Parting Thoughts

This editorial signals the end of my tenure as editor-in-chief of Triple O. Our Journal has a long and proud history of connecting scientists and clinicians to readers seeking quality, contemporary, and relevant knowledge related to oral-maxillofacial surgery, pathology, and radiology, oral medicine, and endodontics. I have tried to preserve Triple O’s legacy, while seeking ways to improve our publication, and writing hopefully thought-provoking editorials. I inherited a talented group of section editors, surgery section editorial board members, and peer reviewers. Over the years I added board members and recruited more reviewers to both provide greater depth and breadth of expertise, and try to respect their busy lives by not calling on them too often. We have had turnover of section editors, but in all cases the quality of section leadership has been preserved. Triple O is extremely fortunate to have a strongly supportive and progressive publisher, Jane Ryley. Also, our issue manager, Jill Shepherd, is beyond compare as evidenced by extremely higher caliber copy editing and page set-up of our published articles. The best thing I did for Triple O was recruiting our managing editor, Carmen Hupp. She guided us through the momentous transition from a hard copy to an electronic submission, peer review, and editorial review process. She made the changes seamless and invisible to readers, who had no clue such a complex overhaul in journal procedures was occurring. A large number of our peer reviewers have experienced Carmen’s gentle reminders and troubleshooting, which has translated into a shortened submission to decision time. She also has aided numerous authors with the submission process, expertly staffs surgery section and Journal board meetings, and makes it possible for me to lead Triple O and still do my day job.

Producing each issue of Triple O is truly a team effort and I’ve been fortunate to be able to count on so many individuals to help us not only protect the Journal’s excellent quality, but improve it in several ways. We were among the first dental journals to move to digital article processing. It was not an easy transition, but went surprisingly smoothly. This change made it easier for authors around the world to get their articles to the Journal office to be considered. Then, once submitted, the electronic handling allowed a more speedy distribution and return of articles to and from section editors and peer reviewers.

Another benefit to authors was a dramatic rise in the Journal’s impact factor. This factor measures the impact an article has on the world by looking at the number of times a paper is cited in articles in peer reviewed journals. The higher the factor for a journal, the more impact that journal has in relation to other scientific journals with lower numbers. Our journal rose from .0973 to 1.5 over the past 5 years. Authors favor journals with higher impact factors because it gains them greater recognition in their academic institution. Readers also benefit in that the journal attracts higher quality submissions.

The improved access for submission and higher impact factor have led to a dramatic increase in the number of submissions. We had a total of 808 submissions in 2004, while there have been more than 1,700 by the end of October 2010.

Other changes that occurred during my tenure as editor-in-chief included instituting an annual ‘Best Paper Award’ in each of our sections to help recognize particularly talented authors. We also started an on-line only form of publishing. This helped us reduce the backlog of accepted articles, thereby reducing the acceptance to publishing time for print articles. Similarly, we began electronically publishing accepted articles as soon as they completed the copyediting process; so all articles are available to readers far more quickly than ever before.

We have added pharmacology updates, interventional imaging, and the ability to publish videos to our array of offerings. More color images now appear in the print editions, and we have been careful to make sure
photographs and imagings are large enough for the reader to appreciate the details of those figures. A special commemorative issue appeared in August of 2005 recognizing the 100th volume of Triple O.

Our cover displays many of the most significant articles in each section, our website carries far more useful information than in the past, and we can now allow authors with a large number of illustrations to include them all in the electronic version of their article.

I am deeply appreciative of all who have helped me during my time as editor-in-chief. This includes, in addition to those I’ve already mentioned, the leaders of the American College of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. They showed their confidence in Triple O by adopting us as their official publication, and were supportive of me over this time.

When this editorial appears, Triple O will be under new leadership. I wish that individual and all of those involved in making this Journal possible all the best. Helping Triple O move forward during these past years has been a labor of love for me. I will miss the regular interactions with our outstanding section editors, publisher, and issue manager. Any success we’ve had is due mainly to them and our managing editor. I also thank the authors of articles who chose to submit to our journal and the readers who, either individually or through their institution, subscribed to Triple O. I believe the Journal serves an important purpose of allowing those with important scientific and/or clinical information to share it with dentists and others in the world seeking to deliver state-of-the-art, safe, and effective oral health care to humankind. This mission now continues under new leadership as our Journal enters its 64th year, and the tradition of continuing to improve the dissemination of quality, peer-reviewed articles goes on.

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