

From: Tom Smith

Re: Notes & Comments from the 36th Annual International AEE Conference in Vancouver, Washington, November 7, 2008

REPORT ON THE OFA MEETING (minutes from memory).

1. First item of business was to nominate/select someone to chair the OFA group. Since JoAnna Allen recently informed Tom Smith, Cliff Knapp, & Tom Lindblade (the unofficial designated chairpersons in 2008) that she would be available to help OFA in 2009, the group gave unanimous support to selecting her as the new chairperson.
2. There was discussion of the OFA internet network which was set up a few years back by Rick Curtis. It was suggested that the OFA chairperson work with Rick, and Kirsten Kindt of the AEE office, to clarify what the OFA network is and how it works. It was suggested that there might be a paragraph of explanation on the AEE homepage, or at a sub-station for OFA. The goal would be to improve interactive communication among OFAs, and between OFAs and other AEE members.
3. There was suggestion that the OFA group might want to create a list of who the elders of AEE really are, and the idea of a "Council of Elders" came up. OFA is a group that includes both old folks and allies who are interested in preserving the wisdom of the experienced for the association, but OFA could certainly lead the way towards identifying a "Council of Elders." **(Note: After the meeting, there were discussions about the appropriate name for such a group, as council implies a group that meets. Perhaps there is a more creative name for an ElderRoster, which would identify AEE's significant elders.)** At the meeting, everyone agreed that such a list of identification should not be criterion-based (i.e., over 60, 20+ years of experience, AARP membership in good standing, etc.). Cliff Knapp suggested that being part of any "council of elders" should be self-selective, and that perhaps JoAnna could work with Kirsten to develop a template that would provide biographic and experiential information on folks who are ready to "give back" to the association. JoAnna had previously suggested the value of compiling a collection of 1-page information on those who should be recognized. **(For now, I will consider this project as working on an ElderRoster --- until the group comes up with a more creative name).**
4. Discussion about a "Council of Elders" or "ElderRoster" led to suggestion that the annual conference might provide some sort of plenary session to introduce these folks to the membership. It was suggested that the planning committee for each annual conference might invite some of the elders from their region to a forum of some sort. **(Note: After the meeting folks talked about next year's Montreal conference, and how valuable it would be to reach out to people like Keith King and Bert Horwood and get them to the conference.)** OFA thinks it is important for AEE "youngsters" to get to know the "elders." It was noted that some of our elders need to be aggressively invited to get out of their easy chair and back to AEE. Sanford Tolette agreed to work with the planning committee for the 2009 conference to follow through with this idea. Sam Tower agreed to work with the planning committee for the 2010 conference.
5. Tom Lindblade and Rob Rubendahl reported that the archiving project moves forward. Tom Lindblade has now posted eight interviews on the net (Betty Van der Smisson, Karl Rohnke, Cliff Knapp, Tom Smith, Margaret Lechner, Rob Rubendahl, Mary Breunig, and Denise Mitten). See them via Tom Lindblade's website - www.hauntedbywaters.com. He is interviewing more folks at the 2008 conference. Rob Rubendahl reported that there is

continuing interest at the Board of Directors in collection, storage, and making available to all AEE members the historical data, old conference programs, workshop materials, audio and video tapes, and time-line information. Someday there should be a link titled "Archives" on the AEE homepage, and a collection of stuff that could be available. **(Note: Two days after the OFA meeting, I had opportunity to talk with Pat Hammond, former AEE Executive Director, and she was not only excited about an archiving project, but thinking that she might be willing to tackle that major task of collecting and assembling things that could be made available. I hope that Pat, the Board, and the AEE office staff can work it out. The task of collection and sorting is a major one, and now that she is retired, Pat's wisdom and energy should be tapped).**

6. OFA was honored to have Paul Limoges, the new Chief Executive Officer of AEE, at the meeting, and a number of those in attendance thanked him for being there. Paul noted that archival data, especially some sort of timeline history would be very valuable for anyone new to AEE. He reported that he is busy looking for all the information he can get on the history and development of AEE. He also voiced support for creation of some sort of ElderRoster.

7. Sanford Tolette announced that he still has dreams of a statement about AEE getting to the United Nations, and is still working on contacts that might lead to that. Jean Berube has agreed to help Sanford draft a letter about AEE and our mission. Sanford noted that recognition of AEE by the U.N. could lead to participation by many young people who are seeking ways to become more involved in programs that can lead to world peace and justice.

8. As the meeting ended, Cliff Knapp reminded all the OFAs that they should be part of the "Meet the Elders" workshop in the afternoon. **(Note: A report on that session follows)**

REPORT ON WORKSHOP #229 - CONVERSATIONS WITH THE ELDERS.

1. The 2nd annual, too short session, of "elders" and "youngers" interaction was very successful. OFAs in attendance included Cliff Knapp, Marianne Scippa, Tom Lindblade, Bob Stremba, Sam Tower, Sanford Tolette, Mary Anne Newell, and Tom Smith. They were joined by about 20 "youngers" who listened to brief bio introductions, and then there was break-out into conversations. Participants agreed that the small group opportunities were quite appreciated, and some of the elders agreed that 1-1, or 3-1, or 5-1 interactions were great. **(Note: Some of us talked after the session, and agreed that while the sharing of bio-information was valuable, it would be nice to get through that faster and have more time in conversation. If there had been an ElderRoster of some sort, a little handout with bio-information, it would have been valuable. The idea of an ElderRoster, as had been discussed in the OFA meeting, was given support.)**

2. The OFAs involved thought the workshop was successful, and felt that a similar session should be offered next year. **Someone needs to step up to be sure to submit the paperwork** necessary to get the workshop into the conference. This does not have to be an elder! Perhaps it is something that one of the allies of the OFA group could do.

I encourage other OFAs, especially those at the meeting, to add stuff to this memo that I missed. And, perhaps send their reactions to JoAnna.