

■ ■ Message from the Chair ■ ■

**Suffering from Inertia**

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Writing this “Message from the Chair” is an interesting experience. It causes me to reflect on many things that I rarely have thought through before. This is the beginning of my 21st year of association with the Engineering Design Graphic Division (a personal anniversary of sorts). From this division has come a large number of people I call friends, mentors, and inspirations. However, it should also be the beginning of some changes to the division as well. Twenty years ago when I attended my first Midyear in New Harmony, Indiana, we were still talking about techniques that relied on compasses, t-squares, and triangles. Computers were not even mentioned. The papers presented at that conference reflected the name of the division and its mission. We now find ourselves to be more diversified in the courses we offer, the variety of content we teach in those courses as well as the methods for creating “images.” Several institutions are beginning to offer degrees in our field, but they are not the degrees we would have offered 20 years ago if we were doing it then. It is obviously now time to

make changes to the division that reflect what we actually do. Kathy Holliday-Darr began the process of looking at the division by-laws and asking questions about why we have positions that seem to no longer have a reason to exist or a mission that is on longer relative. At the Annual ASEE Conference, it was further decided that it is probably time to look even at our division’s name. The division and its by-laws are much like my bedroom closet, which I cleaned out recently. As I marveled at the amount of clothes that I had that no longer fit, was no longer in style, or needed replacing, I wondered aloud at why they were still in my closet. My husband’s one word response to my verbal comment was “inertia.” We as a division are also suffering from inertia, which I hope is getting ready to change.

It is a brave new world and keeping up with the changes are, in the words of my father, “like string beads on a string without a knot in the other end.” I think it is probably time to replace or repaint some of the beads.