FROM THE EDITOR

Oh No! Not Another Learning Experience!

by Kate M. Schell

Kate M. Schell

By now you've all seen that sentiment as a bumper sticker, an email signature, or you've heard it as a mantra in the workplace. For me, the effort that goes into producing this magazine is my latest learning experience. The Executive Editor asks (or begs) for articles, keeps up reminders until promised materials come in, and then helps handle the review process. Sometimes the whole procedure flows seamlessly. At other times I end up re-transmitting review copies over a modem from my hotel room at six in the morning. My thanks go out to the authors and reviewers involved in the production of this issue.

When we finish the review cycle, Pam McIntyre and the MTA staff pick up the reins. They edit the grammar and composition of the materials, and Pam type-sets articles for the printer. Meanwhile, the MTA staff work on co-ordinating the receipt of columns, news items and advertisements, and supplies these materials to Pam. The result is the issue before you.

This issue of *M Computing* contains a wide range of topics. We're hearing from many old friends, as well as some folks who've never written for *M Computing* before. We feature a regular range of articles, as well as some that were written specifically for the MTA Conference, and the results of our first salary survey.

Special thanks are due to Joel Yungton for designing the 1998 salary survey and assembling the responses into meaningful results. Even if you didn't get a chance to contribute, the results are well worth a read. Joel's initiative on this topic has produced some information that can be used to replace idle speculation.

Opportunities for "learning experiences" abound within the MTA. Volunteers put together the Annual Conference, serve on the Board, participate in the MDC, and maintain the MTA web site.

The MTA is currently looking for volunteers to help with the 1999 conference. My first volunteer efforts on behalf of the MTA were with the program committee. I learned a lot, and met interesting people in the process. To get involved, either attend the organizational session at the 1998 meeting, or contact the MTA. The team that puts together the 1999 conference will be faced with new challenges as we move the conference to a new location and a new organizational partnership.

In coming months we'll be working on making much of *M Computing* available

to members through the MTA web site. Watch the site for new areas, and let us know what you think about them. Do they serve your needs? What would you like to see added? Do you have time to help improve or maintain the MTA web site?

A large number of people have spent a great deal of time writing and assembling this issue of *M Computing*. Since this journal is one of the principal benefits of your MTA membership, I hope that there's something worthwhile for you in this issue. If you have recommendations for topics, stories, or authors, please let me know. If any of the articles in this issue spark a controversy, letters to the editor are also welcome.   **M**

Kate Schell is President of Jacquard Systems Research in Rockville, MD and the Executive Editor of M Computing. *She can be reached through email at: cschell@JacquardSystems.com or through the MTA office at 301-431-4070.*

Dr. Valerie Harvey

Executive Editor
M Computing 1996-1998

Valerie Harvey

Nearly one and a half years ago, Dr. Valerie Harvey volunteered her time and expertise and assumed the role of Executive Editor of *M Computing*. With a new enthusiasm she sought to strengthen *M Computing's* role as a unique source of technical information. As a result, *M Computing* has grown and broadened its focus to include a greater use of Internet resources. There is a greater involvement of individuals whose knowledge and M expertise would not otherwise be available to the larger M community. There is greater interaction and communication with the international community. And we have seen how M has been integrated with new technologies like NT, CORBA, and object technology.

In addition to addressing technical issues, Valerie recognized the need to evaluate M issues from a management perspective and sought out articles that would provide a more balanced platform. The *Manager's Forum* by Don Gall reflects this management perspective. Input from system vendors as well as user organizations resulted in two articles on the Year 2000 issue. Valerie's own interest in using online resources resulted in the *Threads* column, a reflection of online discourse about M Technology.

Thank you, Dr. Harvey

MTA wishes to thank Valerie Harvey for her dedication, hard work and creative contributions to *M Computing* during the past year and a half. Her efforts have taken *M Computing* in new directions and provided new insights into M Technology.   **M**