

Quarterdeck

Ellen S. Kappel, Editor

In my first column as editor of *Oceanography*, it is appropriate to offer a few words about the magazine's future. While I am still on a steep learning curve and am soliciting articles and advice from anyone who will listen to me, I take on this challenge with a few ideas for improving what is already a successful publication.

First, some introductions. You will recognize most of the magazine's editorial staff, but there have been some important changes and additions. Nancy Caputo will be replacing Liz Tirpak as assistant editor. Nancy has already worked on several issues of the magazine, so the transition has been seamless. Ellen Druffel decided to step down as an Associate Editor after several years of excellent service. Her slot is being filled by Peggy Delaney, a veteran journal editor who brings experience and energy to the magazine. Kiyoshi Suyehiro will also be joining us, providing the editorial staff with a breadth of experience working with international ocean sciences programs.

As editor, my principal goal will be to increase *Oceanography's* impact. I will concentrate initially on expanding readership by increasing the magazine's global exposure. At the same time, I'm working with Jenny Ramarui, the TOS Executive Director, to make more content available on the magazine's web pages. I will report on our progress in this column.

To bring us back to the present, I'm very excited to introduce the March 2004 issue as a model of multidisciplinary oceanography. The altimetric bathymetry data set described in this issue, now seven years old, provided the ocean sciences community with the first uniformly detailed global map of seafloor topography. The Smith and Sandwell map (see cover) has been enormously useful to those who study plate tectonics and seafloor roughness. Since it was published, the map has been used continuously as a classroom tool for teaching about the variety of features our ocean floor exhibits. More recently, this same data set has been used to improve ocean mixing and climate models, and to understand how seafloor topography impacts tsunami energy and direction. These data have also been used in the context of the Law of the Sea. The March 2004 issue covers all of these exciting ideas.

I welcome constructive input about the magazine. Just send me an email or give me a call. *Oceanography* will improve only if you let me know what you think.



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