

Editorial

HAPPY, healthy, and a prosperous new year! It has been a long time since I communicated to you this way and much happened in the meantime.

About a year ago, I was appointed for a second three-year term as Editor-in-Chief IEEE PHOTONICS TECHNOLOGY LETTERS by the LEOS Board of Governors. I thank the board and the community for their support and confidence in me. I will do my best to keep PTL as the premier letters journal in the field of photonics.

If one thing can summarize what happened in the first three years that would be rapid change. In the second year of my term, there was a significant drop in the submissions. But since then we are experiencing very significant growth in submissions. This year we will most likely get more than 1300 submissions, which is an all-time record. Such submission numbers also present a challenge for us. Our mission is to publish high-quality innovative research results rapidly. To this end, we decided to employ a fully online, web-based system. This system is called Manuscript Central, and at the present time is fully operational. Since September, we have been encouraging authors to submit their manuscripts using this system and starting this year we will require all submissions made through this online system.

Manuscript central can be reached at the following URL: <http://ptl-ieee.manuscriptcentral.com>. Every user should have a login ID and a password. That information has already been mailed to all the LEOS members earlier this year and you can contact PTL Editorial Office (ptlassis@ieee.org) if you need a remainder or an account. However, any user can check for an existing account under his/her name or set up a new account. It is most helpful if every user of the system provides the requested information for new users and keeps only one user account. This helps us to have an up-to-date database without duplicate entries. This database is perhaps the most significant benefit of this online system. It gives us an online database to reach and choose reviewers very effectively. The corresponding author of every new submission is entered in to the database as a potential reviewer along with the keywords provided. Having a unique and fully described entry for every member of the community will be of tremendous help in identifying potential reviewers. Remember that this is a community effort and we all should be involved.

Manuscript submission requires submitting the required information using several different screens and finally uploading the text and figures. It is accessible from anywhere and provides very rapid submission. Furthermore, authors can follow the progress of their manuscript online. The manuscripts are assigned to Associate Editors and sent to reviewers very rapidly. A reviewer can track the manuscripts assigned to him and submit a

review very conveniently. Periodic automatic reminders are sent to the reviewers and Associate Editors. Any user can access the system from anywhere having a web connection. Our experience so far has been quite pleasant. In a few cases, we even had three comprehensive reviews within a week of submission! We are very anxious to hear comments from the community.

It was also decided to decrease the time allowed for revisions from the current limit of four months to six weeks in the spirit of rapid publication. In reality, most revisions are made within a month and this policy change should not change things drastically. Hopefully, it will also provide an incentive to authors who take longer to revise their papers to complete the revisions earlier. This will help us to shorten the time from submission to publication. This policy change will be effective to the manuscripts submitted on and after January 2004.

In the meantime, we also increased the number of our volunteers and staffing of PTL to better cope with the surge in submissions. We now have another full-time PTL staff member in the LEOS Editorial Office at IEEE headquarters in Piscataway, NJ. She is Claire Chin Tan-Yan. Claire works with Sylvia Flores under the supervision of Linda Matarazzo, the Publications Manager. As you all know, PTL is an all-volunteer operation. Without the voluntary dedication of community members as reviewers and editors, we would never enjoy the quality forum we have right now. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Associate Editors to PTL. They are: Professor Peter Andrekson of Chalmers Institute of Technology (presently at Lehigh University), Professor Dan Botez of University of Wisconsin at Madison, Dr. Noboru Edagawa of the KDDI Research and Development Laboratories, Professor Ben Eggleton of University of Sydney, Professor David Richardson of University of Southampton, Professor Yuh-wa Lo of University of California at San Diego, Professor Antonio Mecozzi of the University of L'Aquila, Professor Masataka Nakazawa of Tohoku University, Professor Namkyoo Park of Seoul National University, Dr. Thomas Pearsall of Genie Conseil-Engineering Solutions, and Professor Ben Yoo of University of California at Davis. I also take this opportunity to thank them and the other members of the photonics community participating as reviewers and authors. Their time and dedication makes PTL the premier journal it is. I also encourage other members of the community in actively participating in the operation of PTL.

We are hoping that these changes will significantly improve the quality and efficiency of PTL operation, while maintaining the high level of excellence PTL has already achieved. I am looking forward to implementing these changes and welcome any comments and suggestions.

NADIR DAGLI, *Editor-in-Chief*
University of California at Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA 93106 USA