Forward

As publisher I am responsible for the timely production of this Journal. Regrettably, it has been four years since the last issue of the Journal of Forth Application and Research went to press. I can offer no adequate apology, but thank both the authors and you, the reader, for your patience. In the interest of saving additional time, and money, I have decided to merge issues 3 and 4 of Volume VI into one combined publication. I trust that the high standards you have come to expect of the Journal have been maintained with this issue.

Since we last published the Journal, we have observed significant changes in the Forth community. First, and most sadly, Harris Semiconductor dropped the RTX line, and the company has completely divested itself of digital electronics. Simultaneously, we all found ourselves caught in one of the worst recessions since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Attendance at computer conferences in general, and the Rochester Forth Conference in specific, dropped by 50%. It would seem that the Forth community became lost.

Now in May of 1994 several promising signs are on the horizon. After several years of effort, the ANS Forth Standard was adopted in April and will be presented at the 1994 Rochester Forth Conference. Elizabeth Rather, president of FORTH, Inc., chaired this technical committee nearly from its inception. Nearly simultaneously, the IEEE published the Open Firmware standard, which refers to the ANS Forth Standard. This was also the result of several years of work, primarily by Mitch Bradley, who developed Open Boot while at Sun Microsystems. It is expected that both of these standards will greatly enlarge the Forth community, by expanding the application base. For example, over 1 million Sun Workstations run a tokenized Forth in their boot ROMs.

Almost mystifying, is the continued use and growth of the radiation-hard Harris Semiconductor RTX 2010. Stephen Pelc, of MicroProcessor Engineering, Ltd., has reported that his sales of the development systems for this part continue to grow. It is both gratifying, and sad, to find that the microprocessor of choice for a growing number of space missions is a discontinued Forth processor. Yet, at the same time, one of the most powerful space-rated microprocessors is the 32 bit SC32 Forth processor which is currently flying in a magnetometer experiment aboard a Swedish satellite. This processor was designed by the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory and is supported by Silicon Composers.

Forth continues to show up in unexpected applications from a reconfigured Saudi Arabian airport supporting Desert Storm two years ago to financial software on Wall Street. The Journal will continue to present both refereed articles on applications as well as the underlying technology. If you have articles to publish, please contact us. If you have ideas on how we can better accomplish

our mission of disseminating information about Forth technology, write us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Finally, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the acting US Editor, Dr. Steven Lewis, and our Technical Editor, Dr. Glen Haydon. Dr. Lewis provided guidance with papers in this issue, contributing a paper in Volume VI No. 4 on object oriented programming. Dr. Haydon provided the editing and typesetting support without which this Journal could not have been produced. I salute both of you for your vision and assistance.

Lawrence P. G. Forsley
Publisher, Journal of Forth