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Giving Thanks and New Year's Resolutions

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So it is the time of year to give thanks for last year and to make New Year's resolutions for this year. These exercises keep me grounded. As Gandhi stated, "There is more to life than simply increasing its speed." It sure seems like life flies past faster and faster, and it reminds me of Fermat's Principle: "Light takes the path of least time." I am glad that Fermat's Principle replaced one of the previous ideas that "light takes the path of least distance." My life is certainly taking the path of least time and not the path of least distance. I know this because I have had some huge ups and downs (a crooked path) in the past five years and this past year has held true to the pattern.

I am thankful for the continued opportunity to be the Editor of *Optical Engineering*. It is a highlight in my life and I truly enjoy working with the publications staff at SPIE. I am thankful to have a good job with some of the brightest people in optics and optical engineering. These people make me want to come to work every morning and they seem to appreciate my efforts. I am thankful to be a good father with four unbelievable children (13-year-old triplets and my 26-year-old son). Megan wants to become an optical engineer, Madison wants to be a medical doctor, and Stone wants to be a video game developer. Ryan is a great machinist at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. I am thankful for my family and my close friends who have been there for me for many years. They are continually amazed at the situations I get myself into, but they don't seem to tire in helping me through them. I am certainly always available for them. I am also thankful that NATO is pulling out of Iraq and that Iraq will have an opportunity to develop its own great country. God has blessed me with another good year and I am even thankful for the challenges.

For any new year, I always try to make a number of resolutions, and I do this with a list. My personal list includes a few resolutions for family, finances, religion, health/fitness and career. They say that the key to a good goal or resolution is not to make it too hard and not to make it too easy. Setting a goal too low becomes meaningless and setting a goal too high sets yourself up for failure. My career goal this year will be to write two journal papers and to present at least one conference presentation. I will also teach a short course on infrared systems. My religious goal two years ago was to read the Bible. This year it will be to go to church at least twice a month. Two categories of resolutions that I also write are to learn something that I think is fun and to make a difference in someone's life for the better. This year, I think I will learn to salsa dance. Lessons start in mid January. As far as making a difference in someone's life, this is something that I have thought long and hard about and I think I am closing in on who and what it will be. My resolution with *Optical Engineering* is to continue to work on the quality of papers, with "high interest" and "relevance" guiding the type of papers that we want to publish. We will continue to pursue these papers through special sections, tutorials, reviews, and top ten downloads. As always, we will continue to strive for high acceptance standards in significance and originality for regular submissions.

I would like to wish the entire optical engineering community a great year. I can feel that this year is "my" year and I am really looking forward to getting on with the future without it all happening in the least time possible. Also, remember that *Optical Engineering* is your community journal and please contact me if you have suggestions for improvements.

Happy New Year.

Ronald G. Driggers
Editor