A New Transition

David C. Beebe, PhD, FARVO, Editor-in-Chief of IOVS, passed away from complications associated with his amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) illness. Dr Beebe has had an outstanding career as a scientist, educator, and mentor. He also was a major contributing member of The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). From 1996 to 2002, Dr Beebe served on the Board of Trustees and in 2000 was elected ARVO President. He believed in getting involved to make a difference, and while serving in ARVO leadership positions, David made trips to the “Hill” for ARVO as an advocate for eye research. He served in many capacities for ARVO, including chairing the ARVO Finance Committee. He assumed the IOVS Editor-in-Chief position in 2012 following an ARVO election. In accepting the position, he assured everyone that he would be dedicated to expanding the quality and stature of IOVS. He was author-centered and made changes in the process to make the experience better, including decreasing the time to first decision so authors could get feedback quickly. He also initiated a process whereby reviewers were acknowledged for doing an exceptional job and published the names of those exceptional reviewers each year in IOVS. This rating of reviewers also gave Editorial Board Members an opportunity to identify reviewers doing an exceptional job. While Dr Beebe was unable to complete his term of office, his impact will be felt for years to come. This year he was to receive the 2015 Joanne G. Angle Award; ARVO’s highest service honor that acknowledges outstanding volunteers and leaders who made significant and continuous contributions in support of ARVO and its mission. The selection of Dr Beebe for this award is most deserving for it recognizes all he has done for ARVO and IOVS in his career. His wife, Betsy, accepted this award during the General Business Meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2015. A memorial tribute followed the awards presentation.

INTERIM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Last fall, I was approached by IOVS to consider the possibility of serving as interim Editor-in-Chief, as Dr Beebe thought he would be unable to continue due to the progression of his illness. After David explained why he thought he could not continue, I wanted to help in any way I could to assist him in his time of need. I, therefore, agreed, and following approval by ARVO’s Board of Trustees, I began working with him over the last several months sharing responsibilities and learning what I could from him on what was needed to be an effective EIC. As for myself, I have been an Associate Editor for the previous EIC for five years and continued under Dr Beebe’s term. I also had been on the Editorial Board for many years and, therefore, had experience that was essential for this new position. While I enter this position under unfortunate conditions, I assure members of ARVO and IOVS readership that I will dedicate my efforts to continue the strong gains made by Dr Beebe in improving the experience of contributing authors, expanding the quality of publications, and making IOVS the journal of choice in the eye research community.

During the Editorial Board Meeting at ARVO, I introduced a concept for training the next generation of peer reviewers. I proposed a “New Investigator Peer Review Group” that will seek applications from new investigators for an opportunity to serve in a group of potential new reviewers that can be selected by EBMs to participate in the peer review process of IOVS. It is envisioned that they would serve as third reviewers and receive feedback on how well they did in their reviews compared to the other reviewers for the particular manuscript. This will allow EBMs to develop a new set of reviewers to tap into and to develop as the next generation of exceptional reviewers.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the IOVS staff that has helped me extensively through this transition period, especially Molly Fujimoto, Kiyah Morrison, Debbie Chin, and Gayle Claman. I also want to thank my wife for her patience with this increase in responsibility. Without all of the support, I could not undertake this position and they certainly made the transition go more smoothly. We plan to continue the great progress Dr Beebe initiated and I ask the IOVS community for support as we move forward.

Thomas Yorio
Editor-in-Chief