

## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

This is the last issue of Volume 2 and the second full year of publication for Visitor Behavior. Your responses during the last two years have been extremely gratifying to us. Subscriptions from all over the world continue to increase steadily from month to month. We have received numerous letters and phone calls either supporting our efforts or requesting further information about visitor studies. Many of you have contributed to the material contained in the first two volumes. Many of you have sought us out at conferences to thank us and describe your activities and interest in visitor studies. To all of you we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your support, your suggestions, your constructive criticisms, and your keen interest in visitors.

Thanks should also go to those of you who took the time to give us a special tour of your facility during our travels. We have been enthusiastically welcomed in aquariums, museums and zoos throughout the United States.

Finally, very special thanks must be given to Marilyn (Molly) Hood and Randi Korn, both of whom have faithfully contributed to Visitor Behavior despite their busy schedules. Molly also did an excellent job as guest editor of Issue 3, Volume 2.

### Progress in Visitor Studies

An explosion of activities in the area of visitor evaluation has occurred in the last two years. More and more facilities are empirically studying their visitors. More and more directors are recognizing the value of applying valuable resources to visitor evaluation. I believe that Visitor Behavior has received an enthusiastic acceptance because of this growing interest in studying visitors. In 1987 the International Laboratory for Visitor Studies under the direction of Chan Screven became a reality and holds a bright future as the major organization for those who study visitors. So many professionals are involved and so many separate organizations have pockets of interest in visitors that it is impossible to keep up with progress. We have attempted to make Visitor Behavior a device for bringing together the diverse sources of activity in visitor studies. Unfortunately, we have not yet achieved this objective. It seems we have only touched the tip of the iceberg of activities.

Every week we become aware of others who have been working in this area. One of our New Year's resolutions for Visitor Behavior is to include a broader range of professionals during the next year. If you know of people who might be potential contributors or if you have material to contribute, please let us know.

### The Current Issue of Visitor Behavior

This issue contains at least two areas of focus that we hope you will find interesting. The first is information about the First Annual Visitor Studies Meeting to be held in Alabama in April. The other major topic of this issue deals with visitor misbehavior.

#### The First Annual Visitor Studies Meeting.

The program schedule is shaping up and includes many, if not most, of the leading professionals in the area of visitor evaluation. The tentative program is included on pages 4 and 5. In addition to the variety of presentations listed in the regular sessions on Thursday and Friday, April 7 and 8, we have included a poster session in the evenings (with food and drink), an information forum/activity sharing session, and an ILVS meeting. The varied activities of the program should provide you with ample opportunity to discuss visitor evaluation with others who are as interested as you in this topic. We are still accepting poster presentations for the evening poster session and encourage you to contact us if you have a possible presentation. Those of you who are still snow-bound in April might appreciate the weather and blooming flowers and trees of an Alabama spring.

Visitor Misbehavior. The second focus of the current issue is visitor noncompliant behavior. This topic includes (but is not limited to) littering, public feeding of animals in zoos, vandalism, and unauthorized touching of museum objects. How often do these problems occur? What do facilities do to control these misbehaviors? Can these behaviors be controlled in a cost-effective manner? What kind of research has been done on these behaviors? What research needs to be done? Unfortunately, not much research has been undertaken on visitor misbehavior. However, as several of the articles in this issue suggest, we have a few clues as to the nature of the problem. We hope that these summaries and discussions will stimulate more interest in studying such problems.

[Steve Bitgood, Editor]