Richard Talley’s AJHP colleagues have invited me to offer some reflections on his service to ASHP in light of his retirement at the end of 2014, and I am pleased to do so. I helped recruit Richard as Senior Assistant Editor in 1978, and he succeeded me as Editor in October 1992. It is from these perspectives, and the friendship that I share with Richard, that I offer the following comments.

I remember feeling very fortunate for being able to recruit Richard to the AJHP staff because of the experience he had as assistant director of a pioneering pharmacy department at Harris Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, led by Leo F. Godley. AJHP’s content and readership were expanding at the time, and Richard helped us achieve new levels of service to the growing number of ASHP members.

Since ASHP’s founding in 1942, members of the Society have looked to AJHP as a philosophical and inspirational force that binds them into a cohesive and progressive body in pharmacy practice. This characteristic was established and solidified by Donald E. Francke, Editor from August 1944 to April 1966. Richard preserved and extended this vital function of AJHP through a twofold approach: constantly innovating in content and services to readers while expertly managing the basics of journal publishing (e.g., staff development, peer review of content, editorial quality control, consistent and timely publication schedule, prudent business practices). By year’s end, Richard will have been Editor for more than 22 years, a longer period of service than that of any of his predecessors.

Concurrent with his service as Editor of AJHP, Richard has been Assistant Vice President of the ASHP Publications and Drug Information Systems Office. The responsibilities of this position have included, at various times, ASHP’s website, CareerPharm, the Publications Production Center, the News Center, and the George P. Provost Editorial Internship.

Richard had a large role in creating the ASHP journal Clinical Pharmacy, launched in 1982. Later, he led the process of merging Clinical Pharmacy into AJHP and moving to a semimonthly schedule, an ambitious publication frequency that continues today. As its slogan states, AJHP encompasses “the full scope of pharmacy practice in hospitals and health systems,” an authentic claim made possible by Richard’s leadership.

The intellectual depth and integrity Richard brought to his work are reflected in the scores of editorials he wrote. A few titles that convey a sense of the broad scope of his writing include the following: “Prescribing Authority for Pharmacists,” “Affirming Science and Peer-Review Publishing,” “Experiential Rotations for Pharmacy Students,” “Growth in Pharmacy Residency Training,” “Researching the Human Genome,” “Sterile Compounding in Hospital Pharmacies,” “Impediments to the Promises of E-Health,” “Slowing the Emergence of Multidrug-Resistant Pathogens,” “Direct-to-Consumer Prescription Drug Advertising,” and “Compensation for Cognitive Services.”

Under Richard’s leadership, AJHP has given voice to a wide range of important perspectives in health-system pharmacy beyond those in the regular articles by practitioners and educators. This is evident in some of the sections of AJHP, including columns...
for contributions by students, new practitioners, frontline practitioners, and chief pharmacy officers.

Richard was attuned to international issues, as reflected in the Pharmacy Abroad column and publication of the proceedings of the 2008 Global Conference on the Future of Hospital Pharmacy conducted by the International Pharmaceutical Federation. The latter content continues to be among the most frequently downloaded material on AJHP’s website.

During Richard’s editorship, the diversity and breadth of interests and needs of health-system pharmacists increased immensely. At the same time, the sources of information and the means and speed of communicating information have multiplied greatly, changing the reading habits of everyone, including health-system pharmacists. In the midst of this sometimes-chaotic environment, Richard steadily maintained the core commitments of AJHP: to spotlight the leading edge of pharmacists’ service to patients, maintain high standards for originality and quality of articles, express clarifying and well-reasoned opinions when called for by the times, and synchronize content with ASHP priorities. Practitioners, educators, and students in our field and the profession of pharmacy as a whole owe a debt of gratitude to Richard for that unwavering commitment.

Richard recruited and nurtured a remarkable staff of AJHP editors and associates. When they are asked to describe Richard’s personality and style, the words that pour from them include compassionate, considerate, fair, honest, insightful, intellectual, humble, steadfast, practical, loyal, wittiness, and generous—high praise for the person to whom they have reported.

Over the years, through shared interests and experiences, Richard and I have become good friends. It is a precious gift to have a friend who tells you the unvarnished truth, laughs with you about the absurdities that pop up from time to time, and teaches you through precept and example a “core curriculum” about living a fulfilling life. I am grateful to have Richard as such a friend.

I do not know how Richard will spend his time in retirement, but I suspect it will involve some combination of devotion to his wife, Bona Benjamin, and sons, Jack and Michael, his love of reading American and English literature, his interest in photography and other aesthetic arts, his enjoyment of travel, his affinity for sports cars, and his Baltimore Orioles fandom. As he embarks on a new course in life, I wish him well and extend to him deep appreciation for all he has contributed to the development and maturation of the profession of pharmacy.