***President’s Message***

As I start to write this message the outside temperature is 5◦. It’s not abnormal, but it has been a long time since we have seen that temperature in March. The farm bill has passed Congress and it appears that the fruit and vegetable industry came out looking good. This legislation reinstates the funding for specialty crop research incentive.

With the final financial figures in for the 2014 SHAP Apple Booth at the Farm Show, we were able to increase money for research. SHAP Extension Advisory Committee funding for 2014 will be $25,000.00, and an additional $15,000.00 will be funded to the Research Committee budget. I would like to thank Phil Baugher, Dave Wenk and their committees for funding the 2014 research projects. Also, the Endowment Committee was able to fund a $9,000.00 research project this year. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen.

Immigration Reform: I hope Congress will make a concerted effort in 2014 to resolve all the problems and differences and come to an agreement so that all of us as a nation can move forward in agriculture and many other businesses can build a strong industry.

We have had a long winter and spring WILL come. Hopefully we can get our trimming and early spring chores done! Bud-break and bloom will come fast and let’s hope for good pollination weather. Our blueberry bushes are changing color and that is my first sign dormancy is ending since they are shallow rooted.

I would like to welcome Steve Johnston to the SHAP Board of Directors. Steve represents western Pennsylvania.

***Tim Weiser***