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## Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2011, the *Journal of Biomolecular NMR* looks forward to the second decade of the 21st century

Kurt Wüthrich

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Dear Reader,

The first issue of the *Journal of Biomolecular NMR* was published in May 1991. Since then, the Journal has played and continues to play a key role in maintaining the vitality of our field by providing a venue for publication of exciting research. Notwithstanding the high quality of its contents, progress of the Journal has in recent years been slowed down by the fact that research evaluations increasingly rely on bibliometric parameters, exemplified by the journal impact factor, with some institutions going so far as “not counting” papers published in journals below a given impact factor threshold when deciding on promotions and similar. Nearly a decade ago, the *Journal of Biomolecular NMR* started to publish ‘Assignment Notes’, which had a lasting positive impact on data bank deposition of key data in our field and spawned the new publication *Biomolecular NMR Assignments* as a focused venue for in-depth publication combined with streamlined data bank deposition of this groundwork in our field. As a drawback, the large influx of “Assignment Notes” resulted for several years in a lower impact factor for *J. Biomol. NMR*. At this time of the 20th anniversary of our Journal, the dilution of the impact factor has dissipated, and the value released in the summer of 2010 has nearly doubled when compared to 2009 and continues to rise, reflecting the health and importance of our discipline in the context of biochemistry,

biology and medicine. We look forward with great optimism to continued growth of the impact of the *Journal of Biomolecular NMR*.

Twentieth anniversary events were kicked off by meetings during the 24th ICMRBS in Cairns, Australia, where the Editors were joined by a majority of our Board members. For the upcoming years we made some changes. Thus, the Editorial Board and the Advisory Board have been merged and we are pleased to introduce a number of new Board members. Our sincere thanks go to the retiring Board Members, who have provided much invaluable support over so many years. For the future, we envision an increase in the turnover of the Editorial Board membership, so that it remains representative of those in the biomolecular NMR community with the strongest input into the daily life of the Journal as authors and reviewers. As detailed in the revised ‘Instructions for Authors’, we also streamlined the handling of “Springer Open Choice” for all manuscript submissions. Furthermore, to provide additional input for editorial decisions, submissions of manuscripts describing de novo NMR structure determinations must in the future include copies of the correspondence with the Protein Data Bank (<http://www.pdb.org/pdb/home/home.do>) about the deposition of these structures.

I also have to mention an unpleasant situation. Currently Dr. Brian E. Coggins and Dr. Pei Zhou of the Duke University Medical Center are prevented from continued distribution of the program PR-CALC (*J. Biomol. NMR* 34, 179–195, 2006) free of charge to the scientific community. The Research Foundation of the State University of New York has written to the University of our authors: “Accordingly, please be advised that if the above link is not disabled by 5:00p.m. (central time) on December 11, 2009, the Research Foundation intends to file suit seeking injunctive relief and damages for Duke’s infringement of

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the patent at issue” (quotation from a letter of December 2, 2009, by J.F. DePumpo of SHORECHAN BRAGALONE LLP to A.E. Bradley of Duke University). We deplore this action by an academic institution, which prevents two of our authors from adherence to the guidelines of our Journal, suppresses free exchange of information among scientists in non-profit academic institutions, and threatens to slow down progress in a key area of scientific research with applications in a wide range of different disciplines in natural sciences and biomedicine. Although this ban has been in effect for more than 1 year, the Editors of *J. Biomol. NMR* hope that a feeling of responsibility to the community will return to those who could lift this ban.

I want to conclude with a special comment on ‘Topical Issues’ and ‘Perspectives’. Publication of highly successful ‘Topical Issues’ was started in 2009. Based on feedback

from our Board Members and readers, we will continue this series with an annual ‘Topical Issue’ organized by one of our Editors. Scheduled for publication in the spring of 2011, Prof. Brian Sykes has assembled a group of exciting papers on “metabolomics”. ‘Perspectives’ have been a highlight in many past issues of our Journal. Prof. Martin Billeter and Prof. Gerhard Wagner are in charge of ‘Perspectives’, and they will gladly consider suggestions from our readership. With your continued contributions as authors and reviewers, and with ‘Topical Issues’ and ‘Perspectives’ highlighting exciting advances in our field, we look forward to a strong showing of the *Journal of Biomolecular NMR* during the second decade of the 21st century.

Kurt Wüthrich  
January 2011