Dear Readers,

In this issue, we present The Journal’s subscriber survey results. Along with helpful feedback regarding future topics, article length, and print edition design and layout, we received suggestions to improve readers’ online experience, which continues to be vital for The Journal’s evolution.

Several survey participants expressed interest in having more content regarding clearance trends and technologies—conveniently, the Focus section of this issue. Articles on clearance trends note that even our most basic work must be innovative enough to incorporate efficiencies, changing technologies and best practices. In this section, for example, Åsa Gilbert and Aron Larsson reveal the results of a 2012 GICHD study that considers the effectiveness of post-clearance inspections as well as the financial costs, time and effort incurred in the execution. In addition, Gvantsa Kvinikadze of the NATO Support Agency discusses a capacity-building project in Georgia and GICHD’s Pehr Lodhammar expands on the concept of land release.

The Feature section centers on gender and age issues by bringing together ideas from the field on how best to address issues of access, rights and equity. It examines these issues in post-conflict recovery and includes an article from Abigail Jones, Arianna Calza Bini and Stella Salvagni Varó about how demining activities can be improved through the integration of gender-sensitive mine risk education. Moreover, CISR’s Cameron Macauley authors an article about the CISR/IBUKA peer-support program for female genocide survivors in Rwanda.

In this issue, we also highlight the retirement of Jim Lawrence after 45 years of U.S. Government service. As Director of the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA), Jim led innovative efforts to build public-private partnerships, advance the humanitarian mine-action agenda, and alleviate the negative impacts of weapons of war around the world. Most telling about Jim’s retirement celebration, however, was the number of younger faces present in the room. He was an outstanding mentor to those who worked with and for him.

Jim Lawrence helped establish the U.S. as the world’s largest contributor to worldwide mine clearance and victim assistance programs, and led the first U.S. observer team to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and their Destruction meetings in 2009. He brought an enlightened perspective to mine action and partnered with the private sector and civil society to clear mines and unexploded ordnance while also helping survivors on their road to recovery. By leveraging his broad international service, which includes Peace Corps volunteer service in Morocco and Fulbright fellowship work in Indonesia, he delivered resources to those working on the front lines to help make Earth a safer place for all. His friendship and leadership will be greatly missed by many around the world.

Sincerely,

Ken Rutherford