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EDITORIAL

www.cerf-jcr.org

CERF-JCR History: A Thumbnail Sketch of the First Thirty Years (or, from the Ridiculous to the Sublime)

The thirtieth anniversary of CERF and the JCR comes up in 2014. It is hard to believe that this amount of time has gone by since the inception of the Foundation and the *Journal*, as it seems like only yesterday that I was working so hard to get all this off the ground. I provide some comments and insights in this editorial for those who may not be aware of our beginnings, early struggles to survive, and as background to celebrations at the Durban, South Africa, meeting of the ICS 2014. This editorial, of which there are few in the JCR, highlights some of my impressions during tenure as Executive Director of CERF and Editor-in-Chief of the JCR. Although not a complete history, I hope that this editorial nevertheless provides some interesting background as to how we got to where we are today. I emphasize that the story of our ascent is from the purview of my personal experiences, but that is only one person's impressions out of the many that made all of this possible through their hard work. Without the help of friends and colleagues, none of this would have been possible. As indicated below, it takes a lot of helping hands to make this go. So, I recount the story with humility from my perspective knowing that I could not have done any of this without a little help from my friends. I thus first and foremost say thank you for your support and confidence. I hope you enjoy reading these reminisces without prejudice.

The idea for CERF (Coastal Education and Research Foundation, Inc.) was percolating in my mind during 1982, when my father suggested the name. He came up with it based on FIERF (Forging Industry Educational and Research Foundation), of which he was a member as a steelmaker. At first I was not exactly sure what CERF was going to do, but then ideas began to crystallize when Rhodes Fairbridge and I were setting up a new coastal journal for Van Nostrand in New York. We knew we wanted to initiate something in the general area of coastal science but were grappling with a name for the new scientific journal. Rhodes liked esoteric icons and promoted the name *Litoralia*. While establishing the new journal under that name we found out that the INQUA (International Union for Quaternary Research) Commission on Quaternary Shorelines was already using the term for an irregular newsletter (1977–1986). After some discussions with them, they released the name to us because we planned a regular-issue quarterly publication.

LITORALIA DAYS: CELEBRATION AND LETDOWN

The first issue of *Litoralia* was launched in the summer of 1984, which proved to be a fateful year for us. While we were busy getting the journal ready for publication, Van Nostrand was bought out by Thomson International (now Thomson Reuters). With publication of the first issue of *Litoralia,* we were notified that the new owner was not going to continue publishing scientific journals. What to do now? While surprised and dismayed, we pondered the possibilities. Eventually, they suggested that we could acquire the rights to *Litoralia* for liabilities. Further discussions disclosed to Rhodes and me that the liabilities amounted to fulfilling the first year's subscriptions to subscribers of record, which amounted to 40 orders. So, there we were, holding the rights to a journal, which we did not know how to publish.

FORMATION OF THE *JOURNAL OF COASTAL RESEARCH (JCR)*

Rhodes told me that this effort was taking too much time and getting way too complicated for him, as he had many other projects to take care of. So, then it was down to me wondering what to do. Fortunately, I had an epiphany and realized that CERF could be the publisher of *Litoralia*. Through much discussion with colleagues, I learned that most people thought *Litoralia* had something to do with literature. Listening and appreciating that most people were not attuned to the Latin vernacular in those days (myself included) and even more so these days, I quickly decided that a name change was in order. Because we wanted to fill a niche by providing a venue in coastal research, it seemed pretty obvious to name the new journal by what it did, and so the name *Journal of Coastal Research* was born, and *Litoralia* died after the one issue in 1984. CERF would be the parent (publisher), and was officially incorporated in 1984 as a 501(c)(3) corporation (nonprofit means to deliberately not make a profit); the first issue of the *Journal of Coastal Research* appeared in the winter of 1985. CERF and the JCR thus became inextricably intertwined.

GETTING CERF AND THE JCR OFF THE GROUND

The Founding Directors of CERF were myself, my father (Charles W. Finkl, Sr.), Rhodes W. Fairbridge, and Maury Schwartz. My father made a one-time donation of $30,000 to CERF, and we were off and running. We had an initial investment for startup activities, but had to be self-supporting before the money ran out. That meant that in addition to teaching at university, working for Rhodes on the Encyclopedia of Earth Science Series, and doing my own research, I had to run a journal as well as the Foundation. Because of the limited funding and keen desire to succeed, we had to do everything

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ourselves, as we could not afford helpers or the luxury of subcontracting work.

The Foundation purchased a computerized phototypesetter and hired a graduate student to do all the typesetting on a computer screen that was all code and not wysiwyg (what you see is what you get). In our case it was what you see is not what you get, unless you know the typesetting code. Copy in those days was output to long reels of wet photographic paper. We had to print all copy to find mistakes, then go back and try again to correct the code. Some difficult passages took many tries, especially those with formulas and equations. We unfortunately used a lot of expensive photographic paper, which Kodak very much appreciated. After we printed out an issue in long, seemingly never-ending, reels of paper, I had to cut each page and then do all of the paste up by hand.

Paste up meant literally pasting line drawings on the page using hot wax. Halftones were inserted photographically by the printer before final printing plates were made, but I had to calculate the exact amount of space required for the reduction to fit (whether one column, two columns, or a turn page) and leave a blank space above the figure caption and below the header bar. That effort turned out not to be so easy, and many remakes were required to achieve the desired format. Each sheet of paper (a journal page) was then pasted onto thin cardboard stock. When all the boards were collated, I took them to a printer in Miami, where they were photographed, printed, and perfect bound. Picking up the nearly one ton of issues in my already ailing Ford Bronco was a delightful experience four times a year. Driving back to Fort Lauderdale from Miami with the tailgate almost on the ground and the front wheels barely touching the road was an interesting experience. I tried to coordinate these treks with off-peak hours, as the I-95 interstate was a nightmare driving experience even in the best of times.

Once back at the office, I had to unload the boxed copies and individually seal each issue in a plastic bag with a mailing label. Then all the copies had to be organized by U.S. zip code and by country for overseas mail. Each group was strung together in bundles using rubber bands and then inserted in large canvas mailbags. The mailbags required the correct codes to get where they were going all over the world. Next, I had to pack all that up in the Ford Bronco and head to the main post office. Everything had to be offloaded onto postal scales, weighed in, and fees paid. After that, I got about one day of rest before starting preparation of the next issue, repeating the whole process over and over for two years. People outside of the loop, and the loop was very small, never knew about the extraordinary efforts that were required to get the journal off the ground with such a limited budget.

Never was it known that Rhodes and I had to rewrite (called ghost writing) many initial papers ourselves in order to get the job done in a timely manner. There was no Internet in common use in those days, and so everything was done by mail and handling paper copies, especially when it came to the peer review and manuscript revision processes. Fortunately, the subscriber list grew, and after a couple of years we were able to afford Allen Press (in Lawrence, Kansas) as our printer, the first issue printed by them coming out in the spring of 1987. The production quality of the journal immediately improved after that association and has grown since then, becoming what it is today. Subscription management also received a "helping hand" from Allen Press, and I no longer had to manage everything myself using dBASE. First published by Ashton-Tate, dBASE was one of the first widely used database management systems for microcomputers that included a core database engine, query system, forms engine, and a programming language that tied components together. This program was good for the JCR subscription management because it contained a simple format to store structured data. The program was anything but simple to operate, however, and I had to become proficient in order to manage subscriptions, manuscript tracking, and financials.

ENTRY INTO THE DIGITAL (INFORMATION) AGE

Those were the so-called good old days, and at the time they were truly difficult and trying. Although laborious, time consuming, and at times very frustrating, these efforts were worthwhile because they taught me a great deal about publishing, of which I knew next to nothing previously. Learning how to start up a scientific journal from scratch, compile an editorial board, elicit papers, conduct blind peer reviews, and learn proper procedures for copyediting, computerized phototypesetting, paste up, printing, and mailing was worth its weight in gold. With the advent of widespread use of the Internet, electronic manuscript tracking systems, and digital printing, I was able to easily move CERF and the JCR into the more modern digital age because I knew how everything worked the old fashioned way. It remains somewhat of a surprise to me even to this day how little most authors know about the publishing process. They live and die by the printed word (for tenure, promotion, and prestige), and yet they know next to nothing about how a manuscript actually gets published. Even more amazing is how few authors read the Instructions to Authors before submitting a paper. These are some of the things that make life interesting as a journal editor.

GROWTH OF CERF'S PUBLISHING PROGRAM

In addition to being the publisher of the *Journal of Coastal Research*, CERF maintains an active book publishing program. Most of the books are put out as special issues of the JCR, of which there are now nearly 70 volumes in the stable. That works out on average to about two books per year. The special issues have ranged from a few inexpensive spiral bound, soft cover books to hard cover multivolume sets, but most by far are perfect bound issues in a format similar to the regular issues of the JCR. The Foundation originally published a newsletter called *Just CERFing*, which I produced myself using a desktop computer and special software. As my workload increased, it became impossible to continue the newsletter, and there was a hiatus of many years. When I got some helping hands from Barbara Russell and Chris Makowski, it was possible to reinstate the newsletter in an electronic format instead of paper copy. Reintroduced as a monthly publication, the first electronic version came out as Volume 1, Issue 1, in April 2010 and has become popular with members of the Foundation, as evidenced by the number of hits seen on the Foundation's Web site (www.cerf-jcr.org).

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CERF'S WEB SITE

The Foundation's Web site (www.CERF-JCR.org) was developed by my son, Jon, and I am very pleased with the job. Jon Finkl and Chris Makowski maintain the Web site, which is constantly updated with new information and links. The Web site contains a lot of information, and everyone is encouraged to take a look around. In addition to timely information and news items, the Web site contains archived proceedings of the International Coastal Symposium (official meeting of the Foundation that is held more or less every other year in a different country in association with a local host, known colloquially as the ICS) and issues of *Just CERFing*. The Web site also has a list of Supporting Scientific Organizations, as well as individual CERF supporters (lifetime, patron, and contributing members).

CERF EDITORIAL OFFICE

The Foundation's Editorial Office is thus a busy place with everything that is going on: bimonthly publication of regular issues of the JCR, monthly publication of *Just CERFing*, irregular publication of special issues (some issues printed overseas), daily updates to the Web site, and ongoing manuscript tracking and peer review activities. CERF maintains an electronic photo gallery that can be accessed from the Web site. Contributions are always welcome, as good quality cover photos in landscape mode are always needed. Although not everything that goes on in the Foundation, this brief list gives the flavor or tenor of the wide range of activities that are required to keep things going.

DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

As the JCR grew over time, it became apparent that CERF needed more expertise than I could offer, and so I expanded the Board of Directors (Trustees) to include people with diverse backgrounds who could provide helpful insight into financial and legal matters in addition to the science and engineering that the journal dealt with. Today, the President and Executive Director of CERF is assisted by Senior Vice President and Assistant Director Chris Makowski, Vice President Syed Khalil, Secretary Heather Vollmer, and Executive Assistant Barbara Russell. Only the Senior Vice President and Executive Assistant receive a modest annual stipend. One of the Founding Officers is deceased (Rhodes Fairbridge) and sorely missed for his company, wit, and wisdom. In addition to the executive board, there are now about twenty trustees of CERF, all of whom serve on a volunteer basis. Most of the trustees are located in the United States, but some others reside in Australia, Northern Ireland, Wales, and the Netherlands, to make up a truly international advisory group. The present Board of Directors (Trustees) of our Virginia-based Foundation, includes the following professionals and their affiliations: J. Andrew Cooper (University of Ulster, Coleraine, Northern Ireland, U.K.), Robert Dean (University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, U.S.A.), Charles W. Finkl (Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, and Coastal Education and Research Foundation [*CERF*], Asheville, North Carolina, U.S.A.), Gary Griggs (University of California, Santa Cruz, California, U.S.A.), James Houston (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE], Vicksburg, Mississippi, U.S.A.), Robert Huff (Robinson Farmer Cox Associates, Charlottesville, Virginia, U.S.A.), Joseph T. Kelley (University of Maine, Orono, Maine, U.S.A.), Vic Klemas (University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, U.S.A.), Charles Lemckert (Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia), Christopher Makowski (Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, and Coastal Education and Research Foundation [*CERF*], Coconut Creek, Florida, U.S.A.), Mike Phillips (Swansea Metropolitan University, Mount Pleasant, Wales, U.K.), Orrin H. Pilkey, Jr. (Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A.), Norbert P. Psuty (Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, U.S.A.), Elijah W. Ramsey III (U.S. Geological Survey, Lafayette, Louisiana, U.S.A.), Maurice L. Schwartz (Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington, U.S.A.), Andrew D. Short (University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia), Daniel J. Stanley (Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.), Marcel Stive (Delft University of Technology, Delft, the Netherlands), and Allan Williams (Swansea Metropolitan University, Mount Pleasant, Wales, U.K.).

YEARS OF SERVICE: DEDICATED TRUSTEES

Years of initial service as a Trustee of CERF are as follows, for members presently on the Board of Directors: J. Andrew Cooper (2011), Robert Dean (2011), Charles W. Finkl (1984), Gary Griggs (2011), James Houston (2011), Robert Huff (1988), Joseph T. Kelley (2011), Vic Klemas (2005), Christopher Makowski (2011), Mike Phillips (2011), Orrin H. Pilkey (2011), Norbert P. Psuty (2011), Elijah W. Ramsey III (2002), Maurice L. Schwartz (1984+), Andrew D. Short (1987), Daniel J. Stanley (1994), Marcel Stive (2011), and Allan Williams (2011). As can be seen from this list, the Board was significantly expanded in 2011 and has benefitted from additional expertise. Of significant note are long-term service records by Jeane-Claude Dionne (1994–2010) and Robert Dolan (1988–2010). Deceased Board members and their long terms of service are proudly noted for Per Bruun (1984–2007), Donald R. Coates (1985–1995), Rhodes W. Fairbridge (1984–2006), and Terry Healy (1994–2009). Trustees are critical to the smooth running of the Foundation and their unwavering support over the years is greatly appreciated.

IN HINDSIGHT: DEVELOPING A CONCERTO OF COOPERATIVE ACTION

In sum, the first ten years are the uphill climb getting a journal off the ground and establishing a nonprofit foundation. I had a lot to learn and had to learn it relatively quickly in order to make a go of it. There were many moments early on when I wondered if CERF and the JCR would make it over the hump to success as the slippery slope to failure was ever present. It was only through sheer doggedness and stubbornness (stemming from a German–Irish background) that I persevered through some really difficult times and scary situations. But the hard work and dedication is water over the dam now as we look toward the future. Both CERF and the JCR are well established. I have good people in place to guide the Foundation and the journal. It is hard to believe, but it takes hundreds of people to make all this happen: 85 editors on the JCR Editorial Board (not including more than 250 outside reviewers that

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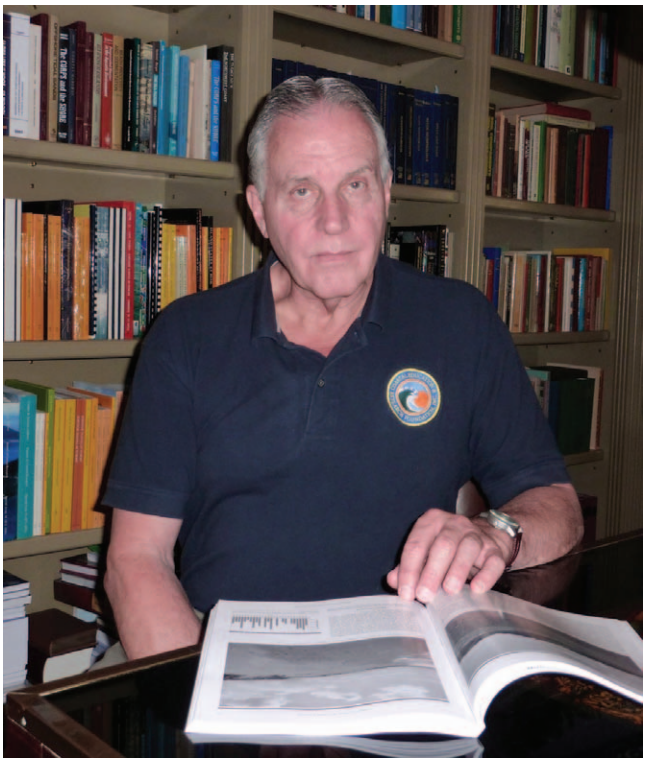
must also be coordinated, as in the 2012 volume year, for example) and 20 Trustees of the Foundation. That means in a typical year there are more than 300 people directly involved in the running of the Foundation and production of the JCR. And that total effort does not take into account support from Allen Press for copyediting, printing, maintenance of the electronic manuscript tracking system, and subscription management (including invoicing, fulfillment, mailing, and shipping).

All in all, this is a pretty big effort that must be coordinated and choreographed. The hourglass of management from the top down and from the bottom up goes through a choke point where one person must know everything that is going on, and that is the Editor-in-Chief of the JCR and the Executive Director of CERF. That person is the conductor who coordinates everything that hopefully runs as smoothly as a fine-tuned orchestra. The present captain of the ship (Charlie Finkl) has been at the helm now for thirty years, and one of these days it will be time to pass the gavel over to Chris Makowski, who is being groomed for the task as an apprentice. The post is somewhat onerous, but, as they say, rank hath its privileges. That is, *Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi*—that which is allowed to Jupiter isn't allowed to cows—meaning there are different rights and duties for different groups. We all do different jobs, but someone has to coordinate the collective effort into a directed goal. I have not yet figured out what the privileges are, but give me a few more years to cogitate on that pressing issue and I may come up with an answer. One thing I do know for sure is that there are plenty of duties that must be expeditiously fulfilled in a business that is time-sensitive. Without a firm hand on the tiller, chaos reigns supreme and knows no bounds. The reason for this lack of insight is that editors live in the future, because they are constantly planning ahead for the next issue or two. Life goes by very quickly because by the time you catch up to where you planned to be, you are already planning to be someplace else in the future.

AND THE FUTURE? A BRIGHT SPOT ON THE HORIZON

I thus look forward to the continued growth of CERF and the JCR. My vision is not to get so big as a society that we can't manage it ourselves and provide personalized service to members and subscribers. When people write to the Editor-in-Chief or the Executive Director, he really does answer personally. The personal touch is just as important today as it was in the past. And, in fact, it is probably more important to be personally involved, as we all get tired of impersonal form letters and canned responses to communication. They are meaningless, and we know it because these stereotyped forms of communication are, in many ways, dehumanizing and unsatisfying. We thus strive at CERF and the JCR to provide personalized service based on hands-on experience. With the continued support from the coastal research family, CERF and the JCR will be around for another thirty years, at least!

Charlie Finkl
Asheville, North Carolina, U.S.A



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