

Applied Optics 2000–2005

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A commemorative editorial for the 50th anniversary of *Applied Optics* from former Editor in Chief Glenn D. Boreman. © 2012 Optical Society of America
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During the six-year span of my tenure as Editor in Chief of *Applied Optics*, the trend toward all-electronic communication continued. I had been involved since 1992 with editorial service for the journal and had witnessed the transition from mailed packages of blue file folders from the OSA home office to faxes (sometimes very lengthy) and e-mail. All of this accelerated the pace of activities and compressed the time line for publication, which was good for the journal and for the authors. In those days, the editors' remote database had a command-line-driven text-only format. But even with slow Internet connections, the response to searches was quite rapid. To the consternation of some of the OSA staff, I continued to use that system until the end of my time at *Applied Optics*. Now in my activities with *Optics Express*, I use the new and improved version of the database.

One of the main challenges of the editor's job was to find capable and willing topical editors and division editors. The division editors make decisions about which topical editors to use, and the topical editors have the direct interface with the authors, select the reviewers, and decide on acceptance or rejection of manuscripts. By the time I became Editor in Chief, I had served in all three capacities for *Applied Optics*. I continue as a topical editor (now called an associate editor) for *Optics Express*. Of all of the functions, my favorite is the direct interface with the authors and reviewers—at least most of the time. It never ceases to amaze me how some of the most

prolific article authors are always “too busy” to review. Seems to me to be a professional obligation. But now with search engines, it is usually feasible to find willing and well-qualified reviewers. The interface with author colleagues entails quite a bit of correspondence, most of it routine and pleasant. Two instances stand out in my memory, from when we still received revised manuscripts by mail. A particular package was addressed to the “Tropical Editor.” Living in Florida for many years, I got a good chuckle out of that one. The other was a letter I received from an irate colleague whose paper had been rejected. This fellow wrote his entire screed in Latin. By the time I plowed through it, I almost wished I had not studied Latin in high school. All I can offer in response is that *Applied Optics* did not accept all of my papers either! The nicest thing about again being a lower-on-the-totem-pole editor is that there is someone else to send the complaints to for resolution.

There were two significant structural developments during the 2000–2005 timeframe. One was the change from each division (Optical Technology, Lasers & Environmental Optics, and Information Processing) publishing once per month to a combined format coming out every ten days, with the divisions identified in the table of contents. This helped to reduce time to publication and was well received by authors and readers. The other significant development was the establishment of a separate Biomedical Optics division of *Applied Optics*. This thematic grouping proved to be so popular that these papers now have their own journal, *Biomedical Optics Express*.

I will close my editorial by expressing my gratitude for having been allowed to serve the OSA in this way. It was an honor and a pleasure.

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“Only a fool would leave the enjoyment of rainbows to the opticians. Or give the science of optics the last word on the matter.” —Edward Abbey