A335.1 JOURNAL OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND LIFE SCIENCES EDUCATION EDITORIAL BOARD

The JNRLSE Editorial Board met on Sunday, 2 Nov. 2003 in Denver, CO. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by the editor and chair, Dr. Doug Malo. Retiring Editorial Board members were recognized, new members were welcomed, and introductions were made. Those present were:

Doug Malo, Editor
Ken Barbarick, ASA Editor-in-Chief
Jeff Voleneec, CSSA Editor-in-Chief
Warren Dick, SSSA Editor-in-Chief
Nora Ransom, Associate Editor
Don Lee, Associate Editor
Jeffory Hattey, Associate Editor
Jim McKenna, Associate Editor, Books
Susan Ernst, Managing Editor

Comments from the ASA Editor-in-Chief—Ken Barbarick

This summer the Editors-in-Chief met in conjunction with the Budget and Finance Committee regarding keeping the journal budgets sound. The B&F Committee and the Editors-in-Chief decided to bundle the journals for nonmember (library) subscribers. The good news is that JNRLSE will be included in the bundle and will receive $60 for each library subscription. The budget should be positive next year. The B&F committee also decided to institute a flat publication fee, which will be $350 per manuscript (member or nonmember).

Comments from the CSSA Editor-in-Chief—Jeff Voleneec

The CSSA Editor-in-Chief agreed that the flat publication fee makes budgetary sense. Crop Science is using a flat fee and it works fine. Bundling is a good thing as well. It pushes the fee onto the libraries, which makes sense because personal subscriptions have been decreasing due to the fact that faculty have library access; why subscribe when you can get access through the library? We hope that we don’t see a big drop in institutional subscriptions. He stressed that the JNRLSE editorial board should not worry about the budget; and should assume the books are balanced. The JNRLSE editorial board now needs to concentrate on your work and be optimistic for the future of the journal.

Managing Editor’s Report—Susan Ernst

Production

Production of Volume 32 (2003) of JNRLSE is almost complete. In 2003 the journal was again electronic with one issue published at year-end. Totals in Table 1 are as of 22 Oct. 2003. A summary of papers published, total pages, etc. for 1998 to 2003 is as follows:

Table 1. Published papers in JNRLSE, 1998–2003.

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<td>Articles</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Profiles</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Reviews</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New features</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-16 Science</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web Lessons</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total pages</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average length per paper</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of pages published in 2003 will be 24 less than in 2002 (144 vs. 168). The number of articles submitted to JNRLSE in 2003 is at 27 papers compared with 26 at this time last year. The total submitted in 2002 was 31. The acceptance rate for the journal is averaging about 82%.

The new category Peer Reviewed Web Lessons/Learning Activities (PRWL) was started this year. We hope to have several more web lessons published in the next few years.

The journal continues to be diverse. The following departments are represented this year: Natural Resources and Landscape Architecture; Crop Science; Plant and Soil Sciences; Soil Science; Natural Resource Ecology and Management; Educational Leadership and Policy Studies; School of Natural Resources; Food and Resource Economics; Agronomy and Horticulture; USDA-ARS; Plant Sciences; Mathematics and Science; Fisheries Wildlife and Conservation Biology; Agronomy and Plant Genetics; Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications; Plants, Soils, and Biometeorology; Environmental Soil Science Program; and Campus Writing Program.

The 2003 issue was typeset in-house. Printing of the journal continues at Capital City Press, Montpelier, VT, under a contract that expires at the end of 2005.

Journal Website. The 2003 volume is available on the website at www.JNRLSE.org. The site is updated throughout the year and one printed copy is published in December. The website is being handled in-house by our webmaster, Elizabeth Tucker.

Web statistics for the dates 22 June to 21 Oct. 2003 are as follows:

- 2072 hits total via agronomy.org/journals/jnrlse/index.html (via the ASA homepage).
- 6398 hits total via jnrlse.org/index.html (going directly to the JNRLSE homepage).
- Approximately 2117 hits per month on average for 2003.
- For comparison, there were about 1275 hits per month on average for 2002.
- To date we have 195 subscribers to the JNRLSE email alert. Anyone can subscribe to the email alert; you do not need to be a journal subscriber to receive the email alerts. The alerts provide notices that new materials have been posted to the website.
- Note that the top three articles are all from previous years. The highest 2003 article is in fourth place.
- The average visitor spends 10 minutes on our page per visit.
- Article is the most popular search category followed by K-16 Science.
- Case Studies is the most popular subject index category followed by Environment and Natural Resources (tied for second place) and Soil Science in third place.
- 43% of visitors come in through an education network (.edu), 14% come in from a network (.net), 14% come in through a commercial network (.com), 11% come in through a nonprofit network (.org), and 3% come in through the Canadian network (.ca).
- 1:00 to 2:00 pm is our busiest hour and Tuesday is our busiest day on average.

Note that these statistics were made possible because of the action the Editorial Board took at least year’s meeting. The action to
purchase a statistical package for the ASA-CSSA-SSSA websites was approved by the ASA Board of Directors and purchased in June 2003.

Survey to Subscribers and Dropped Subscribers

During August 2003 we sent out a survey to current JNRLSE subscribers and those who dropped their subscriptions in the last 5 years. The main reason for the survey was to get feedback on the possibility of producing a year-end, searchable CD-ROM instead of the printed copy. We wondered if that would affect subscriptions to the journal.

After carefully looking at the survey results, we decided to continue publication of the end-of-year printed copy and will not publish a CD-ROM. Although 82% of current subscribers responded that they would continue to subscribe if the print copy were replaced with a searchable, year-end CD, there were many comments that subscribers still prefer the printed copy over a CD. This was true for both individuals and libraries.

Circulation

Circulation of JNRLSE as of October 2003 is 500 copies: 380 member and 120 nonmember subscribers. This is a loss of 42 from last year at this time. See Table 2 for circulation numbers for recent years.

Beginning in 2004 the journal subscriptions to nonmembers will be offered in a bundle. The bundle options consist of the following choices: Package 1—all six Society journals for $1800; Package 2—two journals for $1100; Package 3—single subscription at $600 each. Note that JNRLSE is included in Package 2 as “free” and the single subscription price is $100 (rather than $600). There are a few other variations to the packages; see the order form at http://www.asa-cssa-sssa.org/edit_forms/subscription_rates.pdf.

Promotion

JNRLSE is just beginning to join what the other journals are finding success in: using the Research Press Releases created by Sara Uttech, membership marketing and communications manager at headquarters. They highlight the innovative research published in our journals. The editor, technical editors, and/or managing editor tap three to four articles each issue to be featured as a Press Release. The author in turn writes an Interpretive Summary, which is used as the basis for the Press Release. Two outlets receive these Press Releases: (1) EurekAlert! from AAAS: a press release service sent to 4000+ science journalists; and (2) Environmental News Network: an email newsletter sent daily to 25,000 subscribers.

This past year has seen an increase in the number of media picking up our Press Releases, including: Science Daily, Science Central, NASA’s Earth Observatory, The Toronto Star, Pittsburgh Post Gazette, Discover Magazine, and a featured video news clip about a JEQ article with author Sally Brown, on ABC and NBC news affiliates.

We also feature excerpts from the press release in our own communications: (1) News Flash: biweekly members-only email newsletter (this is more common with the JNRLSE articles); (2) CSA News: monthly newsletter to 11,000+ members and department chairs; and (3) website: our websites feature a link called “Research Highlights.”

For 2004—We should consider doing an email mailing to all subscribers and/or ASA-CSSA-SSSA members along with some sample abstracts of key articles (similar to a sample issue) and give them the option to subscribe to the JNRLSE email alert. We could possibly get some new subscribers to the journal if they can see what the articles are like from the abstracts in the email.

Editorial Comments

New Publication Fee. With papers submitted in 2004, there will be a new structure for assessing page and production charges. Starting with 2004 papers, there will be a flat publishing fee per manuscript. That fee will be $350.00 for members and nonmembers.

Manuscript Processing. We greatly value any help the associate editors provide regarding technical aspects of a manuscript. Any help the AEs can provide with style matters is also appreciated and will make things flow smoother for the final editorial production. Please refer authors to the Publications Handbook and Style Manual, which is available in hard copy or online at http://www.asa-cssa-sssa.org/style/ and to the Instructions to Authors, published in each issue and available online at http://www.jnrlse.org/author.html.

Also, please check your copy of the query letter to authors, which is sent out when we edit each paper in our office. The main editorial problems in each manuscript are listed in that letter; some of the questions can be cleared up during review/revision.

Please complete the R&R form for each paper, completely and clearly. We need to refer back to names, places, dates, and so forth. Your help is greatly appreciated.


Cooperators


APS: The journal is listed under Education Center, Instructors, www.apsnet.org

AAAE: The journal is linked under Publications, www.aaaeonline.org

AIBS: The website lists JNRLSE on their Education and Outreach page, www.aibs.org

ASPB: JNRLSE is linked on the ASPB homepage under Education, www.aspb.org

ASHS: Ken Mudge says the link will be established soon, but to date it is not yet there (21 Oct. 2003).

EntSA: The journal is linked on the ESA website under their Publications and Online Journals page at www.entsoc.org

EcolSA: The journal is listed on the ESA Links page, www.esa.org

CSSA and SSSA: The journal is linked on their web pages, www.crops.org and www.soils.org

Reviewer Database

The Reviewer Database includes 1248 people who volunteered to review manuscripts. During the year we added the section Edu-
cation to the Reviewer Database. A request went out to members that asked them to update their information on the database, and add their name to the Education section if appropriate. There were 73 new names added this year, of which 12 were added to the Education section. The editorial board is strongly encouraged to sign up for the Education category of the Reviewer Database.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to all those who help with the journal, from submission to publication. Thank you to Doug Malo, editor; all the associate editors; Meg Johnson, editorial assistant; Linda Nelson, typesetter; Penny Magana, editorial assistant for reprints; and Elizabeth Tucker, webmaster.

Editor’s Report—Doug Malo

The diversity of articles both in discipline and geographic location continued in 2003. Articles from the Middle East and Africa, and many other countries were accepted for publication. During 2003 there continued to be a significant number of articles and contributions from natural resources and life science areas outside the journal’s former target audience of the agronomic sciences. Associate editors from our cooperating societies facilitate and enhance the review process for our diverse articles. Since 1999, the electronic version of the journal has been posted on the journal’s dedicated website (www.jnrlse.org) as materials are accepted for publication. The redesigned website is user friendly and attractive. This year we developed the review process and guidelines for a new publication category to the journal, the Peer Reviewed Web Lesson/Learning Activity (PRWL).

Non-web lesson manuscript submissions for 2003 are slightly higher than last year at 29. In 2004 we expect an increase in submissions due to the PRWL category. The number of media reviews is down from last year while the number of newsfeatures more than doubled. The number of K-16 Science Education articles is constant and we completed work on the first web lessons, which are being published in the 2003 issue of JNRLSE.

Subscription number have fallen since 1996, except for a small increase in 2000. We need to be concerned about the trends in subscription numbers. The bundling of our journal with other society journals will probably increase our number of subscriptions and increase our cash flow to the point that the JNRLSE will come closer to breaking even in the future.

There will also be an increase in the publication charges for our journal and the funds generated by this activity will help reduce or eliminate our budget shortfall. In 2004 the new publication cost for manuscripts in our journal will be $350 per manuscript (no length limitation). During the last few years the average page length of JNRLSE manuscript was six pages. The new flat fee represents only a $20 increase when the cost of the two pages ($165/page) over four are considered. Increasing subscription rates may and will probably further depress subscription numbers. Various options will be considered during the Strategic Planning activities planned for 2004 with the goal of providing a recommendation to the ASA-CSSA-SSSA Board for consideration at the 2004 annual meetings.

We will need to highlight our new publication category to ASA and other societies in 2004. One of the aspects of the new category is a PRWL seal of approval that is placed on every approved web lesson home page. The seal is a direct electronic link to JNRLSE and will increase the number of visits to the website of our journal. Other journal options (e.g., all electronic journal, all electronic with CD at end of year, and others) and future direction of the journal will be considered more extensively in a survey of subscribers and Division A-1 members during 2004 to determine what viable alternatives are available and acceptable to the membership.

Overall timeliness has improved slightly during 2003 (Table 3). We are still not as fast as we should be and we will try to improve the length of time for new manuscripts received in the later part of 2003 and 2004. We did approve more manuscripts in 2003 than in 2002 when one considers the 13 Peer Reviewed Web Lessons/Learning Activities. More reviewers were involved in the review process this year when compared with 2002.

Strategic Plan. During 2002 the JNRLSE was asked to develop a strategic plan for the journal and propose a plan to increase subscriptions and reduce the deficit. With the change in subscription policy and page charge increases to be adopted 1 Jan. 2004, we have removed the budget issue and we need to now work on increasing our subscription numbers. We need to develop our long-range plan for the future with the goal of having a detailed plan ready for 2004. Many options include looking at content, articles, audience, cost, delivery method; other options will need to be evaluated. [The ASA Editor-in-Chief pointed out that the nonmember (library) subscriptions will probably increase due to the new bundling packages.]

The Editor pointed out that some goals of the Strategic Plan are to evaluate the review process, attract international authors and associate editors, increase hits to the website (which is happening), and relieve financial concerns (bundling should help).

Closing Remarks. Special thanks are due to Associate Editors completing their three-year terms. They include Daniel Devlin, Robert Joly, Donald Johnson, George Middendorf, Kenneth Mudge, Nora Ransom, and Alfred Turgeon. George Middendorf and Alfred Turgeon have agreed to an additional three-year appointment. In addition, Jeff Coker, Howard Woodard, Don Lee, Jeff Hattey, and Leo Schleicher have agreed to serve three-year terms. Additional Associate Editors will be identified during the remainder of 2003 and early 2004. The editor needs to make sure that Associate Editors are identified from our cooperating organizations. The Editorial Board thanks Beth Tucker for her revisions, updating, and work with the JNRLSE web site. The site is attractive and easy to navigate. Sincere appreciation is given to Managing Editor Susan Ernst for her continuing excellence in her work at headquarters. Thanks to all the continuing Associate Editors for the past year, and to the other headquarters staff who have helped make JNRLSE work.

ACTION: It was moved that Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education be added to the Manuscript Tracker electronic submission and review system in 2004. Seconded. Carried.

Other Matters

Jim McKenna stressed that this journal is the “life blood” of our Society because it is for teachers and students. The educational arm of the Society has to communicate and this journal is the means of communication.

Case Studies. It was discussed whether if would be a good idea to publish the case studies from JNRLSE into a CD or other media to sell. Jim McKenna said he thought it would be a good idea and we should look into the possibility. We would need to include the complete study with the other documents associated with it (we
published abridged versions). The “supporting documents” would add functionality. The Editor will look for a Case Study Associate Editor who could served as head for this project.

**Symposia.** Jeff Hattey told the board that the symposium in Division A-1 titled “Outcomes Assessment: From the Institution to the Classroom” is happening this week. There are seven papers that will undergo peer review for our journal. Jeff will be the Associate Editor for these papers.

**Web Lessons.** The new category Web Lessons is new to the 2003 issue. They are short and will take up about a half page of space. The question was raised about what would we charge for a Web Lesson, since a full article will cost $350. If there is no charge, there may be questions as to why it would be free to publish them. The final product is peer reviewed and has value to the author(s).

**ACTION:** It was moved that the publication fee be $150 for Web Lessons. Seconded. Carried.

The Editor hopes that adding Web Lessons could help increase subscriptions. We need to let the Cooperating Societies know about the Web Lessons and ask them to consider submitting some for publication.

Don Lee told the board he has written a letter to inform teachers about the new Web Lessons. He will be targeting our Cooperators and other groups. Who should he target? If you have ideas, let him know.

**Media Reviews.** Jim McKenna asked why the number of media reviews spiked in 2000. There is no good answer. He is having trouble getting books reviewed. The CSSA Editor-in-Chief said maybe the knowledge database (or reviewer database) could be used to help get people to review books (and Web Lessons).

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

—Doug Malo, editor, and Susan Ernst, managing editor