



Service

“So what have you done for me lately?”

There are, at this time, enough people with self-serving attitudes that you wonder if you should agree to anything that does not have an immediate and substantial payback. Consider the chant by the professional athlete in the movie, *Jerry McGuire*: “Show me the money!”

This was certainly not the attitude taken by my predecessor, Brian Thompson, these past seven years. Perhaps it is Brian’s British upbringing that is uncorrupted by this raging tide of self-interest. Certainly you don’t do what Brian did for the title alone. Having built upon the strong contributions of his predecessor, Jack Gaskill, Brian has brought this journal to prominence as a prime conduit for the publication of research in optical science and engineering. Under Brian’s stewardship, *Optical Engineering* has increased in number of pages and in quality of content. This was done single-handedly—literally. From the moment of submission of a paper until its final acceptance or rejection, he was responsible for all aspects of the editorial process. Once a paper was accepted, he handed it off to the publication office at SPIE in Bellingham. His tenure has been an excellent example of stewardship.

After having served as Editor for seven years, Brian deserves a well-earned respite from the editor’s responsibilities. The journal has grown so much that it is becoming too much for one person to handle. When I was asked to succeed Brian, I immediately informed the SPIE leadership that I did not intend to do this job alone. I established a Board of Editors to provide the range of expertise needed to cover this brave new world of optical engineering that extends far beyond what the originators of this journal could possibly have conceived of. What is needed is a range of experts who can evaluate a submitted paper, assign good reviewers, evaluate the reviews fairly, and reach a decision on publication. In other words, I had to find a Board to replace Brian’s brain.

On the masthead of this issue you will find the names of professionals from a wide range of disciplines who

have agreed to serve as Associate Editors for *Optical Engineering*. I want to thank them for agreeing to serve. I tried to cover all of the possible fields within optical engineering, but I am well aware that there are some holes (and some overlaps) in the assignments.

I am proud of the breadth and level of expertise that the Board represents. What was most impressive has been the uniform response by the members to my invitation. No one said, “What’s in it for me?” Instead, as the authors of many technical papers, they accepted their position as a professional responsibility. They realize that the strength and integrity of a journal depend on a strong and timely peer review of papers.

There is one additional link in this chain of responsibility and that is the individual reviewer. This is where SPIE members and other readers of this journal have something to contribute. To establish and maintain a level of excellence requires that submitted papers be critically read by someone who can judge the correctness, originality, and significance of the work. The more closely the assigning editor can match the topic of the paper to the reviewer, the more likely the editor will be able to render a fair decision on the publication of the paper.

“So what have you done for your profession lately?”

In the next few months, by various means, we, the Board of Editors and I, will be asking you to identify your particular area of expertise and signify a willingness to serve as a reviewer. We realize that many of you may not have the time to contribute papers to *Optical Engineering*, but that reviewing a paper on a topic related to your expertise would be a valuable contribution to the advancement of the field. It might also provide you with some new ways of thinking about your field when the details of the current project may be the limits of your professional horizon. So when you see the reviewer forms in the journal, on the web, or in an SPIE mailing, please fill one out, send it back, and be of service to our community.

Donald C. O’Shea
Editor