

President's Report
Stratford, Ontario
April 29, 2006

The first thing that I want to say is to express a hearty thanks to the members of the Board for the good work that you have done, especially in connection with preparation for our festivals. You have demonstrated that you have the talents and the abilities that the membership anticipated when they elected you to the Board.

I also want to express thanks to John, Karen and Jackie at our headquarters for the excellent support which they continually provide. We quite literally could not function without them, and I hope that the Board members and all of the association membership appreciate how much they do for us.

During the past six months we have passed through a difficult transition, and perhaps the best that can be said is that it is behind us and we can now focus on the future. For the record, here is a summary of our actions since our Orlando meeting:

We paid the remaining \$10,000 to the lawyer who represented us in the lawsuit, in two installments of \$5,000 each as per the Association's prior agreement with him.

In November, we adopted the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that the WNGGA borrow \$24,000 from the Endowment Fund repayable over a period of four years. The association pledges to use all the interest derived from the endowment each year plus a minimum of \$3,000 derived from festival profits each year. The association may elect to pay more than \$3,000 from festival profits in a good year. Thus, the exact amount we pay might fluctuate from year to year but the association commits to repaying the debt no later than the end of the fourth year.

The interest from the endowment would be used in its entirety to repay the debt, so the scholarship and grants program would be suspended for the duration of four years, or less if the debt has been repaid."

I know that this has been a difficult topic for us to have to address, but as I look around I see many other organizations that are experiencing financial difficulty. I hope that future members of the WNGGA will regard us as having dealt with this temporary problem resolutely, and that the organization will move on to a new level of operational success.

It has been said before and needs to be said again: We need to recruit qualified and motivated people to serve on the Board, and each current member of the Board should be constantly on the lookout for qualified people to refer to the nominating committee.

To provide some assistance to Board members and headquarters in the many tasks which need to be done, and to respond to those persons who have asked what they could do to help, I have created the category of "festival assistants." These short-term volunteers serve by the appointment and at the pleasure of the President. They function essentially in the same role as volunteers have done in the past, except that these are not geographically limited to a particular festival site and do not officially represent any organization. They serve as assistants to festival committees under the direction of the chairpersons. Several very well-qualified people have stepped forward to assist in this role. If you encounter anyone who asks how they can help, refer them to me.

We have made excellent progress toward our festival in Cincinnati, and there are indications that we are gathering attention in Wales. Significant progress has also been made for 2007 in Washington. In this, as in all other aspects of our planning, it is important that we keep a multi-year perspective, always looking for opportunities for the future.

Again, thank you for your work, and feel free to offer me your thoughts and suggestions at any time.

Hwyl,
Dic Baskwill