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Editorial Comments

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

As my term as Editor of the *Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science* has rapidly drawn to an end, I have looked back at the past five years with mixed emotions. On one hand, the position brings with it a great many headaches, including deadlines, poor writing style by some authors, and irate authors feeling that they have been grievously wronged. On the other hand, one makes many new acquaintances and friends, gains an insight into the scientific community not seen by most people and feels that self-satisfaction and pride of seeing a job well done.

Many people deserve a large measure of my thanks for helping produce the last five volumes of the *Proceedings*. Probably the most important person associated with the production of any journal is the Editorial Assistant. My Editorial Assistant, Ms. Robin G. Heidt used her biology and English background plus a sharp eye for detail to edit, correct and check for uniformity in the diverse array of manuscripts submitted. Without her knowledge and ability my job would have been tremendously hampered. The various Associate Editors have also made my job much easier. Of the several Associate Editors who have worked on the *Proceedings* over the past five years, I would like to pay particular thanks to Drs. John K. Beadles (Aquatic Biology), Walter Manger (Geology), Alex Nisbet (Chemistry), Neal Buffaloe (Science Education) and Dale Ferguson (Biology). These men not only played an important role in the collection and evaluation of manuscripts but they also were instrumental in setting up programs for the annual meetings. I also want to thank the many reviewers who have helped review the 200 + manuscripts submitted for publication over the past five years. These persons gave freely of their time and expertise in an effort to produce a proceedings consisting of high quality papers. Finally, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Mr. Phil Phillips and the staff of Phillips Litho, Inc. in Springdale, Arkansas, who have printed the *Proceedings* during my term as Editor. Of that staff, a particular thanks goes to Ms. Kathy Poore who has more or less ram-rodged the entire production. Without her help, patience, expertise and general good humor the last five volumes would probably have never been completed.

A summary of papers submitted and published in the last five volumes of the *Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science* appears in Table 1. I would like to emphasize two things from the table. First, the format of the *Proceedings* was changed, with Volume 31, to include a General Notes section in addition to the Feature Articles. This was done to allow shorter communications to be published in note form, thus saving space in the *Proceedings*. Furthermore, it has allowed the publication of several communications which might otherwise not have been printed. As can be seen, this section has been successful and if the comments that I have received are reliable, the format has been well accepted.

Secondly, and more importantly, note the percentage of manuscripts which have been either withdrawn or rejected for publication. It has been the ultimate goal of this editor and editorial staff to produce a proceedings indicative of the generally high scientific professionalism found in Arkansas. Unfortunately, in order to accomplish this goal, not all of the submitted manuscripts are judged to be suitable for publication. However, it must be remembered that the journals of any of the state Academies of Science are the most important and often the only outlet for publishing data concerning

the local area. This is particularly true as national and regional journals are shifting emphasis toward research of a national or wider regional interest. In addition, the journal of a state's Academy of Science is often the major outlet for publication of papers prepared by graduate and advanced undergraduate students. As such, these journals represent a major part of a student's educational process and an editor must be cognizant of this while evaluating and processing manuscripts. Thus, it becomes the job of the editor and editorial staff to balance the goals of publishing papers of high scientific merit with that of publishing information of local interest and/or students learning the scientific profession. I hope we have accomplished that job over the past five years. I would like to further emphasize that the *Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science* is a refereed journal and not all papers submitted for publication are automatically accepted. Since it is my view that the journals of the state Academies of Science will, in the future, be the major depositories of local information, I strongly feel that the *Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science* both deserves and should be held in a more favorable position by college and university administrators.

As a direct result of my position as Editor, I would like to offer you, my colleagues, two major criticisms. First, it has been my impression from examining numerous student papers, that a number of our state scientists are remiss in their job of teaching students how to compose and write scientific papers. I feel that it is one of our major responsibilities as educators to be sure that individuals leaving our laboratories are well schooled in all aspects of scientific endeavor, including graphics as well as writing. I admonish some of my colleagues to take note and improve this aspect of education. Remember, your students directly reflect back upon you.

Secondly, it was with a great deal of soul-searching that the editorial board had to institute page charges with Volume 34, 1980. IT IS A DISGRACE THAT THE ARKANSAS ACADEMY OF SCIENCE DOES NOT ENJOY THE SUPPORT FROM ARKANSAS SCIENTISTS THAT IT BOTH DESERVES AND NEEDS. To emphasize this point, I would like to list the memberships of the Academies of Science in this area: Arkansas - 250, Missouri - 933, Tennessee - 700, Mississippi - 936, Louisiana - 800, Texas - 900, and Oklahoma - 800. To me this is appalling! Every scientist in this state should support the Arkansas Academy of Science. If the Academy had the full support of the scientific community, page charges would be nonexistent and more services, such as scholarships or special publications, could be provided to Arkansas scientists. I would urge those of you who are members and do support the AAS to put appropriate pressures on your colleagues who aren't.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to my colleagues in the Arkansas Academy of Science for allowing me the privilege of serving as their Editor for the past five years. It has not only been a valuable learning experience and opportunity to meet and make new friends, but also has given me a great deal of personal satisfaction and pride. I give my best wishes and crying towel to your next Editor, Dr. V. Rick McDaniel.

Gary A. Heidt, Editor
Arkansas Academy of Science, 1977-82

Table 1. Publication Summary of the Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science, 1977-1981.

Volume/Year	Number of Manuscripts Submitted	Number of Manuscripts Rejected or Withdrawn (%)	Number of Manuscripts Published	
			Feature Articles	General Notes
31 - 1977	54	13 (24.1%)	33	8
32 - 1978	39	8 (20.5%)	22	9
33 - 1979	41	5 (12.9%)	19	17
34 - 1980	59	14 (23.7%)	24	21
35 - 1981	32	6 (18.8%)	15	11
Total	225	46 (20.4%)	113	66