

EDITORIALS

The Journal and its Organization

Andrew N. Rowan, Editor-in-Chief

Five issues of the Journal have now appeared and it is perhaps appropriate at this juncture to share some of the comments we have received and to explain the different Journal departments and their intended functions.

Almost without exception, the general tenor of the comments received has been favorable. There was a certain amount of adverse reaction to the 'boxiness' of the first issue's layout, and this was, we hope, corrected in subsequent issues. The layout of the cover masthead will be changed for the second volume to accentuate the subject matter elements of the title rather than "International Journal." We also intend to change the color of the cover page with the first issue of every new volume so that subscribers can discriminate between volumes with greater ease.

The initial issues of the Journal have depended heavily on solicited articles from selected authors, but this is beginning to change as more unsolicited articles are being received for consideration. We hope that this trend will continue to gather momentum, especially now that the Journal is scheduled to be included in *Current Contents*. (*Current Contents* publishes article titles and authors' addresses; its very wide circulation ensures that an article in a journal covered by *Current Contents* will get maximum exposure.) In addition, we hope that more dialogue will take place in the pages of the Journal. Much of the material that has appeared so far has had an animal welfare bias or has been prepared by authors with such a bias. It is important that the Journal not be perceived merely as a means of preaching to the converted, but rather as a forum for debate. However, it is not always easy to draw the line between mere difference of opinion or perception and factual error. Anyone who deals in controversial issues — and animal welfare topics certainly qualify for this label — recognizes that there can be very different perceptions of what is factually correct. It is therefore important for the readers to recognize our different approaches to different departments in the Journal.

Editorials are written by members of the editorial staff and editorial advisory board and are subject to only minor editorial changes. If the editors recognize a statement as blatantly incorrect, we will call it to the attention of the author, but will not change it without permission.

News and Review items are prepared by the editorial staff, and every effort is made to ensure their accuracy. Such items cover stories and articles of interest in a concise and informative manner with brief references as required. Occasionally, the *News and Review* format will expand to accommodate special features such as the *Focus on Live Animals in Car Crash Studies* in issue #4. These features, which can be written either by a member of the editorial staff or other qualified journalists, are meant to be analytical, as distinct from the straight reporting of *News and Review*, and will therefore carry a byline.

Comment articles are written by a very diverse group, including editorial staff. Such articles vary from an examination of a particular issue in some depth to an outline of an organization's goals and policies to the development of a personal viewpoint. These articles are not necessarily refereed although this section

may be used to present differing views on the same subject. If references are used in these articles, they will be the minimum necessary to locate the source and support the argument being developed.

Original and Review Articles are written by anyone with the necessary knowledge, data or expertise to prepare 'hard' scientific reviews or to present new data. These articles will be refereed, and we are following a policy of sending out papers for review without identifying the author. The referees will remain anonymous unless they agree to be named.

Legislation and Regulation items are written by members of the editorial staff or appropriate experts, and every effort is made to ensure their factual accuracy.

Meeting Reports are written by persons who have attended the relevant meetings. Every effort is made to ensure factual accuracy.

IJSAP Book News consists of a conglomeration of reviews and news about the printed and electronic media. The reviews reflect the opinions of the bylined author.

Letters to the Editor is the department in which readers should point out errors and dispute opinions and statements made in earlier issues of the Journal. If a letter is very long and cannot be cut, we will place it in the *Comment* section.

As should be apparent from the above, the Journal may well contain articles which produce vehement disagreement from certain segments of our readers. In fact, if everyone agreed with everything printed in these pages, we would not be achieving our objective, namely, to act as a forum for constructive debate and dialogue. Perhaps it is unrealistic to expect the *Letters* page to be flooded with comments at this stage, but we hope that readers will not be hesitant about criticizing the Journal's content or style. We may not agree with all of the criticisms, but we will not ignore them.

Finally, we would like to thank all of you who had sufficient faith in the Journal to subscribe, some even before we had produced a single issue. There have been a few problems with distribution and we apologize for the long delay in getting the first issue out. We hope that you feel the wait was worthwhile.

Troubled Times at the RSPCA

David Wilkins, Associate Editor

Animal welfare means different things to different people. To the farmer it can mean proper care of stock and prevention of disease; to the urban dweller it can mean the abolition of fox hunting and the provision of kennels for unwanted dogs and cats; to the countryman it can mean maintaining the countryside for wildlife; to the philosopher it can mean the appreciation of the rights of animals to live a life of freedom in which all natural instincts can be followed; to a scientist it can mean advancement in the diagnosis and treatment of disease.

When one considers that representatives of all these varied walks of life with their different ideological attitudes can come together under the umbrella of the largest British welfare society — the RSPCA — then one should not be surprised that arguments occur and that complete agreement is the exception rather than