



SOAR's September Newsletter

Your SOAR Board of Directors met Wednesday, September 8 at the Colton Fire Department Hall (an impressive facility). Thank you, Carol McRobbie.

We had been making plans so that we could, if circumstances permitted, begin to schedule some in-person classes for the coming Spring 2022. The rise of the Delta Variant has complicated that. We are, of course, dependent upon our various hosts, primarily the area colleges, for our meeting venues. The colleges have yet to determine their policies for permitting outside groups to use their facilities. One interesting example of scheduling problems is our attempt to revive "Meet the Chef." Bill Mein reports that the Events Committee contacted six local restaurants; four did not respond and two disclosed that staff shortages precluded holding the event.

In beginning to recruit presenters for our spring classes, Jim Barry has found that many instructors from college faculties are "Zoomed-out" and prefer to wait until they can meet classes in-person. It may be that our members are feeling the same as our registrations for the Zoom classes have declined from about 131 to 74 from Spring 2021 to the current semester. To recruit new members in order to maintain our level of membership for an anticipated return to normal, we are opening our current classes to all in the community who wish to sample SOAR's offerings. **Please tell your friends about this.** Registration continues throughout the semester.

The Board continues to plan for eventual reopening, but we foresee problems. If our membership declines, we will lose income. We have relied on volunteers and have spent very little during the last several semesters, so we have a decent financial cushion. But it won't last long when we encounter the necessity to staff the office in order to serve members as we did in the past. On a brighter note, David Mathie has experimented with the technology for offering hybrid courses (in-person and Zoom), which might accommodate both those who prefer live and those who prefer virtual classrooms.

The Board remains optimistic that we can soon be SOARing as high as ever. We hope that you will help us to retain and recruit members. Thank you