



Plain Talk About Our Editorial Process

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



By John Loofbourow, MD

THE EDITORIAL THRUST of *Sierra Sacramento Valley Medicine* has been to encourage members to write about our lives in the broadest sense; to publish a story, essay, poem, painting or other artistic creation; to express an opinion or relate an experience. We try to reject self serving or commercially motivated articles from any source, and those adverse to the interests of the society.

Our members take preference in this magazine; here we can be ourselves, let down our hair, or take off our white coats revealing whatever is beneath. Where else are we so welcome to do so? Our magazine is also read by non-members, and others who occasionally submit an article that we publish.

Though we may suggest edits, we leave final decisions to authors. Revisions are most often due to space limitations, potentially libelous statements, or technical problems. With regard to dissent, we have felt that plain talk is preferable to banality and doubletalk. Therefore we accept satirical humor or sharp expression of opinion, as well as dispassionately reasoned articles.

We are not fearful of an author's passion, as it is a vital part of living. Regarding contentious subjects where there may be disagreement, we believe our members to be big boys and girls, able to give and take in print, and to understand that the expression of contrary opinion, and hearing it, are the essence of communication, and of democracy.

The editorial process is briefly as follows: When articles are received by the editors, some back and forth with the authors may take place. Email makes this exchange very convenient. With the author's consent, a draft is forwarded for review by the Editorial Committee. When an article is approved, the editors determine those to be included in a given issue; sometimes a re-draft of an article is submitted at the last minute. When we have very little time to review it, it may be held over for another issue.

At last the managing editor organizes the issue in question, taking into account time sensitive material, and the overall feel and look of the magazine. The entire process may take several months. The final steps go very quickly over about one week when the managing editor works closely, sometimes feverishly, with the graphic designer and the printer.

We recently began using email to circulate proof copies of the magazine among committee members; authors can still make minor changes but it's cumbersome and expensive. Occasionally *all* involved in this rather extensive review and editing process may miss an error, or something in an article that someone may find offensive. It happens.

In order to minimize that likelihood, we have extended the period of time for review of articles by *moving the deadline for submission up to one month before a publication date*. The deadline for this, the March issue, was February 1. We hope to accumulate and to maintain in reserve enough material so that we can continue this policy.

We prefer articles of less than 1125 words, but can negotiate more when space allows. For further information, or for an email copy of our Author's Guidelines, contact editor Dr. John Loofbourow at john@loofbourow.com or 916/978-9910 or managing editor Ted Fourkas at t4kas@comcast.net, or 916/451-4862.

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