

My view

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As time moves, we humans need to impose patterns upon it, and anniversaries are a means of doing so. In the western world, we celebrate birthdays, marriages, and especially 10-yr anniversaries. Many aspects of our society, with the notable exception of our system of measurements, are organized by the decimal system based on divisions of 10. There is no rational reason why we celebrate decadal anniversaries and golden anniversaries (50 yr). They are matters of convention and reflect our preference for round numbers. Decadal anniversaries have no intrinsic significance but lend themselves readily to our need for regularity as we imbue them with extrinsic meaning. Not all societies use a 10-yr cycle to determine when to celebrate. Some societies (e.g., Chinese and Thai) use the 12-yr cycle of the Zodiac calendar. Important events in those societies occur 12 yr apart rather than the 10 yr that seem so right to the West.

This year, this journal celebrates its 50th year of publication. When someone is 50, we know that the person is old enough to know a great deal, yet young enough to work with what has been learned. When one becomes 50, it is an inevitable human tendency to look back on life, regret the mistakes, applaud the successes, and lament the missed opportunities. A journal, an inanimate thing, is not capable of thought, reflection on the past, or anticipation of the future. Those who read the journal, and those who write can do these things, and it is appropriate that we do so individually and collectively as we celebrate 50 yr of publication.

We should celebrate. None of those who created this journal thought it would last 5 yr, no less 50. All may have hoped for 50 yr, but no one was so bold as to predict a golden anniversary, but here we are. The Association of Regional Weed Conferences was founded in 1951 by the four regional conferences for the express purpose of publishing a national journal that dealt with weeds. The first issue of the journal, *Weeds*, was published in October 1951. R. D. Sweet (Cornell University) was the editor from 1951 to 1953, C. E. Minarik (USDA) edited in 1954, and K. P. Buchholz (University of Wisconsin) from 1955 to 1958. Volume 1 of *Weeds*, the new journal of the regional weed science societies, included four issues with the last appearing in July 1952. Volume 2 had four issues in 1953, and volume 3 had four issues in 1954. The journal was not published in 1955. *Weeds* became the journal of the Weed Society of America with volume 4 in 1956. K. P. Buchholz was the first designated Editor of the society's journal, the name of which was changed to *Weed Science* in 1968.

It is fairly easy to make the case that the best work is

done by the young, and that youth will prevail. Benjamin Disraeli said, "Almost everything that is great has been done by youth." Other examples include the observations that Mozart was 8 yr old when he composed his first symphony, Alexander the Great conquered in his 20s, Einstein published his first article on the Theory of Relativity when he was 26, Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone at 29, Jane Addams founded Hull House at 29, Michelangelo completed his most famous Pieta at 26, John Keats wrote most of his best poems when he was 23, James D. Watson was 26 when he and Francis Crick, 36, devised the structure of the DNA for which they received the Nobel Prize, Napoleon was in his 30s when he ruled Europe, Alexander Hamilton was 19 when Washington made him aide-de-camp, and Rossini first conducted an orchestra at 14 and led the Bologna Philharmonic when he was 18. The list of achievements of the young goes on. Weed scientists also accomplished much while the science was young, but one should not conclude that life and accomplishment end as youth ends. As has been noted, age and wisdom will usually prevail over youth and innocence. It is not only the young who have achieved great things. For example, Cervantes completed "Don Quixote" when he was near 70, Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross at 59, Goethe finished "Faust" when he was 82, Verdi composed Othello at 73 and Falstaff in his late 70s, and G. B. Shaw wrote "Saint Joan" at 67. Shaw wrote his first play at 48 and his last when he was over 80, Albert Schweitzer won the Nobel Peace Prize at 68, Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Guggenheim Museum at 76, Winston Churchill was 66 when he was re-elected Prime Minister of Great Britain, Sophocles wrote "Oedipus Rex" at 75, John XXIII was elected Pope at 77, Konrad Adenauer became Germany's Prime Minister at 72 and governed for 14 yr, Gandhi was India's moral leader when he was assassinated at 78, and G. F. Handel wrote the "Messiah" when he was 57, in debt, and recovering from a stroke. This list also goes on. Disraeli became Prime Minister of England for the second time at 70, and he is the one who said, "Almost everything that is great has been done by youth."

Each of this year's six issues is scheduled to have two invited articles that will thoughtfully explore several (but not all) matters of importance to our science. Some articles will be about things that one ought to reflect on at 50, and others will explore where we ought to go to continue our record of success and achievement as we enter our sixth decade. This 50th calendrical milestone gives us an opportunity to collect our thoughts and consider what navigational changes we ought to make as we proceed.