

## Swan Song

By Pamela C. Day

Over the past 42 years the job of Managing Editor of our Blue Journal has evolved quite a bit. When I started working for the Aerospace Medical Association in 1980, my job as editorial assistant was to copy manuscripts and mail them to the typesetter and proofread the proofs when they came back to the office. I was also responsible for billing, advertising, and keeping track of ad placement in the journal. The upkeep of member files was also in my purview. I was hired to assist our Managing Editor, Fred Stoffel, who was first and foremost a journalist and news photographer who happened to end up at AsMA, much like I did. My background as an artist occasionally came in handy, but it was my trainability and my degree from a college in his hometown of Appleton, WI, that convinced Fred to take a chance on me.

When Fred retired in 1990, I thought I was ready to handle this job! Sometimes I was, sometimes I wasn't. I have worked with three Executive Directors and six Editors-in-Chief. I have had seven assistants to help me along the way. One lasted only about a week, most stayed a couple years before moving on. We were lucky to hire Rachel Trigg, who has been with us since 2003, and is now poised to take over as Managing Editor!

Now as I prepare to leave AsMA, I can look back on how the job has changed. First, we got computerized and sent our edited manuscripts on discs instead of xeroxed copies. And now we upload them to an ftp site. We used to publish a membership directory every year (I proofread the whole thing, which is how I remember the middle initials of older members!). Now we have a website with a search engine to help members locate each other. We used to publish a news section at the back of the journal with

pages devoted to our constituent organizations. Now Rachel has created an online newsletter published monthly with the most up-to-date information.

The scientific program used to be something the journal published, but we had no role in its makeup. Now much of my time is spent managing the online system for abstract submission and working throughout the year on the Scientific Meeting Program. That is another process that has evolved from sending abstracts typed in a blue box so we could cut and paste them for publishing to the online portal we now use. Over the years I have used at least five different abstract management systems.

The job now entails such things as photographing the highlights of the annual scientific meetings; managing the abstract submission system; publishing the meeting program and addendum; the honors night awards biographies, press releases, and brochure; coordinating with all vendors for typesetting, printing, mailing, advertising; editing manuscripts and proofreading; coordinating all association publications, brochures, and advertising; creating and enforcing style in coordination with scientific notation and style; managing licensing agreements for subscriptions; pricing of subscriptions and pdfs and open access, etc., etc., etc. It really is a 'Jack of all trades' kind of job. This job isn't for everybody . . . and not just anybody would want it! Lucky for us, Rachel does!



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