

My Farewell to the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*

As readers and contributors to the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* (JMC), most of you know I will retire as Editor-in-Chief (EIC) at the end of 2011. I am exceptionally pleased that Professors Gunda Georg and Shaomeng Wang will serve as my replacements at editorial offices located at the University of Minnesota and University of Michigan, respectively. Both are highly respected medicinal chemists who have served JMC over the years. I wish them the best in their new adventure. The Journal will be in excellent hands.

JMC has undergone considerable change since the start of my journey in 1972 when I replaced Alfred Burger who cofounded the Journal in 1959. As background, its title was originally *Journal of Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry*, which was changed to JMC a year after acquisition by the American Chemical Society in 1962. At that time, JMC was published bimonthly and was the only journal dedicated exclusively to medicinal chemistry.

Since medicinal chemistry research in 1962 was confined mainly to pharmaceutical companies and a small number of academic departments in pharmacy and medical schools, 70% of the approximately 100 published papers were from pharmaceutical companies and research institutes, with the remainder from academia. A majority of industrial medicinal chemists were not trained in medicinal chemistry and had acquired their background in this area on the job.

As medicinal chemistry matured in the 1960s, more chemists involved in drug research, particularly those from the pharmaceutical industry, employed JMC as a venue for publishing their work. By 1971, the number of submissions had increased sufficiently to warrant expansion to a monthly publication. Over the next 2 decades, the emergence of a body of well-defined drug design principles, together with molecular biology, combinatorial chemistry, high throughput screening, and improved instrumentation, gave rise to significant changes in the practice of medicinal chemistry. In 1992 JMC transitioned to a biweekly publication as a consequence of this heightened activity. Also, the operation of our editorial office was impacted dramatically by the advent of personal computers, resulting in Web submission of manuscripts in 2006.

As the premier journal in the field, many of our editorial policies have been models for editorial requirements adopted by other medicinal chemistry journals that followed JMC over the years. I recall one of my first actions as EIC was directed to enhancing the quality of biological data that accompanied the chemistry. Initially, we received criticism from some authors who accused us of trying to transform JMC into a pharmacology journal. But that editorial requirement was only the start of a long list of changes that were made as the practice of medicinal chemistry underwent transition.

Finally, my tenure as EIC has been a rewarding experience from the standpoint of maintaining JMC's top ranking status in the field, as reflected by its 53,000 citations, 2.7 million Web hits, and 5.2 impact factor in 2010. This would not have been possible without competent, dedicated Editors, Editorial Assistants, ACS staff, and excellent authors and reviewers.

During my tenure JMC has had 25 Editors, all of whom contributed to maintaining its high standards.

In closing, I should mention that one of the conditions for my accepting the editorship of JMC in 1971 was that I naively believed it would not interfere with my research. Even though I have been continually funded by NIH to pursue research during my 40 years of service to JMC, I cannot deny that my editorial responsibilities afforded me less time for research. In anticipating the likelihood of having more time in 2012, I'm already making plans to broaden my research program—and of course, to publish in JMC.

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