The Year in Review

The end of a year provides an opportunity to evaluate how things have gone. For the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, this year marked a lot of changes, most of which concerned the expansion of the journal. My January editorial indicated that we would be increasing the number of pages, developing new departments, and aiming for the regular appearance of the existing Case Report, Brief or New, and The Issue Is departments. So what effect did the expansion have and how are we doing?

The increased number of pages has resulted in a quicker publication time for accepted articles. Before, it often took 13 to 15 months for an accepted paper to be published. We have shortened that time to 12 months. The disadvantage of this shorter publication time is that we have fewer papers available. In its new size, AJOT can accommodate about 10 feature articles per issue, thus, 30 feature articles on hand permits us to plan only 3 months ahead. We would like to see more feature papers submitted, so that we have a steady supply of material for the journal. Feature articles can be of several types, including program descriptions, critical literature reviews, and papers on the state of the art of practice. You may have noticed the categorization of the feature articles into Research, Education, and Practice (another change this year)—All types of feature papers are needed.

The new department added to AJOT this year is called Health Policy. This forum for the discussion of policy issues, policy making, and policy information debuted in October. Planned for three times a year, this department will add variety to the journal while providing information that touches the fabric of our varied careers. Health Policy is being managed by Donalda Ellek, Contributing Editor, who encourages the submission of manuscripts appropriate to this department.

Regarding the other departments, we have managed to have them appear regularly or monthly. More Case Reports have been submitted this year than ever before. We are pleased and hope to see this trend continue, for it is important to document what we do in practice. However, the number of Brief or New papers submitted has fallen. These papers can be on any topic, as long as they are short (< 8 manuscript pages). Submissions to The Issue Is column also need to increase to meet our aim of monthly publication. This department provides an opportunity to air and substantiate a particular point of view.

The contributing editors of two nonmonthly AJOT departments always welcome submissions. Kathleen Barker Schwartz handles the Looking Back department, which publishes papers on occupational therapy history. Richard K. Schwartz, who manages Software & Technology Reviews, is in need of a constant source of reviews.

Periodically throughout this year, AJOT incorporated Occupational Therapy News within its pages, another change. Many members did not approve of this move and registered their opinion in their votes on the Bylaws. Since that vote, we will no longer continue this practice. Next year, most of the news formerly published in OT News will appear in OT Week, and much of the Association business that formerly appeared in OT News will be incorporated in a new Association department in AJOT.

A final change this year was the expansion of the number of special issues from two to three. Ideas for these special issues and their subtopics come from members within the field. Our job is to help the guest editor coordinate the details. This year, the topics were HIV Infection and AIDS (March 1990), the Sensory Integration and Praxis Tests (July 1990), and Multiple Personality Disorder (November 1990). If you are interested in developing a special issue for AJOT, submit your idea or proposal to the Editor.

This is a brief perspective of these changes from my position. Change has the effect of keeping us responsive, current, and on our toes. Change is an incentive for growth. The readers' perspective, however, can be known only through published letters to the editor (get the hint?). I hope to hear from many of you in some form or other in the coming new year, and I take this opportunity to wish you well.

Elaine Viseltcar, Editor