform fishes, turtles, lichenized fungi, mammalian chromosomes, lancelets, baobab trees, and will include sponge spicules.

In 1997, 799 pages were published (50 pages were aligned sequences); this is a large increase over 1996, in which 640 pages were published. My rationale for the extra pages was to avoid a backlog, but the number of acceptable papers has produced one anyway. All papers for issue 3 are at the publisher, and 24 accepted manuscripts (not including book reviews) remain to go into issue 4 and beyond. I estimate that these 593 ms pages will require 436 printed pages (1997 was 1,078 ms pages for 794 printed pages). Each issue is targeted at 175 pages, so there are enough papers to fill issue 1 of 1999 as well.

Some rough calculations: In 1997, 1,078 submitted ms pages yielded 794 printed pages. Applying this ratio, the 593 pages for these 24 manuscripts will require 436 printed pages, which is a bit more than two issues. With 175 pages allowed for December, we face a significant backlog of 261 pages, about 1.5 issues. We are contractually bound to 700 pp/yr. Mike Brown of Taylor & Francis estimates that printing an extra 32 pages would cost SSB approximately $1,800–$2,000 at current prices. The cost to SSB to print these in 1998 is $(261/32) \times 2,000 = 16,312. It seems that some 1998 pages must spill into 1999; the issue that should be decided at the Council meeting is how many.

I visited Taylor & Francis in Washington, D.C. to work out some production issues and was joined by local SSB member Richard O’Grady of the Publication Committee.

The March issue of 1998 was officially mailed at the very end of March, but because of problems in the mailing list transition, most members did not receive them until much later. The June issue was mailed in early June. Alison Labbate (Production Editor) and I have adjusted the schedule so that the journal should regularly appear at the beginning of the target month. The March issue of 1998 was published by Taylor & Francis and printed by Allen Press. The proofs generally looked good and the final product remained much the same. However, I was not entirely happy with the quality of copyediting by Taylor & Francis for that issue, because of inconsistencies in application of the SB style.

A different printer was contracted by Taylor & Francis for issue 2 (June) because of apparent difficulties with Allen Press. Those proofs were of poor quality. Although I read two sets of proofs, the final product was still not what I had hoped for. Several mistakes in proofs were not corrected by the printer. In addition, the consistency of the copyediting for issue 2 was not good. Taylor & Francis has hired a new copyeditor for issue 3. Also, through a printer’s error, the cover of the June issue is of a lighter stock than is usually used. Taylor & Francis did not discover the error until after the print run was done. The printer had assured Taylor & Francis that they would use 100 lb stock. Taylor & Francis was very apologetic.

The transition to the new publisher has not been as smooth as hoped. My experience suggests that the Editor can expect further problems if Taylor & Francis changes the printer or copyeditor again. A change in Production Editor should be absolutely avoided. In consultation with me, Patrick Kilgarriff of Taylor & Francis produced a brochure designed to attract new members. This was mailed out to members of several other societies.

Treasurer’s Report: Annual Meeting, 1998.—(This report by the Past-treasurer Funk covers 1 January 1997–15 June 1998.) The new Treasurer, Mary McKittrick, took office 1 January 1998. During the last 18 months much has happened as we moved from collecting the dues and paying all the bills to a more simple system. The financial report presented below covers all operations from 1 January until 31 December 1997 and select items, such as the publication of issue 46(4), from 1998.

Traditionally we have paid for 4 issues of Systematic Biology each year. In January of each year we paid for issue 4 from the previous year and then throughout the year we paid for issues 1–3 of that year. Because we switched from Allen Press to Taylor & Francis we