A New Year—A New Outlook

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Every January 1st, we celebrate the end of the previous year and the start of a next year. Rationally, there is little true difference between December 31st and January 1st. Everything is essentially the same. There is no noticeable difference in the weather, hours of daylight, or even the behavior of the animal world. Yet, for us humans, it is a big deal. We celebrate (and sometimes overindulge in celebration) the end of 1 year and the beginning of the next. We reflect on the past year; what went well and what not so well. We then create “New Year’s Resolutions” or behavioral changes aimed at improving our behavior for the future. The goal is for humans to improve every year.

January 1st also represents a “New Year” for our journal, *Obesity Surgery*. This new year brings to *Obesity Surgery* a new contract with the International Federation of Surgery for Obesity (IFSO) and new leadership. Most importantly, it is an opportunity to reflect on the past and to change to better face the future.

Our beloved journal was first created by Dr. Mervyn Deitel in 1991. That makes it 21 years old. During that time, the field of bariatric surgery has undergone dramatic changes including the conversion to laparoscopic access; the introduction of the adjustable gastric band, duodenal switch, and the sleeve gastrectomy; the creation of the “Centers of Excellence” system; significant reductions in surgical risk; the introduction of the concept of metabolic surgery; and the dramatic worldwide increase in the number of procedures performed annually by an increasing number of practicing bariatric

surgeons. In addition, over those same two decades, *Obesity Surgery* has also dramatically changed. It recovered from near death and evolved into a successful and stable outlet for our bariatric papers (thanks to the efforts of Dr. Deitel). *Obesity Surgery* became a top notch surgical journal with impressively high impact factors, reaching as high as seventh of all surgical journals. In the past 3 years, co-Editors-in-Chief Drs. Henry Buchwald and Nicola Scopinaro added to it the experience of the two of the world’s most accomplished academic bariatric surgeons. The tireless efforts of these three giants of bariatric surgery, along with the unheralded “behind the scenes” hard work of the associate editors and reviewers should all be credited for their success.

But now it is a new year and a new era begins. The leadership of IFSO along with the publisher, Springer, have selected me to be the next Editor-in-Chief, an honor I am truly grateful for. They place in my hands the responsibility to continue the work of my predecessors and to steer the journal down the right path. To do so, we need to reflect on the past and prepare for the future. In those regards, I am tasked with assembling the best editorial board possible whose responsibility would be to deliver the highest quality manuscripts to the members of our society in a timely fashion. To do so, I believe we need to invigorate the editorial board. It is time to bring some new blood to the editorial board alongside the senior talent already there. We need to also energize the members of IFSO to continue to submit their work to the journal and to solicit the best work being done by non-IFSO members and our medical colleges. *Obesity Surgery* should always be considered the journal of choice for all manuscripts pertaining to bariatric and metabolic surgery, and beyond. Furthermore, we need to assure our readers that *Obesity Surgery* is meeting its objective of being the major source of education for our

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membership. I suggest more well-written review articles, a point-counterpoint section for controversial topics, and solicited comments from our thought leaders on hot or innovative subjects.

Impossible? I don't believe so. What this journal has overcome in 21 years may be viewed as impossible. I view

my charge as challenging. But with hard work and the talented input from IFSO members, I think we can move *Obesity Surgery* into the future. I look forward to working with all of you.

Happy New Year!