

## Greetings, and Best Wishes for the Coming Year.

January is a customary time for reflection, as well as for making new resolutions; and in reflecting on the past year, it becomes clear that we all owe a debt of gratitude to our very recent President, Stanley Baron.

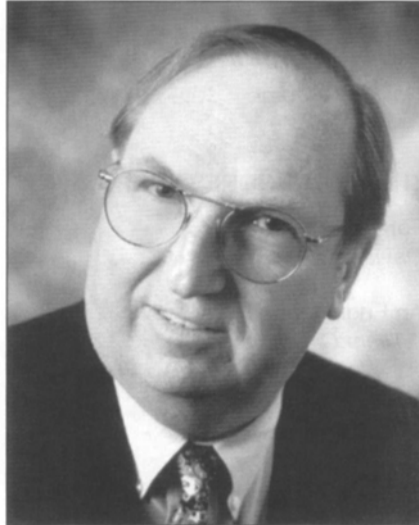
Stan became President of the Society in difficult times — a period when the very structure of our industry was being remolded by the pressures of new economic and technological forces that not only contained the promise of new goods and services but also brought with them new possibilities for, and new expectations of, improved efficiencies and productivity in their delivery. The structural changes and rationalizations that characterized much of the industry during Stan's term as President also impacted many members of the Society as individuals and extended to the Society itself. Stan's challenge was to stem the fiscal and membership hemorrhaging, focus the Society on the new and shadowy structures that began to emerge in the industry, and begin rebuilding for the future.

He was remarkably successful. During his tenure membership grew some 15%; and Sustaining Membership, reflecting a renewed relevancy for the Society in the new media environment, grew some 33%. Among his many accomplishments, he also promoted and was successful in having SMPTE appointed registrar for a new program ID initiative, and two new and exciting Sections were added to the Society. He was a tireless and constant force in the Society and in the industry. One could hardly ask for more.

### New Challenges

That's not to say that the challenges are over. Quite aside from finding

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David L. George

new ways to deal with the ongoing structural and technological changes that continue to impact us and our industry, and apart from providing better support to our individual and corporate membership, over the next few years we will also be faced with the task of rebuilding our franchise in our own fall conference and exhibit, following the ending of the World Media Expo (WME) coalition.

That won't be easy, but SMPTE provides an important service in the presentation and dissemination of technical and operating information and education within the industry, and the conference activity is an important component in the delivery of that service. Being an SMPTE conference and being, once again, under SMPTE control means that we will be able to locate, schedule, and focus it to better serve the needs of our own constituency than we were able to under the WME umbrella — but the rebuilding challenge is before us nonetheless.

As always, your counsel is sought as to how we may best assure the success of this rebuilding effort, and any ideas or suggestions you may have would be appreciated. They can be

funneled through any of the officers, governors, or executives of the Society, or directly to me.

### Importance of Sections

The health of the Society is a reflection of the well-being of its more vibrant Sections; forums in which individual members deal with issues of local interest and address immediate and regional needs, as well as keep abreast of the larger picture. These activities are critical to the service the Society provides to its members and furnish the most frequent and most continuous face-to-face interaction between the Society and its membership. To many members, SMPTE is the local Section. The continued growth and success of SMPTE Sections is key to a successful Society, one that plays an important and positive role in the professional lives of its individual members. One more challenge is to strengthen the Sections, improve their direction, and support their delivery of local services.

### Expanded Role of Society and Journal

Yet another challenge is to continue to address the issues surrounding technological convergence, and the expanded role this Society and its members can play in that area. Among other things, we also want to improve on the relevance and usefulness of the *Journal* as a means of conveying technical and educational knowledge, as well as to make it more attractive as an instrument providing industry news and information.

In spite of Stan's considerable successes, there will be no lack of challenges going forward; and his continued counsel, guidance, advice, and boundless energy will be actively solicited. But he will be a tough act to follow.

— David L. George