Jerry Davis, University of Michigan, gives us all the news that's fit to print about the OMT Division.

I am very happy to be working as division chair for Organization & Management Theory this year. Thanks to its intellectually diverse members, who span disciplines, methods, and levels of analysis, OMT is a thriving intellectual community. My hope over the coming year is to further some ongoing initiatives to enhance what the OMT community has to offer. The annual program testifies to OMT’s success as a research enterprise. The division also serves members at different transition stages of their scholarly career—developing a dissertation proposal, completing a PhD and moving to a first job, learning the ropes as a new faculty member. In the future, we aim to extend this to the classroom, to make salient what organization and management theory has to offer to students and the world of practice.

Thanks to the work of prior division officers and volunteers, OMT is in great shape. The division is now very large (3,645 members) and financially healthy. In spite of its size, OMT still manages to feel like a community, due to the warm personalities who work to keep it human scale. Tina Dacin, who just completed her final year in the Division Chair cycle, brought to life the OMT committees—Research, Teaching, and Practice—and saw them through their early years. Tina deserves our thanks for the great job she did as Division Chair to make OMT a welcoming home. Pam Haunschild brought her vast organizational skills to the job of Division Chair last year, and her effective leadership made it easy to follow in her wake. (Note to self: avoid displaying leadership skills, or you will end up a department chair...)
The Academy meetings. The meetings in Atlanta testified to the vibrancy of the work done by OMT members. Kim Elsbach, who served as Program Chair, did a magnificent job putting together a terrific program in a situation with great uncertainty. The Academy rolled out a centralized submission and reviewing system this past year, which rendered obsolete any skills gathered in prior years of program management. The goal of the new system was to streamline the patchwork approach of prior years, in which each division had its own system—confusing for submitters and reviewers alike. But of course there was a risk that several thousand guinea pigs (or at least their papers) would get lost in a server crash, or that the reviewer-matching algorithm would go berserk and leave ecologists reviewing ethnographies of compassion, or institutional theorists reading about rational actors. Kim boldly piloted the new system with Zen-like equanimity and grace, and produced an outstanding program.

Willie Ocasio, the Incoming Program Chair, organized the largest and boldest set of professional development workshops ever. The PDWs faced a different sort of uncertainty, as new security procedures were introduced at airports around the world earlier in the week. Flight delays, cancelations, and lost luggage kept participants in airport limbo (and generated lots of business for the Atlanta Brooks Brothers). In spite of all this, the PDWs were well-attended.

Christine Beckman and Marc-David Seidel, intrepid Reps-at-Large, assembled an excellent OMT New Faculty Workshop. This is the third time OMT has held the workshop as a sole-sponsored event, and the room was packed, which speaks to the fine job Christine and Marc-David did. And Mary Tripsas and Pablo Martin de Holan, equally intrepid Reps, created an engaging OMT/ODC/MOC Doctoral Consortium that also drew a very large attendance. Both of these events are large undertakings involving management skills that are not normally part of our training (logistics; negotiating with hotels and their catering offices; managing alliance partners) and involve a surprising amount of effort over a surprisingly long period—so, mad props to Christine, Marc-David, Mary, and Pablo.

The committees. OMT has three committees that are central to our future initiatives. The Research Committee, chaired this year by William Dougan, selects winners of the Best Paper, Best Dissertation, and Best Symposium awards from among the top submissions in each category for the program. The committee receives between 12 and 20 submissions to evaluate and has a very quick turnaround time, so we are grateful for their willingness to drop everything for this task. The Teaching Committee, co-chaired by Terry Conry and Kelly Thomson, is doing two critical tasks for the future of OMT: gathering and disseminating teaching materials (see the repository on our website) and organizing an annual “Teaching OMT” pre-conference workshop. I believe that getting OMT into the classroom is vital to the future of the division, and thank Terry and Kelly for their work. Finally, the Practice Committee,
co-chaired by Majken Schultz (recovering Rep-at-Large) and Mike Tushman, seeks to connect the T in OMT to practice, and this year organized an excellent symposium that involved leading academics who bring theory to practice, and vice versa. The committees are the source of much of OMT’s energy in bringing our research work to the world of practice, through teaching and connections with the real world.

Thanks to the outgoing officers. Three of our officers are retiring from OMT and are outgoing in both ways. Tina Dacin was Division Chair extraordinaire, and brought her native Canadian sense of decency and fair play, along with her effusive charm, to OMT. Matt Kraatz was a tireless Rep-at-Large and pragmatist—in both the upper-case and the lower-case sense—while maintaining faith in the power of ideas. And Majken Schultz has worked energetically to build bridges to practice, which she has continued through the Practice Committee. I am grateful for all they did and continue to do for OMT.

Thanks to the uber-volunteers. Since roughly the time of the Beatles’ first appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, OMT has been blessed with outstanding uber-volunteers. Tracy Thompson, our Communications Coordinator, has published nearly 4,000 editions of the newsletter since taking on her role, and has served as the unerring institutional memory for OMT. Marshall Schminke has been an astute fiscal manager and all-around numbers guy as OMT treasurer, and is widely touted as Ben Bernanke’s successor. And Pablo Martin de Holan has brought his soul-patch style to OMT’s many web upgrades. Thanks to all of you.