Letter from the editor

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Geosphere. Getting this journal started has been a real learning experience, and I want to thank our associate editors, reviewers, the very able Geological Society of America staff, the Allen Press staff, my outstanding assistant editor, Steve Holloway, and, most of all, the authors who have sent us manuscripts. This partnership has allowed us to proceed from a standing start to this issue in about one year. We intend to maintain this record of moving papers through the system as rapidly as humanly possible. Initially, we will be publishing issues every other month, but we hope to move to monthly issues soon.

It has been gratifying to see the high level of interest our community has expressed for Geosphere. We have already received more than thirty manuscripts and many commitments to manuscripts in the near future. Many authors have asked about the nature of our journal; our primary mission is simply to publish high-quality geoscience research results that are international in scope. We also want to encourage innovative approaches to scientific publication, such as the extensive use of color, animations, and interactivity. Although the electronic medium is extremely flexible and provides for new types of publication opportunities, we intend to follow the tradition of excellence that the Geological Society of America Bulletin, Geology, and GSA books have established.

Geosphere seeks papers from the entire spectrum of the geosciences and accepts manuscripts in several categories. The traditional “research paper” is analogous to papers in the Geological Society of America Bulletin. The short “research note” is to some degree analogous to papers in Geology, but we welcome even shorter contributions. Education is a major part of the mission of GSA, and thus, we welcome “educational contributions” and have already received two papers in this category. As the field of geoinformatics has emerged over the past few years, a common theme has been the need for researchers who have developed databases and software to have an outlet to publish their results in a peer-reviewed forum. Thus, we have established “data contributions” and “software contributions” as categories of publication, and we have a paper dealing with new software in this issue. We intend for these categories to play an active role in the presentation and preservation of basic data, images, and other materials through linkage to the GSA Data Repository, other data archives, and a variety of online resources. With increasing emphasis on data and results funded by government agencies being made readily available to the scientific community, the public, and decision makers, we believe that it is important to provide this vehicle for publication. So far, we have not received any material that we have not easily found a way to publish, and we will make every effort to keep up with technological advances.

We believe Geosphere is off to a good start. We, of course, welcome additional contributions in the form of material to publish. However, I also welcome your input and ideas on how we can make this journal as dynamic and innovative as possible.

Randy Keller
Science Editor