

Editor's Corner

It's Time to Retire!

Over the past five years I have been privileged to serve as the Editor of the Journal of Genetic Genealogy (JoGG). Although I tried once before, unsuccessfully, to retire and turn JoGG over to new leadership, I believe that this time it's going to work out. We are very fortunate that Blaine Bettinger has agreed to move up from his position as Associate Editor and take the reins as Editor. I am very grateful to Blaine for taking this on and I urge everyone connected to JoGG or in our larger Genetic Genealogy community to welcome and support him.

From the beginning it was clear to me that our community needed a place where the very high quality work that was being done could be published with peer review. Our work didn't fit in well with any of the existing journals of genetics, so a new one was needed. The growth of the field has been phenomenal and many capable people have become involved in the research.

The nature of the job as Editor brings one into very close contact with the research of authors who write for JoGG. I have benefited tremendously from reading the manuscripts and working with the authors and reviewers through the editorial process. It was not always a painless process, but it was always interesting, educational, and ultimately rewarding. It was like having my own private university where I was the only student.

During the last five years we have seen a dramatic shift in the dynamics of this field. We have gone from a position where we had to beg the professionals to share their data with us, to a position where much of the work is being led (or driven) by us "amateurs."

I must admit that there were a few early issues of JoGG when I worried whether we would have more than one article for the next issue. In one early issue we did manage just two articles, but from that point JoGG has steadily grown. Note that the present issue has 10 articles, not to mention several features. We finish Volume 5 with the page count almost reaching 300 pages for the year!

However, I believe that we have just been scratching the surface so far. I see a lot of really good research posted on project web pages and elsewhere on the Internet, that with a little work could be publishable. I know it takes time away from the fun part, but please consider publishing in a peer-reviewed process where your work will surely be strengthened and where all of the community can share your success.

As an Editor I am barely a fit for the job. I have few organizational skills and I am terrible with remembering where things stand in any given project. There is a lot more that could be done with JoGG and I think that it is time to have someone else take JoGG to a higher level.

I hope to use my increased available time to catch up with the DNA projects I am supposed to be administering (but which are often neglected), and to work more on small projects of interest to me. I would also like to make some progress on a book on my family that has been lying neglected during the last few years.

Most of us know our incoming Editor, Blaine Bettinger, through his widely read blog, *The Genetic Genealogist* (<http://www.thegeneticgenealogist.com/>). Blaine has been instrumental in bringing our attention to issues that lie, as he puts it, "at the intersection of traditional genealogical techniques and modern genetic research." Blaine always seems on top of the latest developments, especially to the issue of DTC or "Direct to Consumer" DNA testing.

Blaine received his doctorate in biochemistry from SUNY, and he recently got his J.D. degree from the Syracuse University College of Law. He is the administrator of the Bettinger DNA Project.

I wish Blaine every success in his new job and I will work to make the transition as smooth as possible. Please help to support Blaine and make him welcome, and keep those articles coming in (but address them to Blaine!)

Whit Athey