

BLUE JAY CHATTER

It will soon be October, the time for our annual meeting. The Saskatchewan Natural History Society will then be taking stock again, reviewing its aims and examining its various ventures to see if they are accomplishing what they ought to.

The main activity and greatest expense of the society is the printing of the **Blue Jay**. Are you satisfied with it? To a large extent the contents and appearance of the **Blue Jay** are determined by the editor. Your present editor will this year complete seven years in this office. It is time for the society to consider changing its editor. The previous editor, Mr. Lloyd T. Carmichael, held office for seven years though he could very well have carried on for another seven years. There is some evidence that the society is in a rut; for two years now the membership has been at a standstill approximately at the 3,000 mark. To be considered also is the fact that almost no one noticed that there was no editorial on this page in either the March or June issues this year. If this editorial brings no action we will know for sure that the editor is expendable!

Those in office need encouragement and guidance from the general membership. The annual meeting is the one time each year when you can do most for your society. You cannot all turn up at the meeting on October 13, but everyone is welcome and everyone can send in suggestions.

First, the annual meeting is election time and everyone can make nominations. Even if you plan to attend you should send your nominations in by mail as soon as possible. You should make a few notes on the person nominated to tell of his interests and activities in the field of natural history. Nominations may be made for every office, including editor. Normally, the directors stay on for three years; but five retire and five new ones are chosen each year.

Second, the annual meeting is the time when we look at the finances. If you are not satisfied, what suggestions do you have for improvement? I met a man the other day who said that our membership fee should be ten dollars per year and he did present a convincing case. How many would be willing to pay more than the present two-dollar membership? One can, of course, always give more than the membership. One man I know always pays double the membership fee and insists that half of what he pays is a donation. Perhaps we should, like some societies, regularly ask for donations from our members. Some members always pay for several memberships; this increases our costs for we have to print more **Blue Jays**, but it also helps to increase our numbers and reduce our unit costs. If a person can contribute in no other way, he can always help financially. Now that donations have been accepted as income tax deductible perhaps more of us should consider this angle.

Third, do we support our society's activities? A society can only be successful if it can grow and gain new members; do **you** talk about the society and try to gain new members? Do you buy cards, films, books from the society's bookshop? We will find it difficult to carry on this bookshop service unless our members support it. We would also urge members to patronize those who advertise in the **Blue Jay**. For example, the Seven Seas Book Service has an ad in this issue again in spite of the fact that it received only two inquiries in response to the ad which it ran in the June issue. We all need books—if you cannot get the books you need from our own bookshop, then write to the Seven Seas Book Service and mention the **Blue Jay**.

Fourth, what other things should we be doing? Let's talk about these things and if we agree let's do something. Perhaps our action will include the drafting of resolutions which may be presented to municipal, provincial or federal governments. If you have ideas, please express them: write to Mrs. T. Pepper, 1015 Temperance Street, Saskatoon, to any member of the executive, or—at any time—to your editor.—G. F. L.