

## President Report 2018

This report, along with our financial statement, will be published to our website, so don't feel that you need to take notes.

To begin, I'd like to start by once again thanking the members of this year's Board of Directors: Clare Bermingham, Kathy Block, Nadine Fladd, Jordana Garbati, Brian Hotson, Linnet Humble, Sarah King, Liv Marken, and Nancy Johnson Squair. All of you contribute so much, all while juggling busy jobs and lives. And you do all this work for nothing more than the occasional thank you and the warm fuzzy feeling you get from doing valuable work for a good cause! Thank you all so very much.

This has been a great Board this year, so we have a lot of highlights to report:

### **Publication of Conference Proceedings**

For the first time ever, the Canadian Writing Centre Association has published a peer-reviewed proceedings from our 2017 conference. Thanks to the work of editors Clare Bermingham, Kathy Block and Jordana Garbati, working with the great team at the Canadian Journal of Studies in Discourse and Writing, we finally have a written record of the work we hear about at these conferences. Thanks also to all of the contributors, peer reviewers, and proofreaders who made this possible. We hope to be able to do this again this year, but we will need new editors to take over from our outgoing team. If you have any interest in participating in this work, please speak to any member of the Board after our meeting today.

### **Logo + Website Update**

Another Herculean task, taken on by the Communications Committee and championed by the indefatigable Kathy Block, was the development of a new logo for CWCA. Some of you might remember that we had entered into an agreement with a logo designer at the end of last year. Unfortunately that agreement fell through when the designer became too busy to take on the work. But Kathy and her team were not willing to give up, and with the help of designer / writing centre professional Malcolm Sutton, I am pleased to announce that we have, after at least two years of discussions, a new logo—one that we think reflects better the professional organization we are becoming. And once we had a new logo, we just had to update the look and feel of our Wordpress site to reflect our new visual identity. Thanks so much to Kathy Block and Jordana Garbati for their help with that.

### **Creation of a Conference Planning Guide**

A third area of work this year was streamlining and documenting the organization process for our annual conference. Using materials that we had developed for our previous years' conferences, we have now created a spreadsheet that captures, we hope, the majority of tasks involved in every area of conference planning—from first booking locations to sending thank you notes at the end of the conference. We hope that this manual will not only reduce workload for Board members and local conference hosts but also ensure a more consistent conference experience year to year.

### **Creation of an AGM Planning Guide**

A natural extension of our conference planning guide was the creation of a similar guide for AGM planning. In previous years, planning our AGM was often secondary to planning our conference—and since conference planning absorbed most of our time, the AGM often received short shrift. In creating a standalone AGM planning manual, not only will we devote the proper amount of planning to our only members' meeting of the year, but we will also have the option to separate our AGM from our annual conference—should we ever wish to do so.

### **Travel Grants**

Soliciting sponsorships and frugal stewardship of our funds has meant that we were again able to offer travel grants this year. We recognize how important it is to encourage participation in our conference from those without sources of travel funding, particularly given the vast distances people have to travel across our country. So we prioritized spending some of our surplus from last year's successful conference on travel grants, once again funding 5 presenters' travel costs, for a total of \$2000.

### **Adherence to Industry Canada obligations**

Now that we have official association bylaws, we devoted some time bringing our filings and records with Industry Canada fully up to date. This work, though perhaps not the most interesting that we do, is necessary to maintain our status as a not-for-profit corporation. I am happy to report that for the first time in our Association's history, we are now fully compliant with all aspects of Industry Canada requirements!

### **Looking to the future**

For the coming year, we expect to focus our attention on the following projects:

- Separate our Association budget from our conference one and look at how we can use conference revenues to fund initiatives that are important to our members (travel grants, professional development opportunities, mentoring, support for regional associations, support for research and scholarship, to name just a few possibilities)
- Develop a 5-year plan for the organization that can guide the work of the Association even with regular turnover in our Board members
- Investigate creating a Membership Committee who can promote the value of membership in CWCA beyond conference attendance and more actively encourage and support diversity in our Association. Eventually, we hope to separate membership from conference registration which will help us maintain more stable membership numbers from year to year.

- Continue to consider new formats for our annual conference, including a longer conference and/or different types of conference presentations.