



One of my “pet peeves” is the increasing sound levels in restaurants. Dining out, with a rare exception, has become a hearing challenge: a challenge to hear the server and a challenge to hear your tablemates. Indeed, my wife

and I have “discovered” that a much more pleasant evening is dining at home with friends because conversation does not involve shouting to be heard, not hearing much of what is said due to acoustic masking, and possibly developing temporary threshold shift (hearing loss) over dinner. And so, at a recent meeting of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA), when I heard a talk by Kenneth Roy, I immediately invited him to contribute to this issue of *Acoustics Today* (*AT*), an article he wrote with Keely Siebein. The article gives fascinating insight into the basis for high sound levels in restaurants and an appreciation of the fact that even if a restauranteur wants to lower sound levels, the challenges are great. I trust that most (if not all) members of the ASA will “relate” to this article, as did I. Indeed, I invite you to download copies and provide it to the manager of your favorite restaurants; maybe they will “get the message.”

The first article also comes from a talk at an ASA meeting. There, Gordon Ramsay discussed the history of machines that produce speech. Although I was not at the talk, I heard about it from several colleagues and am delighted to have this fascinating article.

Our third article, by James TenCate and Marcel Remillieux, discusses the acoustics of rocks. This is an area I had not much thought about, but I think readers will find, as did I, that the acoustical properties of rocks are not only fascinating but also very revealing. And I suggest that readers also check out the Marcel’s BioSketch and do a search for his French bakery. I wonder if it is quiet!

The fourth article by Bradley Treeby, Jiri Jaros, Eleanor Martin, and Ben Cox is another in what has become an informal series in *AT* that deals with use of ultrasound in biomedicine. In this fascinating article, the authors talk about how one predicts the path of ultrasound in the body, and it becomes apparent that the path is not simple to predict and is affected by many different aspects of the body tissues.

The “Sound Perspectives” pieces in this issue of *AT* are quite diverse. “Ask an Acoustician” features my old friend Sam Ridgway. Sam, who is often referred to as the “Dolphin Doctor,” was the world’s first marine mammal veterinarian. He continues to have a fascinating career that mixes medicine and extraordinary research on the biology of marine mammals.

Another essay is by another old friend of mine, Ed Walsh. Ed chairs the ASA Public Policy Committee, something I knew nothing about but which has the potential to hold great importance for all ASA members.

We also have an essay by a young friend of mine (no, I do not only ask friends to write essays, but it just happens that there are three such essays in this issue), Laura Kloepper. Laura is involved in a number of important ASA committees, but the focus of this article comes from a talk she gave at a recent ASA meeting on communicating science to non-scientists. Laura teaches this subject in very creative ways, and because it is an area that I think is very important and one relevant to all of us, I asked her to share her approach so that others might give some thought of adopting similar courses elsewhere.

The other two essays reflect support for the ASA Student Council and for the ASA Women in Acoustics committee. In a report from the Student Council, Kali Burke and William Doebler discuss ways that students can get more involved in ASA and the value of getting involved for developing networks that will be useful now and in the future. The idea of networking and its value is very much the theme of the essay from Tracianne Neilsen, Lauren Ronsse, and T. Christina Zhao from the Women in Acoustics group. This essay, which really applies to all ASA members, reflects on the need to develop networks and mentors throughout one’s career.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that this issue of *AT* is the first with our new production team, Opus Design. The firm is located in the United States (Boston) and Germany, and it has exceptional experience in creative design. We don’t anticipate much change in the design right now (though there are a number of subtle changes to improve the readability and look of the magazine), but down the road, as we and Opus get to know one another, we look forward to perhaps enhancing *AT* in interesting ways.