

Space Weather Journal-Quarterly History

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Starting to gather history here. What is currently reflected here needs to be consolidated and written into a cohesive narrative. Please add to this by sending information to Barbara.

[Copy of the Original Proposal to NSF](#)

Original whitepaper proposing the [Space Weather Journal](#) was written and submitted by Bob Robinson and Paul Song.

FROM BOB ROBINSON:

The idea for a Space Weather Journal began in 2000 as a result of discussions between Bob Robinson and Paul Song about the unique quality of papers submitted to the Chapman Conference on Space Weather, held in Clearwater, Florida. Based on those discussions, Robinson presented a concept for the new journal to a small group at AGU Headquarters on January 31, 2001. The group included Bob Robinson, Paul Song, Paul Bellaire, Howard Singer, Janet Barth, Bob McCoy, and Gene Fisher. Art Richmond and Delores Knipp were invited, but could not attend.

The subject of the meeting was to discuss the benefits of a journal that would serve the unique needs of the broader space weather community. The original list of papers to be included in the journal was:

- Basic research papers in which the results of the research may directly and immediately lead to improvements in space weather operational goals.
- Papers that present observations and analyzed data for specific space weather events.
- Papers presenting new techniques for data dissemination, data mining, and real-time access and control of instruments and observations.
- Papers that describe the results of modeling specific events, model validation and evaluation, application of metrics, and improvements in techniques for data assimilation.
- Papers related to the development and test of space weather indices and proxies.
- Papers describing instrument development applicable to space weather.
- Anomaly reports, forecasting reports, analyses of prediction accuracies, reports of notable successes and failures, post-event analyses.
- Articles on customer requirements and engineering specifications related to space weather.

The agenda for the January 31 meeting identified the following questions to be discussed:

- Who are the involved parties who could contribute to or use a new space weather publication?
- For each segment of this audience for space weather information, characterize the size of the community, the leading institutions, major trends, and existing publications.
- What are the major scientific and engineering societies active in space weather?
- What are the major unmet information needs of the space weather research community?
- What are the major unmet needs of the space weather information user community?

The discussions at AGU led to the development of a formal proposal to the AGU Publications Committee written by Bob Robinson and Paul Song. The proposal described the scope of the journal, any possible overlap with other journals, the role of the editorial board, and the subscriber and author base. The proposal also suggested the journal be overseen by an editorial board with members representing the broad scope of the articles to be published.

Comments on the initial concept were solicited and received from Lou Lanzerotti, George Siscoe, Janet Luhmann, Santimay, Basu, Jack Gosling, Nancy Crooker, Marty Mlynzczak, Paul Bellaire, and Janet Luhmann. Reviewers suggested additional articles in the journal to include interviews with space weather experts, educational and outreach efforts related to space weather, and space weather programatics.

On February 9, 2001, Brian Fraser, Chair of the AGU Publications Committee, agreed to bring the proposal to the attention of the committee at its March meeting. Subsequent to that meeting, he summarized the points/questions raised by committee members:

- Is space weather a discipline that can be sustained over the long term?
- Will it bring in new contributors, readers, and members?
- Can the community expand to accommodate the new journal?
- Will it detract from JGRA?
- It may do better as electronic only.
- Could solar physics be added to the list of stakeholders?
- Could it be co-marketed with AIAA and IEEE?
- Gather statistics on weather journals in meteorology.
- The journal would have to function under AGU's Publications Committee, as other AGU journals.

Further consideration of the concept was deferred to the May 2001 AGU Meeting in Boston, where SPA officers, journal editors, and the proposing team members met to discuss the journal. In attendance were Jack Gosling, Dan Baker, George Siscoe, George Hornberger, Bill Nize, Brian Fraser, Judy Holoviak, Fred Spilhaus, Allison Levine, Paul Song, and Bob Robinson. The result was the formation of a Space Weather Advisory Group that would continue to work with AGU in its consideration of the new journal. The Board included, Bob Robinson, Paul Bellaire, Howard Singer, Janet Barth, Bob McCoy, and Gene Fisher.

By February 2002, the Publications Committee was looking favorably on the launch of the new journal, but was still deliberating on whether it should be an all-electronic publication. With Steve Cole's help at AGU, the concept of creating a "hybrid" publication was proposed. He developed a revised proposal for the journal concept, and also conducted a survey at the Spring 2002 AGU meeting. The response to that survey was overwhelmingly positive. Paul Song presented the plan in one of the sessions and asked for a show of hands. More than 70 percent of attendees said they liked the idea. Of 25 AGU members who submitted formal responses, 90 percent said the journal would be helpful to them.

The final proposal to the AGU Publication Committee was submitted in May 2002, and it was approved in June. An editor search was initiated by soliciting suggestions from AGU section officers, the advisory group that proposed the journal, and the co-sponsor ISES. AGU staff would contact candidates and the Space Weather Advisory Group would review and rank the candidates. The Publication Committee would then select the top three candidates and forward the list to the AGU President.

In November 2002, Lou Lanzerotti was offered the position as Editor and Chief and he accepted.

In the fall of that year, Steve Cole began to prepare a proposal to NSF that would fund the hardcopy production and distribution of the journal.

In December 2002, AGU asked the Space Weather Advisory Group to nominate people to be on the Editorial Advisory Board for the new journal. Invitation letters went out in January 2003. Board members were assigned to initial two-year terms. The role of the Advisory Board was "to encourage submissions to the publication, foster communications with the diverse audiences that are the intended readers and authors of the publication, and advise the editor on editorial content."

AGU issued a press release in February 2003 announcing the launch of the new journal. The first edition was published in March.

Understanding that precedent establishes policy, Lou Lanzerotti has been extremely careful and deliberate in making decisions about the journal content and the scope of articles that are published. His excellent work over the past ten years has helped shape the journal and has been vital to its success.

FROM LOUIS:

When the announcement for possible editors went out, Louis Lanzerotti did not initially consider responding as he was still employed part time at Bell Labs and did not think that he could devote sufficient time to a journal. However just at the deadline for applications, AGU staff in charge of the start up called and asked him to consider applying. The committee and AGU was looking for someone with practical experience and knowledge of the field and someone that was willing think outside the scope of simply another JGR-type journal, which is not what the Union wanted. After considering all applicants, it was Louis that was chosen to inaugurate this new publication.

The journal began with the intent to be an on-line technical magazine, with the exact format space being up to editor-in-chief in terms of recruiting the various types of non-technical articles. In addition, there would be a hard copy digest, SWQ. All were committed to ensuring that SW would not become another JGR-Blue.

At the outset and for several years a significant effort was expended in recruiting the types of technical articles that fit the scope of the journal. It was hard (and still can be) to get articles that do not parrot the JGR style and content. Significant editorial suggestions are required for perhaps 20%-25% of the technical papers received before they go to peer review and the editor edits closely all of the non-technical articles. These interactions were critical to ensure the final product is readily accessible by the intended audience while also being absolutely technically sound.

The NSF and others wanted a hard copy digest that could be delivered to policy and decision makers, as well as other users. NSF provided the leadership and means for this and instituted a five-year grant to AGU to largely cover the costs of this hard copy digest. This grant expired in [INSERT YEAR] and, to date, has not been resubmitted for renewal.

At the start and for some six or seven years there was a small budget for freelance writers for non-technical news and Features as needed. This was utilized on start up, but decreased as the editors have largely been able to solicit enough non-technical material from Space Weather practitioners that the use of freelancers ceased in 2009 or 2010.

For the first decade, the journal was managed by the News department of the AGU. In this department, the journal benefited from access on occasion to the writers in this department to cover a news story if Louis (or some volunteer) could not make it. These AGU writers also provided the interview Features, under the guidance of the editor. In 2012, management of the Journal and Quarterly were moved to the publications division. Access to the news department writers was interrupted and several regular features in the journal suffered for a year or more while the publications division modernized its publication activities through Wiley Online Library. In this first decade, AGU staff did the layout of the SWQ and the artwork.