A changing of the guard

Blood's major goal is to bring to its print and online pages the best in basic and clinical investigation in the field of hematology. Blood, the official journal of the American Society of Hematology, is international in scope and reach, as evidenced by the geographical breadth of its authors, subscribers, and readers. The journal seeks balance in the range of hematology subjects that it handles and in the relevance of its published papers to scientists and clinicians. Given the explosion of specialized knowledge in the biological sciences, achieving this balance is no easy task, but it is our raison d'être. Pessimists might doubt that such a balance can be attained. Optimists, and we count ourselves in this group, might argue that bringing the latest basic and clinical investigation together in one journal is an efficient way to provide information to a readership that is dedicated to moving discoveries from the bench to the bedside. After all, as exemplified by the work of the late Dr William B. Castle on pernicious anemia,1 hematologists have a long and illustrious track record in integrating basic science with patient care. Consequently, while a particular article in any given issue of Blood may seem to be in the purview of but a segment of our readership, we will strive to bridge any divide between basic and clinical hematology. This effort will be facilitated by our Inside Blood feature and by commissioning a new series of concise reviews highlighting recent advances in translational hematology.

Since the inaugural issue of Blood in 1946, the quality of the journal has been maintained in large part through the vision and commitment of its editors and editorial boards, stewards to whom the present generation of readers owes a debt of gratitude. This issue of the journal sees a passing of the guard from one editorial team, led by Dr Kenneth Kaushansky, to another. Dr Kaushansky deserves great credit for shepherding the journal in the last 5 years through an unprecedented thicket of change and growth, resulting in increased efficiency, quality, and impact. During his tenure and that of his editorial team, Blood converted to self-publishing, underwent a stylistic facelift, consolidated the editorial and publication functions to a highly efficient central office in Washington, DC, and moved to online review and rapid online publication of accepted manuscripts. Submissions to the journal have increased a remarkable 55% from 1997 to 2002, and the number of articles published per issue has increased by 18% in this period of time. The accelerated pace of scientific investigation and the ongoing revolution in journal publishing promise new challenges in the next 5 years. Fortunately, several Associate Editors from the old guard will be staying on, and several talented new ones will be joining them to meet the challenges. We invite feedback from our readers for suggestions on how to continue to improve the journal, and we look forward to participating in Blood's evolution, in the best tradition of editorial teams past.

Sanford J. Shattil, MD
Editor-in-Chief

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