

## From the President

Forty-five years ago, when the Council of Science Editors was formed (as the Conference of Biological Editors) by a joint action of the National Science Foundation and the American Institute of Biological Sciences, much was different and yet the same. The broadcast revolution of the late 1950s and today's electronic revolution are powerful transitions that force us to question our means of communication and our professional futures. In 1957, Sputnik, atomic energy, antibiotics, and a newly released oral polio vaccine dominated headlines; in 2002, lasers, nanotechnology, cyberterrorism and bioterrorism, and genetic discoveries carry the day. And sadly, a crisis in the Middle East then and now reminds us that "the world is too much with us."

A few years ago, when CSE formally broadened its mandate to include all sciences, we were asked to consider a new logo to demonstrate that CSE remains current. The Board of Directors

considered replacing the "dated" nib and laboratory beaker with more modern icons. The board's decision to retain the logo reflects continued confidence in our mission. While ink and beakers are being replaced by bytes and microscopic vessels, print journals clone online versions, and publishers experiment with portals, the basic meaning implied by the quaint CSE symbol—the unification of science and communication—remains the focus of our vocation, our profession, our passion.

CSE's mission—to improve communication in the sciences—continues to guide us well. As a professional society and authoritative resource, CSE fulfills its mission through its annual meeting, educational courses, *Science Editor*, its Web site, its editorial policies, and its style manual—*Scientific Style and Format*—as well as by providing venues for member networking. Our membership is diverse, comprising editors of all "species", publishers, writers, librarians,

informatics experts, and communicators and purveyors of print and online scientific information.

Our membership base is solid. As of 8 May, we had 1006 members in 24 countries, including 209 members who joined since May 2001. Our renewal rate has been 80% to 86% since 1988, but overall membership remains between 1000 and 1100. With new dedicated marketing efforts under way, we hope to increase the number of new members and the renewal rate. Revenues generated by the annual meeting help us to maintain a membership fee that does not cover the full costs of servicing members. More than one third of our members attend the annual meeting each year, and the meeting and the CSE short courses continue to offer the best available educational and professional development. The board plans to identify other nondues sources of revenue. More than 15,000 purchased the sixth edition of the CSE style manual, and the sev-

enth edition is nearly complete. The Publications Committee will assess other CSE books and guidelines and will report a plan by early fall. Our newest member service—the CSE Web site—is used by 4000 unique visitors each month. And about 10% of our members volunteer to serve the Council each year.

Even with that solid foundation, we face challenges. In our personal and professional lives, we must be prepared to be more accountable and transparent, to publish faster and better, and to do more with less. We can rely on CSE and our member colleagues, friends, mentors, and leaders for guidance. We must continue our efforts to promote CSE to editors and communicators in all sciences and continue to serve our current members with programs, products, and services while maintaining fiscal responsibility. I welcome your comments and views about how we can meet those challenges as we begin our next 45 years.

**Annette Flanagin**

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