On the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Journal

Ten years ago this month the first issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* was unveiled with considerable fanfare by our Society. The first decade of its existence has been marked by unprecedented growth, and today it is regarded as one of the premiere journals in the subspecialty of nephrology. The editor believes its brief history bears telling.

When the intention of the Society to publish its own journal first surfaced, it would be fair to say that not everyone was wildly enthusiastic. As a member of the Council of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) and a former assistant editor of *Kidney International* (*KI*), I was concerned that this proposed journal might have a negative impact on *KI*. However, after some discussion, Jay Stein, who was the ASN president, gently persuaded the Council to make the vote unanimous in support of a new journal. And so the journey began.

Founding editor Jared Grantham, along with the deputy editor Lawrence Sullivan and their four associate editors Gerald DiBona, William Harris, Jr., Nathan Levin, and Roger Wiggins, who were joined by Harold Helderman in 1991, set about the task of turning the dream into reality. Williams & Wilkins was selected as the publisher, a partnership that continues today. Having firsthand experience in launching a new journal, I can imagine the anxiety the new editor and his deputy editor must have experienced as they awaited each mail delivery hoping that a manuscript would arrive that would eventually find its way into the Journal. Initially, response to the new publication was modest—it did not tap into a mother lode of manuscripts available because of pent-up demand for yet another journal. In fact, submissions during the first 12 months of publication totaled only 170, of which 19 were invited articles. However, after a period of relatively slow growth, the Journal began to develop momentum in the fifth year of publication. In 1996, the final year of Dr. Grantham’s editorship, the editorial office processed 523 manuscripts.

In July of that year, Dr. Grantham handed over the reins of leadership to the current editor, and a new editorial team was assembled. Several changes in editorial content soon followed. Two features, “Letters to the Editor” and the “American Renal Training Centers” series, were phased out during 1997. Two new features, “Disease of the Month” and “Milestones in Nephrology,” were launched, each of which has gained considerable favor among subscribers. In addition, more text pages were devoted to original articles and fewer to invited manuscripts.

The first issue produced by the new editorial team in January 1998 included a redesigned front cover and page format. In addition, the table of contents was reformatted so that the articles were now subdivided into 10 major categories to make it easier for readers to focus on topics of interest.

Because of the effective leadership and dedicated efforts of the founding editor and his colleagues, there was a sense that the Journal was poised for a period of spectacular growth. Figure 1 provides data on the total number of submissions over successive 12-month periods since the inception of the Journal. The yearly rate of growth in new manuscript submissions since 1995 averaged 26%. The Journal, like the annual meeting, has become truly international in character. In 1998, for the first time, submissions from outside North America outnumbered those received from authors located in North America.

With the January 1998 issue, the Journal took its first step into online publication. For the first time, titles and abstracts of all original articles and the entire text of selected special articles could be accessed through our web page. One year later, in the January 1999 issue, all editorials, reviews, the Disease of the Month and Milestones in Nephrology features, and six to eight original articles were made available online without additional cost to subscribers.

In conjunction with our online publication efforts, an exciting new partnership was developed this year with Up To Date to provide our membership with yet another means to acquire the latest clinical information in nephrology and related disciplines. Access to Up To Date is now available to subscribers of the Journal through the Internet without additional cost. Each month, six to eight original articles in the Journal are identified for Internet access through our web page. At the end of each article, instructions for logging onto the Internet to locate Up To Date are provided so readers may obtain additional in-depth information on the same or related subjects highlighted in the original article.

Throughout the 10 years the Journal has been published, both editors have been extremely fortunate to work with the managing editor, Ms. Bonnie O’Brien. Her friendly yet persuasive voice is known throughout the world, especially by

![Figure 1. Number of submissions over successive 12-month periods since the inception of the Journal.](image-url)
those referees including members of the editorial board who may be a bit tardy in returning a promised review. She has been a key ingredient in the success of the Journal. For her it has been a true labor of love.

We also acknowledge the valuable contributions of our publisher, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, formerly Williams & Wilkins, during this first decade of publication. Their staff—including Jim Mulligan, Paul Cook, Karen Zeiler, and Sherri Reed—has worked tirelessly to ensure the publication of a truly outstanding issue each month. The editor and his team thank this dedicated group of professionals.

What does the next decade hold for the Journal? There is little doubt that electronic publishing will be in demand by the majority of subscribers. In anticipation of this demand, plans are under way to offer subscribers the option of receiving the full text of the Journal online each month. Also, it is quite likely that the actual format of the online version of the Journal will change rather drastically with time. In this age of sound bites and electronic mail, brevity is key. The submission, review, and publication of all manuscripts in the future will likely occur electronically. Although journal income from advertising may fall, so should the expense of producing an all-electronic online publication. This form of publication should also afford the opportunity to publish articles more rapidly, thus exposing our readers to new and exciting developments in our subspecialty with far less delay.

Finally, we are sorry we cannot offer you a piece of cake in celebration of our 10th birthday. However, we do invite you to devour the content of this issue of the Journal. We believe you will be glad you indulged.

C. Craig Tisher, M.D.

Editor