

SWAN SONGS SHOULD be sung by swans, but I'm unable to resist such indulgence as I face my last issue as editor of *ACE Quarterly*. Since I have avoided the practice of restraint in this column throughout my tenure, I see no reason to try for any such self control in my last offering.

The major thought I have at this time is a feeling of gratitude. Serving as *ACE* editor has been a meaningful experience for me, and I'm grateful for the opportunity. I would be remiss if I failed to thank the many AAACE members who have supported

The Editor's Corner

me by furnishing articles, both on request and on individual initiative. Without you I would have been up the proverbial creek without a paddle. Encouragement I have received from many of you, along with the general feeling of support from practically every member, has given me the encourage-

ment I needed to face each quarter's deadline.

I've enjoyed complete freedom in putting out *ACE*, and for this I'm deeply grateful. I have used this freedom to comment on many issues facing AAACE and all of agriculture, many of which I probably should have kept quiet about. Too often we hear only an "official" stand on things, so at least my column has aired other than official views on various subjects.

Probably some of you feel that I have been unduly harsh on your expressed ideas. But many of my agitating comments have resulted in someone putting his thoughts down on paper, either in a letter to me or as an article for *ACE*. I've gained a lot from these exchanges, and learned to appreciate some ideas different from my own. This takes some good ammunition from you to overcome my many prejudices and fixed opinions.

The Future of AAACE

Despite the cloudy picture in my crystal ball, I see a bright future for AAACE. I see some shoals along the way, however, that will require good navigation by the leadership — with help from the total membership — to avoid.

Probably the biggest need is for AAACE to be recognized and treated as an organization of individual communicators. Too often in the past it has been thought of and operated as an organization of "state editors" and their staffs. This attitude has hurt

the organization and stifled some potential "giants" in our membership. The "unwritten law" that only a head state editor or USDA agency information head can be president of AAACE is a slam at the many talented non-administrators in the organization. Before you accuse me of imagining this situation, make up a list of non-department or agency heads who have been president. You'll have to go back before my time in AAACE to find one. The point I'm making is that we don't take advantage of the abilities of our members when we arrange it so that the top leadership comes from such a small percentage of total membership. While I've never been accused of joining the battle for women's lib, I might also note the scarcity of females in important assignments.

One other thing we need to guard against is the idea, which sometimes originates in an organization or agency, that AAACE has the function of supporting their specific programs. This is false and dangerous. AAACE's function is to support and further the profession of agricultural communications and to aid the growth of individuals in the profession. This, in turn, will aid all of our departments in improving their services. Trying to use AAACE to further a specific political cause can only weaken it.

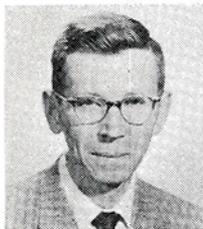
Before you get the idea that I'm concentrating on the negative, let me say that I note progress in the very areas I just complained about. But progress could be much faster if we admit that the problems exist. This is the kind of change in direction that requires no official action by directors or membership — just a recognition of the need and consideration of it as decisions are made.

ACE Quarterly, like AAACE itself, has a lot of room for improvement. I'm confident you will see improvement under direction of the new editor, Charles Bower of West Virginia. But regardless of his good work, *ACE* can only reach the heights possible by steady support by the membership. Likewise, AAACE's future will be determined by each of you.

R.E.S.

Meet ACE Authors

ARLAND R. MEADE is agricultural editor and head, Department of Agricultural Publications, at University of Connecticut. A native of Maine, he studied dairy husbandry (B.S.) at University of Connecticut and ag journalism (M.S.) at Wisconsin. He has been on the Connecticut staff since 1963. He is active in World Federalists and Esperanto Club.



HOWARD E. FRISBEE is extension publications editor at The Ohio State University. He holds a B.A. degree from Westminster College (Pennsylvania) and the M.A. from Ohio State, both in journalism. Before joining Ohio extension work in 1956, Frisbee edited newspapers in Zelienople, Pennsylvania, and Fairborn, Ohio. In addition to editing publications at Ohio State, he also handles news and feature stories for agronomy and natural resources.

NEIL DOWLIN is assistant publications editor at The Pennsylvania State University, at University Park. He worked three years as a magazine editor and writer in Kansas and Oklahoma before going to Pennsylvania State four years ago. Dowlin graduated from Kansas State University with a B.S. in agricultural journalism, and he worked one year as an information trainee with the Soil Conservation Service in Kansas.



W. K. SONNEMANN, JR., is publications editor at the College of Agriculture, University of Nevada, at Reno. He has held his present position for the last 12 years. His other jobs have provided a variety of experience. He was experiment station field editor at Colorado State University, did public relations for an agricultural cooperative in Seattle, Washington, and worked in the newspaper field for two and one-half years while in Washington.

GERALD R. McKAY, professor and extension visual education specialist, has been on University of Minnesota staff since 1945. A Minnesota graduate (M.S., agricultural education), he taught vocational agriculture for six years in Minnesota and served as audio visual consultant to the Foreign Operations Administration in Europe about two years. He has worked closely with the development of teleteaching as an extension communications medium.



JACK C. EVERLY, associate professor of agricultural communications, has been on University of Illinois staff since 1955. His current interest is extension communications education. A graduate of University of Missouri (B.S.) and Illinois (M.S., Ph.D.), he is co-author of *Mass Media and Adult Education* and associate editor of *NACTA Journal*. He received the E. B. Knight Award for the outstanding 1971 article in *NACTA Journal*.

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