Parting Thoughts from Your Editor

The time has come for me to sign off as your editor, a role that has occupied most of my waking life for the last 18 years. Editing has been a privilege and an ongoing education, but all good things must end, and now I must say my goodbyes.

Farewells from editors may be expected to cover 3 areas: (1) a look back in time at the editor’s journal, (2) a look forward, and (3) advice to the incoming editorial team.

I will dismiss the 1st issue by indicating that there has been too much history in 18 years to summarize in 1 or 2 (or, as we used to write, “one or two”) paragraphs. I will summarize by indicating there has been much more pleasure than pain (although both were available in abundance) and much satisfaction.

Regarding the look forward, predictions are notoriously wrong. Even the fabled Stan King, my distinguished predecessor, seems to have erred when he warned in his departing comments 18 years ago of the impending demise of journals. So I will refrain from looking into any crystal balls.

As for advice to the incoming editorial team, it is clear that they do not need it. In fact, they probably did not need the advice I already gave in response to their questions. They have been busy for months and have already prepared a January issue that you will recognize as marking the beginning of the journal’s move to its next, higher level. In case they might need advice in the future, I will write the following (with apologies to W. Somerset Maugham): There are 3 rules for editing a peer-reviewed journal. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.

My thoughts on a beautiful, sunny, late October day in Virginia turn to the people who have made this journal what it is. We inherited a legacy from Harold Appleton, who was the journal’s 1st editor, and from Stan King, the executive editor who succeeded Appleton and taught me about writing by tearing apart each manuscript I submitted. Our legacy emanates from previous chairs of the Editorial Board: Donald Young (who labored successfully to make this an international journal and who took a chance by appointing me to the Editorial Board’s Executive Committee shortly after I was elected to the Board), Ted Peters (who taught all of us about science and about how to behave), Jack Ladenson (who was chair when I started as editor and who was and is the journal’s secret weapon), and Carl Burtis (who, among other things, tutored me in analytical chemistry and thus prevented many embarrassing moments for the journal).

A peer-reviewed journal, like science, represents a collaboration, supported by mutual trust, of the following people: authors, readers, reviewers, editors, office editorial staff, associate editors, editorial board members, manuscript editors, copyeditors, production editors, printers, electronic publication experts, publication directors, owners (here, AACC), and more. Each part of this team is essential, and none is more important than any one of many people who are unknown to readers. I think of Tommy Sadler and the time when all 10 000-plus copies of a monthly issue were printed with the same page numbers as had already been used in the preceding month’s issue. Such an error is a publishing nightmare. On a Friday afternoon, I was told that the issue could not be reprinted because there was no paper. On Saturday, Tommy Sadler, whose job was to print the journal not to find paper, said he would look into it on Monday. In fact, he found the paper over the weekend, reprinted the issue, and mailed it on time. None of the readers knew. This scene was representative of actions by individuals who went beyond their job descriptions to bring you the best possible journal that they could deliver.

I would like to thank individually all members of the team that brought you this journal over the last 18 years, but there are too many to list by name. I must, however, make a special thanks to the office staff and

Fig. 1. “One more to go.” Dr Bruns surrounded by 17 years and 11 months of Clinical Chemistry.
Dr. Jim Boyd in Charlottesville. Two of the staff, Sandy Weaver and Donna Brandl, have served the journal almost as long as the office has been here. The staff and Jim have been daily companions and have shown an unparalleled dedication to clinical chemistry and to Clinical Chemistry. Their positive attitudes have brightened many a day.

I have tried during my tenure to meet what I viewed as my primary ethical responsibility of providing fair, expert, and timely reviews. I tried to work with authors to improve their papers. Where I have succeeded, I thank authors for their cooperation and the opportunity to work with them. Where I have failed, I apologize.

Finally, as some people know, I am most indebted to my wife, Liz. She has put up with late and aborted dinners, working weekends, and canceled vacations, all in support of my attempt to do my part in the production of a journal that would reflect credit on our profession. She has other plans for me now.

I wish the journal every success and look forward to the new features that are in store.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

AACC’s Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the 2008 association election. The president-elect, two positions on the Board of Directors, and four positions on the Nominating Committee are to be elected to serve, beginning January 1, 2009. Nominations should be sent in writing to: Dr. Larry J. Kricka, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, 3400 Spruce St., 7103 Founders Pavilion HUP 3400, Philadelphia, PA 19104-4283 (fax 215-662-7529; e-mail kricka@mail.med.upenn.edu).

You should indicate the office for which the nominee is proposed and include 1 or 2 sentences explaining the nomination. A nomination form will be available on the AACC website (www.aacc.org) January 1. All nominations must be received by January 31, 2008. The Nominating Committee will obtain the candidates’ consent to run for office.

According to the association by-laws, in this election, members of the Capital, Chicago, Northern California, and Southeast Sections are not eligible for election to the Nominating Committee for the term beginning January 2009.

Members of the 2008 Nominating Committee are as follows: Larry Kricka, DPhil (Chair); Corinne Fantz, PhD; David Grenache, PhD; Patricia Jones, PhD; Stephen Manzella, PhD; Joseph McConnell, PhD; Judy Stone, PhD; and Donald Wiebe, PhD.

DOI: 10.1373/clinchem.2007.099861

Fig. 2. Images from the beautiful Spirited Garden, Jeju Island, South Korea (Republic of Korea). Photos courtesy of Sung Bum-young of Spirited Garden.