

Salutations, Statistics, and a Sneak Peek Inside

Abstract

As the new *JOE* editor, I begin this installment of the Editor's Page by introducing myself and acknowledging the very big shoes I have to fill. Next, I share the always interesting "*JOE* by the Numbers" information. You'll find out everything you want to know about *JOE*'s 2015 submission and readership rates—along with *JOE*'s current acceptance rate—and about the most read articles of 2015. Finally, I provide a glimpse into the contents of this issue of *JOE*.

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Introduction and Recognition

As the new editor of *JOE*, I would like to introduce myself. I have worked extensively as a writer and editor in fields from journalism and technical writing to educational and scholarly publishing. My involvement with Cooperative Extension began in 1996, when I joined the University of Kentucky's Agricultural Communications Department as an editor. More recently, I continued my connection with Extension as a freelance copy editor for eXtension. With my first reading of *JOE*, I was impressed and thought, "As an editor, how can I be part of this journal?" To my delight, I have my answer!

While sifting through mounds of material in my attempts to learn everything I can about being a good *JOE* editor, I encountered some items that didn't surprise me in the least. They were laudatory remarks from *JOE* readers about my predecessor, Dr. Laura Hoelscher, and her "high level of professional caliber and commitment." I concur and will do my best to build on the substantial improvements she has made to *JOE*.

As I try to fill her shoes, Dr. Hoelscher is patiently attending to my frequent and long lists of questions. In fact, she even wrote the "*JOE* by the Numbers 2015" section of this Editor's Page for me. Her help has been invaluable. Also, *JOE* webmaster Eric Owens, *JOE* peer reviewers, and members of the Extension Journal, Inc., Board of Directors have made me feel welcome and supported. In Dr. Hoelscher's first Editor's Page, 16 years ago, she asked for patience from *JOE* readers. Now I do the same. Please bear with me as I slowly make strides at getting better and faster in my new role.

JOE by the Numbers 2015

As per usual, here are the previous year's submission tally and *JOE*'s current acceptance rate, a report on readership statistics, and a shout out to one of the most interesting features of the *JOE* site (and one that should interest many of you, too).

2015 Submission Tally

2015 was a barn burner of a year for *JOE*. We received 334 submissions, our all-time high and 11 submissions more than in 2014, when we tied our previous high of 323 submissions.

Acceptance Rate

In 2003, we started collecting the data that would allow us to post an annual acceptance rate for *JOE*, but posting annual acceptance rates caused confusion. It also failed to account for submissions that were submitted in one year but reviewed in another. We now have enough reliable data from enough years to post a single rate.

JOE's current acceptance rate is 25.5%. (This figure is the average of data from 2011 through 2015.) *JOE* is a rigorous journal in which Extension professionals and other scholars can be proud to be published.

Readership Statistics

In 2015, there were 1,090,521 "visitors" to the *JOE* site who viewed 1,673,499 pages. *JOE* is now using newer statistics collection software that better filters "bots" and search engine crawlers. You can find readership statistics from 2010 through 2015 and definitions of terms at [Website Statistics: Readership Statistics](#).

Also in 2015, *JOE* attracted readers from 226 nations and territories, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Among the top 10 nations and territories accessing *JOE*, the United States, not surprisingly, was number one, with 475,059 visits, and Indonesia was number 10, with 17,972 visits. You can find the list of nations and territories at [Website Statistics: Nations & Territories Accessing JOE in 2015](#).

The Top 50 Most Read Articles

Now to some of the most interesting statistics.

The list of the Top 50 Most Read Articles in 2015 as well as lists from 2005 to 2014 can be accessed from [About JOE: Website Statistics](#). Included are indications of which articles are new to a list and how articles ranked in the previous year. There's considerable movement in the Top 50 lists from year to year. For example, one article on the 2015 list rose 21 places from its ranking in 2014, and other articles rose 15 and 16 places. It all makes for interesting reading and potentially valuable information.

You'll see that five entries on the 2015 list weren't on the 2014 list. Two articles on the 2015 list were published as early as 1984, and one was published in 2014. This detail reinforces a singular

advantage of web-based journals such as *JOE*—all of the articles still "live" and "speak."

These lists certainly are not a reflection on the quality of *JOE* articles that "made the lists" as opposed to those that didn't. But they do say a lot about the degree of interest readers from around the world have in some of the topics discussed in *JOE*.

February *JOE*

The many excellent articles in this issue begin with two Commentaries. "[4-H and Its Relevance in the Era of #Moments in Urban Communities](#)" takes a tough stance on a pressing contemporary challenge—how 4-H should reposition itself for relevance to today's "socially charged and social justice-minded" urban youth. "[Finding the Motivation, Time, Personal Techniques, and Confidence to Write](#)" supplies (mostly) tender advice and prodding related to a perennial problem—barriers that keep Extension professionals from accomplishing written scholarship.

Reflective of the persistent demand for justification of Extension programming, the lead article in each of the other four categories focuses on program evaluation. The Feature "[Program Theory and Quality Matter: Changing the Course of Extension Program Evaluation](#)" proposes a significant shift in the overall approach to evaluation. "[How Do Mode and Timing of Follow-Up Surveys Affect Evaluation Success?](#)" (Research in Brief) and "[Making Evaluation Work for You: Ideas for Deriving Multiple Benefits from Evaluation](#)" (Ideas at Work) give suggestions for getting the most out of program evaluation. And the first *two* Tools of the Trade articles—"E-Basics: [Online Basic Training in Program Evaluation](#)" and "[Tools for Formative Evaluation: Gathering the Information Necessary for Programming Improvement](#)"—recognize the role of effective training and instruction for Extension professionals if truly worthwhile evaluation is to be achieved.

In addition, other articles, such as "[Extension Resource Use Among Washington State Wine Makers and Wine Grape Growers: A Case for Focusing on Relevance](#)," explore important aspects of client needs fulfillment that current Extension program evaluation may overlook. From professional development for Extension personnel to innovative ways of working with clientele, topics in this issue offer something for everyone.

A Quick Apology

Whew! I must apologize for the length of this "Editor's Page." Please don't think I'll be this long-winded on a regular basis. It's just that I had a lot of business to take care of this time around!

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