EDITORIAL

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The experience of the Annual Meeting was exhilarating. It included visiting with old friends and participating in technical sessions that contained many excellent presentations on a wide range of topics. Of special delight was the Eagleson Lecture by newly-minted Nobel-Awardee Stanley B. Prusiner. His topic was “Mad Cows, Demented People and Bio-Containment”. We feel very fortunate, as well as honored, to have been addressed by two Nobel Laureates in 15 years (In case you have forgotten, the first was David Baltimore at the 25th Annual Meeting in Boston.)

All presenters have been invited to submit their papers to the Journal and the Journal Editor anticipates receiving many fine manuscripts to review. This is important because new journals have difficulty attracting adequate submissions and JABSA must transcend this hurdle by eventually requiring that all presentations at Annual Meetings be sent to JABSA for the privilege of first acceptance. This year, the Editorial Committee will request the Board to make it a requirement for each person invited to deliver a named lecture (Eagleson, Wedum, Gross) to submit a manuscript suitable for printing in JABSA. This would be helpful to the Membership as well as the Journal, inasmuch as it must be assumed that each such lecturer has something important to say as a reason for extending the invitation, and these words of wisdom should not be lost. Noble-Laureate Prusiner’s paper was published in Science just a couple of weeks before his presentation at the Annual Meeting. Science is so widely available that there seemed little reason to request permission to reprint it in JABSA. Nevertheless, because Dr. Prusiner included some informal reminiscences of Jack Eagleson (an old friend of his), we will try to recover them for our Journal, along with a biography of Jack, for those who may not be familiar with the background of the man in whose memory the lectureship is named.

Another important thing that occurs at Annual Meetings is the opportunity for Association Committees to get together. The Editorial Committee met and came to several important decisions regarding Journal operations. It was agreed to open the Journal to increased participation by the membership by 1) establishing a panel of peer reviewers and 2) appointing assistant editors to take responsibility for specific sections of the Journal such as Lessons Learned, Book Reviews, Letters. The first notices of these openings are contained in this issue of the Journal.

The current Editor asked the Editorial Committee a year ago to select a replacement who would take over the Editor’s duties for the first issue of 1998. The reason for requesting a replacement was not because I found the Editor’s job to be unacceptably difficult and time consuming. For, in truth, the Association’s Headquarters Office does the hard work and does it well and on time. Rather, it has been a delight and a signal honor to have been entrusted with this responsibility and permitted to render an important service to the Association. But I believe it is essential, at this point, to transfer the editorship to a young, vigorous member, fully involved at the cutting edge of health and safety affairs, and bubbling over with fresh ideas for maintaining and improving the Journal; hence my request. The Editorial Committee has a vigorous search underway for a replacement and I am committed to remaining at the post a few more months to permit a seamless transfer of duties.

You will find that this issue of the Journal has more articles and more pages than ever. This is a good sign of healthy progress. Please keep the research papers, critical reviews, histories, Lessons Learned, and letters coming in so we can continue to grow and serve the biosafety community well.