

From the President

We have apologized enough for the problems that IALL has encountered over the past two or three years: the lack of contact with our members, our failure to keep the **NALLD Journal** on schedule, etc. There are many reasons for this state of affairs, but there is one which I should like to suggest. For the first twenty years of its existence, NALLD/IALL was carried along by the force of the language laboratory movement itself. So many people were buying language laboratories that it seemed only logical that there be an organization to represent it. These were the halcyon days: the days when, characteristic of the society in which we lived, we believed the good times would last forever; the days when there was no thought of tomorrow, because tomorrow would be pretty much like today. The organization was carried along by the current; the force was provided as much by external circumstances as by internal drive.

And then things began to change. Slowly, but with increasing intensity, the swell of professional opinion against the use of the language laboratory invaded our complacent consciousness. Some of our exaggerated claims about the role of the language laboratory were used in evidence against us. Many institutions, especially schools, began to feel that the lab was an unjustifiable expense and worry. Contributions to our journal became more difficult to find. The flow was beginning to ebb.

As our loyal, long-standing members will know, NALLD/IALL reacted in a number of ways. We became the National Association of *Learning* Laboratories, because we wanted to extend ourselves to disciplines other than languages. We then changed the association name to the *International* Association of Learning Laboratories, because we wanted new members. None of these moves seemed to help to any great extent. Our membership declined as old members moved out of the language lab field, and precious few new people entered it. It became a time of discouragement, and soul-searching about whether IALL could really retain its vitality in the computer age.

But of course it can, and it will. In fact, it already is. The signs are all about us. Over the past year IALL board members (both past and present), as well as a few active IALL friends, have reaffirmed the fact that IALL has an extremely important, vital role to play in the field of language learning. Our original mandate involved language laboratories, and there are still many such facilities, though we recognize that there is an evolution occurring in these facilities. We must help, and be a part of that evolution. But language laboratories apart, we need only thumb through the **NALLD Journal**, to see that IALL has been involved in many other technologies used in language learning: satellites, computer-assisted learning, video, short-wave

radio, overhead projectors and the like. If we take stock of these interests, and the fact that we are living in an increasingly technological world, there is no doubt about the need for an organization like IALL. We are the only organization to have a long history of involvement in all technologies and their applications to language learning. Such is the definition of the uniqueness of IALL as well as a statement of its present and future mission.

As we look forward to greater things, it would be appropriate to stop and thank those who have helped provide the new thrust. As members will know, we have just completed elections for our new Executive Board. (Incidentally, the number of ballots cast was the highest in recent IALL history). The "old" Board members are President Roger Sanchez-Berroa of Wesleyan University, and Secretary Mary Lynne Flowers, of the University of Kentucky. Both these people, especially our now Past-President, have worked extremely hard to infuse the needed vitality back into the organization. Both have attended Board meetings, not only at ACTFL and CALICO, but also our newly instituted summer meetings held in Athens, Ohio.

The two new members elected to the Executive Board are President-Elect Sue Otto, of the University of Iowa, and Secretary Robert Jones of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Both have already attended Board meetings at CALICO (May) and Ohio University (June). Their commitment was demonstrated by the fact that they both had 12-hour drives to come to the summer meeting in Athens. We should also mention that Robin Lawrason, the only candidate proposed by the Nominating Committee, was re-elected. The remaining members of the Board are Executive Director Phil Richardson, and myself.

The other major event in the last few months has been the appointment of a new editor of the Journal: Suzanne Lindenau. Language Laboratories, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602. At the same time, it was decided that there would be a change in the name of the Journal. As from volume 20, it will be known as the **Journal of Educational Techniques and Technologies**, rather than the **NALLD Journal**.

I am quite sure that there will be some members who are happy with the new title, and some who are not. We have in fact already heard from some members who feel that, if there were a change, it should have included the word "language." The question of a change--and if so, then to what--occupied the previous Executive Board a great deal. The Board was in total agreement about the fact that IALL and its journal were committed to language teaching and learning. There was, however, much discussion, and some amicable disagreement, about the new name. Many things come in package deals, and this was the case in this instance. In the end, via an

evening conference call, the Executive Board decided to go ahead with the new name. We believe that the journal will be what it makes itself, irrespective of the name. We also believe that it will re-establish itself as a pre-eminent publication in the field. The Board, and the new editor are right now working to produce an excellent inaugural issue. Naturally, any contributions would be gratefully received by our new editor.

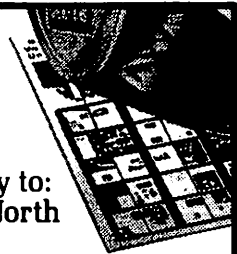
At our recent Board meetings we have mapped out other fresh endeavours for the organization. We are increasing the number of IALL-sponsored sessions at conferences. As members will know, we had nine IALL sessions at the recent CALICO conference in Annapolic, MD. They were a resounding success, and covered the spectrum from computers to satellites to interactive audio to language laboratories to video. Our new President-Elect has put together a magnificent series of sessions for the upcoming ACTFL conference in Dallas, Texas (see the announcement in this issue). We have no doubt that they will be well attended by IALL members and others. There will also be, for the second consecutive year, an IALL workshop at ACTFL. This year Jim Pusack, Sue Otto and myself will be evaluating CALL courseware. We are also to be represented at the AECT meeting this year by Robin Lawrason and Suzanne Lindenau. Plans are moving ahead to sponsor sessions at other conferences. Our Conference Committee may well be contacting some of you in the near future.

This is sufficient news for this issue! There will be more to come...

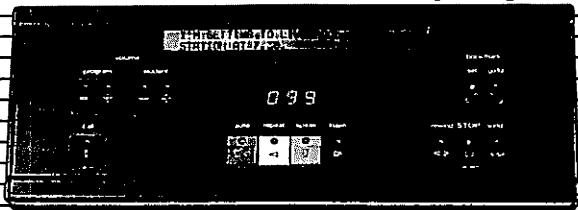
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