

INTRODUCTION

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Dear Readers,

As promised in this spot last issue, we are publishing some special papers from the IMWA conference held in Karlovy Vary last year. These are not reprints of the same papers that you can find in the conference Proceedings. There, the authors were limited to four pages. IMWA's Executive Council was asked to pick the ones they thought were the best, and those authors were asked to prepare longer manuscripts for publication in this issue of our journal. At least that was the plan. Two of the papers (one by Gary P. Curtis, Matthias Kohler, and James A. Davis and the other by Clara Sena and Jorge Molinero) did not quite make the mid-January deadline for inclusion in this issue and so are available for you to view on-line (instructions on how to do this are included in the Mine Water Notes column in the back of this issue). They will be published in hard copy in our June issue. Another paper had a more challenging time making it through review and is currently being revised. Hopefully, it will make it into the June issue as well but I am slowly learning that such things do not always work as planned. At any rate, we thank all of the authors, reviewers, and editors who strived to meet our timetable; based on the quality of the papers, I am certain that you will agree that the effort was worthwhile.

Of course the delay in publishing the invited papers made room for other papers that had been accepted for publication and which otherwise would have not been published until June. Among these is a paper that includes background material that some of our readers might find too basic but that others, just starting out in the field, will learn from. This was a suggestion from one of our reviewers who was initially going to suggest that the section be omitted or radically cut back, but thought to consult some of his students, who found the more fundamental material useful, new to them, and interesting. Given the fact that we now have many readers who are taking advantage of our inexpensive student membership rate, the Professor thought that including that material would be good, and we went along with that suggestion. We have not identified the paper in any special way because we felt that doing so might make some of our readers skip that paper while, as the Professor pointed out, even our most senior members might learn from the review material if it is outside of their field of specialization. However, please let

me know what you think about this whole concept. As you might imagine, it is a balancing act, trying to make this journal useful and interesting for all of our readers while maintaining high standards and presenting state-of-the-art science and engineering. Please, take the time to let me know how we are doing!

This brings me to my next request, which is actually a repetition of the request that I made in the last issue. In the December issue, I announced IMWA's intent to establish an annual Best Paper Award, which would be given out at our annual meeting. I asked for ideas or suggestions on what the award should look like or how we should proceed, and received absolutely no feedback. Does this mean that you, the reader, thinks this idea has little merit, but are too polite to say so, or that you think it is a good idea but that you figure someone else will be inspired to suggest something, or that you just did not read this column in the last issue because, after all, it was the December issue, which meant that it arrived during the holidays and is still sitting in that stack of low-priority stuff that you plan to look at when you have time. If by chance, the last is your excuse, please take the time to excavate that issue, read my column from the last issue, and let me know your thoughts.

When our Society's membership was smaller, I could count on receiving feedback from at least a few of you after each issue. Sometimes it was just encouragement, sometimes it was a criticism, and sometimes it was a suggestion or two, but I truly welcomed all of it. Now we have a lot more readers, but I hear from very few of you. What does this mean? Without feedback, the editors of this journal are making decisions in a vacuum, and as you know, Nature abhors a vacuum. Please, it is easy to send us an e-mail; just send it to: editor@IMWA.info.

A reminder, Christian Wolkersdorfer has offered to organize a Special Issue on geothermal applications of mine water. If you are interested in submitting a manuscript, please contact him or send an e-mail to the same e-mail address: editor@IMWA.info.

Finally, I hope that many of you plan to be in Sweden in June for ICARD and Pretoria in October for the IMWA annual meeting. Once every 3 years, we get to experience both meetings, and it is always fun and worthwhile.

Best Regards,

Bob Kleinmann, Editor-in-Chief