

A Very Good Run

Michael T. Eismann

Editor-in-Chief



In 2015, as I was spending the Fourth of July holiday at my brother-in-law's vacation house on the Tennessee River, I received an unexpected call from Eugene Arthurs, the former chief executive officer of SPIE. Ron Driggers had just departed as editor-in-chief of *Optical Engineering*, and Eugene called me on behalf of the SPIE board of directors to invite me to replace Ron as editor-in-chief. I had already been serving as one of the senior editors for the journal, so I was reasonably well-positioned to take on these broader responsibilities. I accepted the position for a minimum tenure of three years but also indicated that I would not remain in the position beyond five years to enable the succession opportunity for the next leader of the journal. While it has been a good

run in the editor position over what has now slightly exceeded this duration, the time has come for me to end my tenure. I will do so at the end of this month.

Leading *Optical Engineering* over the past few years has been a very rewarding experience for me. I have been honored to serve this prestigious and recognized journal, the flagship of our SPIE community, and to maintain its legacy and core function as the archival scholarly venue for research and development in the optical engineering field. The landscape of scholarly publishing has changed significantly since that day when Eugene called me to serve, and the staff, editorial board, and I have had to navigate through these changes. Despite the tremendous increase in competition for journal content, we have managed to increase the overall journal interest and impact, maintaining it as an important resource for the community. We have succeeded in completing the transition to a completely digital format that is opening up opportunities for delivering information to our readership in new and alternative ways. We have strengthened the integrity of the journal relative to plagiarism and other ethical concerns that have diminished some other journals, and have successfully executed our hybrid open access policy optimized toward author choice. Along the way, we also recruited leading research and engineering content, notably through many highly successful special sections. The current state of *Optical Engineering* is strong, but the continually changing publication environment may necessitate further changes as outlined in my most recent Year in Review editorial.

Although proud of the steady journal improvement, the most rewarding component of this position for me has unquestionably been the opportunity to interact with so many amazing people. Our editorial board is composed of numerous highly recognized and competent scientists and engineers across the world from a diverse set of backgrounds and institutions. I have particularly enjoyed reaching out to new prospective editorial board members and greatly appreciated their enthusiastic willingness to serve our society in a completely voluntary capacity. As I noted in prior editorials, the SPIE staff who supported me over my tenure have been simply marvelous. Of all the terrific staff members, I want to personally highlight Karen Klokkevold, the *Optical Engineering* manuscript coordinator, without whom this journal simply would not function. One of my direct responsibilities has been to personally initiate and arrange special sections, a duty in which I have had the pleasure to engage so many outstanding guest editors. Of course, the people who ultimately drive the journal are our numerous authors and reviewers, the latter being the unsung heroes of the enterprise. Knowing this, I started a tradition of annually recognizing top reviewers for *Optical Engineering*, a practice that I hope continues after my departure.

Starting in January, I will hand the reins of this journal over to Dr. Adam Wax of Duke University. While I was not privy to the process that led to my appointment as editor-in-chief, I was a member of the search committee and selection board that recommended Adam for this

position to the publications committee and ultimately the SPIE board of directors. I can unequivocally confirm that the search was incredibly extensive, the vetting process extremely rigorous, and the selection highly competitive. Adam brings a breadth and depth of experience, expertise, insight, and vision into this position that I am confident will translate into success. I welcome Adam as my successor and wish him well as he tackles the challenges of maintaining the journal as a vital resource for our optical engineering community, fully support him in that endeavor, and encourage all of you who have faithfully supported me over the past five years to grant him the same level of support.

It has been a very good run serving as your editor-in-chief for *Optical Engineering*, and I would like to thank all of you whom I have encountered along the way for your service, support, contributions, and commitment to SPIE and its flagship journal. While my editorial tenure imminently ends, my SPIE involvement will undoubtedly continue as it has over my entire career, and I look forward to seeing how *Optical Engineering* continues to evolve in the future.