



SOARING!

the Newsletter of SOAR

Spring 2020

Chair's Comments

Back in early March during our first week of SOAR classes for the spring semester, I began thinking about my remarks for the SOAR luncheon. What a glorious week that was for SOAR: barn quilts, salamanders, art conservation, line-dancing. How quickly our lives have changed. They will probably have changed more by the time you receive this. Here are my revised remarks—they will surely need further revision.

The SOAR Board is working to be ready for any contingency. Jim Barry and Ed Russell continue to work on a full curricular offering for the Fall 2020 semester (Ed has 54 confirmed courses in hand), but that looks less and less likely. Others are speculating on what Stimulating Opportunities (SO) we might offer in lieu of classes; it will only be half of SOAR, but it might keep us going until we can be fully functional. We will keep you informed. We are dependent upon the decisions made by our generous sponsor, SUNY Potsdam, which is examining three scenarios for the fall. To a lesser extent we depend upon other providers of facilities. And of course our members will respond individually to the changing circumstances. We will have to be agile.

ALERT We are mandated by the Bylaws to hold the Annual Meeting, which we usually conduct at the now-cancelled Spring

Luncheon. We have decided to hold a virtual annual meeting so that the Board can continue to prepare to offer service that will benefit our members. Within a couple of weeks we will ask you to reply to an email ballot (details will be provided in advance). We must elect the BOD and officers; we must act on a budget for 2020-21; we will submit revisions to the Bylaws for your action. Detailed explanations will follow, but please vote because we need a virtual quorum.

Two members of the Board are retiring in May after years of dedicated service. **Ron Frank** has been treasurer of SOAR for many years. There is lots and lots of day-to-day work for the Treasurer, so Ron was at the Office frequently. There is also the highly responsible work of preparing the annual budget to present to the Admin & Finance Committee, the Board and the membership. That has been a greater challenge than ever this year. Those of us who work with Ron appreciate his hard work and his foresight.

When I first joined SOAR, I noticed that **Ruth Kreuzer** was present at almost every class that I attended. Upon occasion, when the technology failed, Ruth would dash to her car to fetch and set-up a spare system. She was also taking pictures that appeared on the web site, at the luncheon slide-shows and in printed collages (then cd's, then flashdrives) that presenters received in thanks for their efforts. She has created the publications that you are accustomed to receive: the booklet and calendar for registration, the Newsletters, and a variety of handouts. There are many of us who are scurrying to try to do what she accomplished all by herself. Thank you Ron and Ruth.

As we proceed into the unknown, your BOD is attempting to prepare for any eventuality. We are proceeding with plans that resemble normal, we are beginning to explore alternative ways to serve you, and we are eager to work together to enhance SOAR.

Mark Coleman, chair, Board of Directors.