

EDITORIAL NOTE

Our first editor, the editor who launched The Oakland Journal, Geoff Brieger, has retired. He has left in his wake a grateful bunch, many of us new to our tasks. I have been around this project for many years, but I am new to the role of chief editor. Brian Murphy is the only old hand at associate editor work, and now Jude Nixon, Vince Khapoya and David Garfinkle join him. Our advisory board is also replenished with many new faces.

Geoff gave us a journal that, in my opinion, looks great, features interesting articles, introduces Oakland people to each other in a deeper way than was common before, and offers both faculty and staff a meaningful voice they didn't have before. The Journal has come a long way toward meeting some of the goals we promised at its beginning.

Here is language from the original proposal: [The declared purpose is to] "1) promote student writing by encouraging a campus atmosphere where writing and scholarship are respected, 2) encourage communication and collegiality among faculty across disciplines, and 3) serve the alumni and general community, presenting Oakland University well." It went on to promise a forum: "We hope that the common faculty and staff interests will attract constructive articles. One could discuss one's vision for the university. A common forum and permanent record should greatly facilitate this effort."

We have so far served as an issues forum and as a meeting place for faculty, and we will rededicate our efforts to these tasks. We are also beginning to reach out to the wider community; for example, with this issue we will provide a copy of the journal to each of the many people in the County who are

interested in environmental issues. The greater challenge will be to expand our readership among students and broaden their participation in writing for the Journal.

Your ideas are welcome. For example, someone suggested that we provide Journal article off prints to faculty who wish to lead a class discussion based on an informative article; we have begun this part ways by providing copies of an issue in sufficient number to a teacher's class. My student assistant suggested that students largely have never heard of the Journal; he reserved a table at the OC, took 50 copies there, and students snapped them up. And, of course, to gain student readers we need to earn them, we need to have articles that merit student interest.

The bottom line? I think it is that those things we have not yet achieved at TOJ offer us opportunities worth trying for. Geoff's editorship has given to us a very good base from which to work.

THIS ISSUE IN BRIEF

Fay Hansen leads off with a thorough introduction to environment issues, both what's needed and why, but also what practical steps can be taken. Fay has extensive knowledge of both environmental issues and Oakland County, and it shows in this piece.

Juliette Roddy explains the economic benefit cost approach to environment issues. She gives a clear and accurate version of the subject, but the article is especially useful because it relates the bad side of benefit cost analysis as well as the good.

Simon Ren and Donna Folland take stock of the University and its relative commitment to the environment we physically share with the local communities. I think you will find the objective facts within this article to be very impressive, indeed.

The "Two German Girls", **Claudia Grimberg and Wiebke Nieman**, who visited Oakland on an exchange program recently, let their lively and fun-loving personalities show

through in this interview with TOJ. Here's how OU looks to visitors from Oldenberg, Germany.

Robert Goldstein makes a plea for the systematic evaluation of administrators in "Evaluation of Administrators: An Idea Whose Time Has Come". A good issue to bring to open discussion.

Those who haven't tried a Sue Grafton crime novel, with its tough as nails yet wholly likeable female private eye, Kinsey Milhone, will probably buy one after reading **Natalie Cole's** in depth review of *R is for Ricochet*.

Honors College student, **Stephanie Bohde** wrote an unusual paper that I think you will like. Quilts, she finds, have historically had many applications for communication. "The Underground Railroad Quilt Code" records one of the most colorful and unusual such applications.

When you read **Chris Brockman's** "Behind Every Poem a Story" be ready for a harrowing story indeed, as well as a felicitous, unexpected meeting.

"Gas Prices: What's Real and What's Not?" is the subject of the Notes From the Dismal Science column this issue. The article by **Sherm Folland** makes the seeming contrarian claim that gas prices are not too high, but in fact are too low.

The last piece that we offer is a TOJ editor's account of a plan to bring a regular cinema to OU. We thought that the design is complex and interesting so as to warrant reporting here.

