Fifty years is a milestone often celebrated—it’s a birthday, an anniversary, or a significant event in history. For the Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, & Neonatal Nursing (JOGNN), 2021 marks the publication of its 50th volume. Volume 1, Issue 1 was published in June 1972. Technically, JOGNN will not have published for 50 years until Volume 51 is published in 2021 and 50 years have elapsed since the publication of its first issue.

When JOGNN was launched, Editor Ruth Young, RN, noted the following in her inaugural editorial:

The new Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing offers a fresh, new opportunity for nurses in OGN nursing to report thought, trend, policy and research. It represents an expansion of limited existing opportunity to publish in these specialty areas. It is an opportunity to take the lead in OGN nursing, and who should be better qualified to take this lead than those directly involved in these areas? It serves as a source of encouragement for research in obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nursing. The Association [Nurses Association of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (NAACOG)] has grown rapidly and now is even more firmly established as the spokesman for obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nursing through this journal. (Young, 1971, p. 14)

Also, in the first issue, Jane Edwards, RN, MSN, a charter member and former officer of NAACOG reported that “...the Journal will provide obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nurses with information—current thought, policies, trends and research in this specialty! The Journal is the voice of the Association” (Edwards, 1971, p. 56). In his editorial in the first issue, Michael Newton, MD, Director of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists at the time, noted that the emergence of NAACOG and its journal represented a clear delineation of the specialty of obstetric, gynecologic, and neonatal nursing (Newton, 1971). However, Newton challenged his nurse colleagues and NAACOG to develop standards of competence and accredited methods for knowledge acquisition, maintenance, and updating in obstetric, gynecologic, and neonatal nursing similar to those in place at the time by the American College of Nurse-Midwives. He stressed the need for urgency in these initiatives and the requirement for interdisciplinary collaboration and interorganizational efforts to clarify and develop the specialty. Although the terminology has changed over the years from obstetric to maternity nursing and from gynecologic to women’s health nursing, and the singular nursing specialty of OGN has evolved to more separate specialties of maternity (including the healthy neonate), women’s health, and neonatal nursing, the challenge presented by Newton remains. It is critical, ongoing work that is necessary for the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) to meet the goal of enhancing the abilities of nurses to provide evidence-based care for women, childbearing families, and their infants.

In 1992 NAACOG became AWHONN and JOGNN was retained as its official publication (Haller, 1993). JOGNN's Editor Karen Haller, RN, PhD, wrote that the move of NAACOG to AWHONN:

Brings the organization out from under its parent organization, ACOG. A parent-child relationship may be based on respect, but it is not collaborative. The parent is the dominant part, and the relationship is hierarchical. This type of relationship became unacceptable to NAACOG members in 1992. (Haller, 1993, p. 14)

You may or may not be aware that as an AWHONN member, you have free electronic access to the archives of all issues of JOGNN from Volume 1, Issue 1 to the present time. During my recent pilgrimage through those archives, I learned that JOGNN’s nickname was originally JGN Nursing. I also learned about the various individuals who served before me on JOGNN’s Editorial Board and as editors. Interestingly, during at least the first 10 years of
JOGNN, there were always physicians on the journal's editorial board, which reflected the close and somewhat dependent relationship between NAACOG and ACOG. JOGNN's previous editors include Ruth Young, RN; Pam Saroff; Mark Hobbs; Judith Serevino; Annette Flanagan, RN, MA; and Karen Haller, RN, PhD. Finally, I was struck by the topics of the journal's articles, many of which were very contemporary, and read with delight as many names appeared of people I have known or known of across the years. On the occasion of JOGNN's 10th anniversary, Helen Wohlert, RN, MS, former president of NAACOG, reiterated the objectives for the journal announced by NAACOG when the new journal was established:

To stimulate interest in obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nursing; to add to the professional knowledge of the obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nurse; to provide leadership in obstetric, gynecologic and neonatal nursing; to provide incentive for quality nursing care and to give added stature to an already quality branch of medicine and nursing. (Wohlert, 1982, p. 138)

It is interesting that although different words are used, some of these original ideas remain central to JOGNN's core publishing mission and the new, expanded statement of its aims and scope (see Table 1). JOGNN's new mission statement focuses on the recipients of nursing care, women, their families, and their infants, while positioning nurses within the interdisciplinary context of contemporary health care, regardless of setting. JOGNN's editorial team and Editorial Advisory Board, in collaboration with the editors and Editorial Advisory Board of Nursing for Women's Health and AWHONN staff, worked during 2020 to develop this more complete, contemporary description of the journal's aims and scope. We hope that you find JOGNN's new aims and scope statement appropriate to undergird the ongoing and future work of JOGNN's scholarly contributions to the discipline of nursing and the specialties of maternity, women's health, and neonatal care. We invite your comment.

Finally, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Cheryl Tatano Beck, DNSc, CNM, FAAN, as Associate Editor for Qualitative Methods. Dr. Beck brings her well-known reputation and expertise as a qualitative researcher to JOGNN's editorial team where she will shepherd the review and editorial decision-making for qualitative manuscripts submitted to JOGNN for publication consideration. I am grateful for the financial support of AWHONN to make Dr. Beck's appointment possible.

Throughout the five decades of organizational change and growth, the changes in scopes of practice for nurses at the registered nurse and advanced practice levels, the rapid development of graduate education in nursing, and the overall advancement of nursing specialties, JOGNN has been an ongoing presence in the peer-reviewed literature. The journal was launched by forward-thinking nurses who recognized the need for
nurse leadership through scholarly publication by nurses in obstetric, gynecologic, and neonatal nursing. We honor these nurses by looking back to the beginning, reviewing the journal's path across the decades, being faithful stewards of the journal during this time, and by looking forward to what is to come for JOGNN as it passes its 50th milestone.

REFERENCES