An editorial farewell
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With this “Editor’s Page,” I conclude 10 years as the Founding Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Nuclear Cardiology. It really is hard to believe that a decade has passed so quickly. The activity has involved both substantial effort and enormous satisfaction. The many rewards have unquestionably outweighed the negatives of meeting deadlines, juggling time commitments, and dealing with the logistics and intellectual demands of an unforgiving publishing schedule. I will certainly welcome reclaiming the early pre-sunrise weekday hours and the long Sunday mornings spent at my desk dealing with the Journal. While these times will be reallocated quickly in a new life’s schedule, I definitely will still miss the fun and joy of the Journal.

In my first “Editor’s Page” in January 1994, I stated the goal of the Journal:

Simply stated, it is to be the major vehicle for the concentrated delivery of knowledge and information concerning the field of nuclear cardiology on an international basis. The Journal should be the investigative and clinical voice of the field, with boundaries established not by geography or professional discipline but by intellectual content and clinical expression.

With that charge we moved forward and have not deviated.

Although we now deal with a mature and well-established journal, its earlier days were quite different. Those initial years were filled with anxiety, tension, and concern about both immediate and long-term success. The Journal took form just as the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology (ASNC) was establishing itself as a professional organization. We were suddenly faced with a daunting series of tasks: finding a publisher, configuring a reasonable and economically viable contract, establishing a format, establishing a publication schedule, appointing associate editors and defining their roles, establishing a format, establishing a publication schedule, appointing associate editors and defining their roles, establishing an international editorial board, convincing colleagues to submit original papers at a time when the Journal was new and not yet referenced in Index Medicus, defining the appropriate emphasis for reviews and other invited materials, and convincing industrial colleagues to advertise and thereby provide the necessary support. As we proceeded, there were occasional non-collegial efforts made by the leadership of other publications who felt we were intruding on their turf and who would have been happy to see us fail. Despite these efforts, operational and political issues were dealt with and the Journal was birthed. By a variety of metrics, the Journal experienced early success. Our editorial pages were immediately filled with quality work. Advertising pages and supplements and the growing ASNC membership supported the Journal financially and, remarkably, made it profitable in its first year. The quick acceptance for indexing in Index Medicus and a meaningful position in citation indices moved the Journal from the realm of upstart incubator effort to established publication.

I have always viewed the Journal as more than a vehicle for the distribution of knowledge. It also serves as a bully pulpit, providing the opportunity for directing the field toward new and important endeavors. We have attempted to find that focus through the “Editor’s Page,” editorials, challenge editorials, reviews, and special series such as “Topics in Molecular Biology” and “Topics in Integrated Systems Physiology.” The Journal has attempted to direct nuclear cardiology away from a level of comfort and insularity that can easily result from clinical success, and to engender maintenance of a relevant role within the mainstream of contemporary cardiology, imaging science, and modern biology. After all, nuclear cardiology exists in a broader context than its imaging laboratories. One could argue in fact that the field serves at the behest of those who must value our services. Without this larger context in both the clinical and investigative world, we would not exist as a discipline. Our field can never be based on entitlement, but on achievement and innovativeness. It is with that view that we should move forward both as a journal and as a discipline.

A journal can only be successful if a number of individuals work together to ensure a positive outcome. I have been extremely fortunate to deal with an outstanding group of individuals over the past 10 years. They should be recognized for their contributions. Peggy McLaughlin, Manager, Editorial Office, has been instrumental in keeping the Journal moving in an efficient and highly professional manner. Her contributions have been immeasurable. Particularly in the initial years, my extremely capable administrative assistant, Astrid Swanson, devoted substantial quality time and effort to the function of the Journal. The four Associate Editors, Ken Brown, Jeff Leppo, Al Sinusas, and Frans Wackers, have...
been incredibly active and supportive. Each has had specific roles and assignments; each has performed in an outstanding manner. A special word of thanks to the Section Editors of two special sections. Jagat Narula and Heinz Schelbert developed a superb “Topics in Molecular Biology” series that has helped move the field into the molecular era. Al Sinusas has done an extraordinary job in the “Topics of Integrated Systems Physiology” series. These series have forced the readership to readdress the macro as well as the micro implications for our field. My thanks as well to our international Editorial Board for supporting the Journal with their own work, for providing timely reviews, and for providing valuable input at board meetings. Finally, a public thank-you to Myrna Zaret, who for over 40 years has coped with a workaholic husband. She has always supported me in my endeavors. During my 10-year tenure as Editor, she has been incredibly supportive, has understood the time constraints of the position, and has served as my sounding board and my at-home editor.

I am particularly pleased that ASNC has chosen my longstanding colleague and friend and leader in the field, George Beller, as the next Editor in Chief. I could not think of a better choice. I have no doubt that under his stewardship the Journal will reach new levels of achievement.

Goodbyes are always difficult. It is hard to articulate all the thoughts and emotions that have been nurtured over a decade. I look forward to the next stage of my professional life and, for the first time, receiving issues of the Journal without having advance knowledge of their content. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the first editor of the Journal. The many pleasant memories of the past 10 years will, like good red wine, age and improve.

References