

ACE BOARD MEETING

October 19-20, 2001

St. Augustine, Florida

I. Call to Order, Opening Remarks, Introductions – Ashley Wood

The board meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by President Ashley Wood (Florida).

Others in attendance: Holly Young, president-elect (New Hampshire); Tom Knecht, vice president (Mississippi); Martha Filipic, past president (Ohio); Ellen Varley, Northeast regional director (Maryland); Erik Anderson, Western regional director (Idaho); Dave McAllister, DC regional director (Washington, DC); Tom Jirik, North Central regional director (North Dakota); Frankie Gould, Southern regional director (Louisiana); Eldon Fredericks, retirees director (Indiana); Pat Calvert, associates director (Maryland); Hugh Maynard, associates director-elect (Quebec); Tom Bare, retirees director-elect (South Dakota); and Chris Penko, coordinator (Florida).

Not in attendance: Rebecca Osborne, Northeast regional director-elect (West Virginia); Gene Hettel, international director (Philippines); Debby Weitzel, Western regional director-elect (Colorado).

II. Approval of 6/18/01 ACE Board Teleconference Minutes – Ashley Wood

Young moved to approve the minutes as written from the 2001 summer board meeting in Toronto. Gould seconded the motion. Motion passed. Fredericks moved to approve the minutes as written from the 2001 business meeting. Young seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. Headquarters report: memberships, finances and operations – Chris Penko

Penko reported that ACE currently has 711 members. Renewal notices will be sent in November via e-mail to the membership and regular mail to individual members. As of Sept. 30, 2001, total ACE assets were at \$137,054.42. The checking account balance was at \$46,985.35.

The new ACE Web site is nearly ready to be posted. Most of the text has been rewritten and reorganized so that it's up-to-date, succinct and reader-friendly. Getting the new site up and running has taken longer than expected because it will be operated through a database, rather than standard HTML. This will make it easier to revise and maintain.

The C&A CD-ROM is almost finished; headquarters is just waiting on a few more entry representations. The CD should be ready to mail in a couple weeks. It is structured much like last year's CD with minor changes based on a few comments from users. The CD has become a project of ACE Headquarters, rather than UF/IFAS or another institution responding to an RFP, so the only cost to ACE will be for CDs and cases.

The 2002 C&A rulebook design is under way and should be ready to mail by Dec. 1. When the rulebook design and changes to classes are final, headquarters will construct the 2002 C&A Web site. The staff also is looking for ways to further automate the entry and evaluation processes.

Young said it would be a good idea for Penko to send to regional directors or state reps a list of new members for 2001 so the directors/reps could give them advance notice that it's time to renew for 2002. Penko will supply this information to regional directors.

Young moved to accept the headquarters report. Calvert seconded the motion. Motion passed.

IV. ACE budget for 2001-2002 – Penko

Penko pointed out that the proposed budget is for calendar year 2002. Last year, the proposed budget was for ACE year 2000-2001. Because ACE's fiscal year runs by the calendar year, there is no way to make legitimate comparisons at a given time to find out whether the organization is over, under or on budget. At the end of calendar year 2001, headquarters will provide a report of how ACE performed based on the 2001 projected budget.

Filipic asked about royalties vs. Communicator's Handbook income; they are listed separately for 2002, but in past years were together. At the start of 2002, ACE Headquarters will purchase remaining copies from Maupin House and sell as many as possible. That will be income, rather than royalties. As a result, the royalties category on the 2002 budget may need to be lowered.

The budget for the membership brochure (\$1000) may be too low, depending on quantity that will be printed. Young mentioned that Development Fund brochure may need to be reprinted; it might make sense to look at all ACE's printed materials to determine what is needed and revise the brochure figure.

Young asked whether the board has ever considered giving officers and directors a small stipend (\$50) to cover expenses such as mailing or copying. Wood said board members should submit expenses incurred to headquarters, and they'll be reimbursed.

Young moved to accept the 2002 proposed budget with addition of the Journal of Applied Communications executive editor stipend of \$2,000. Varley seconded the motion. Motion passed.

V. ACE Policies and Procedures Manual update – Wood

Wood reported that the board officers revised the manual the previous day. Because it is a bylaw in the constitution, two-thirds of the board must approve the changes. An e-mail vote will be conducted.

Wood outlined the major changes made to the document: added a review procedure for the manual; changed name of the Harmony Award (now Beacon), the Server Committee (now Technology Advisory Group) and the Workshop Committee (now Workshops and Conferences Committee); added criteria for charter membership; updating general procedures for ACE awards; added a procedure for the board to solicit bids to host annual meetings now that the board has final say on the location; and clarified procedures for reporting election results and notifying candidates.

Wood said there needs to be a procedure for removing leaders from office if they do not fulfill their responsibilities. He called for a task force to develop specific procedures (for SIG leaders, committee chairs, board members, state reps) and report at the spring or summer 2002 board meeting. The task force includes Martha Filipic, Frankie Gould and Tom Jirik.

VI. Reports of committees and task forces

Core Task Force on Russia – Filipic

Videographers from the Press Video Center were planning a trip to the U.S., but it has been canceled. Task force chair Eric Abbott will be encouraged to involve all task force members in activities. Fredericks expressed concern about recent PVC leadership changes and how it might affect ACE involvement in Russia.

Wood and Elena Polouchkina (Iowa) are working on ways to include a Russian language version of the ACE Web site. Ivan Perov might be helpful in translation efforts; he could review after Polouchkina translates.

Development Fund Committee – Young

The committee held its first teleconference of the ACE year Oct. 17. The 2002 auction at the Savannah meeting likely will be Tuesday evening. The committee doesn't know the total amount raised from the 2001 auction; headquarters can provide.

The committee named members to its four subcommittees: programs, promotion, fundraising, investments. The program subcommittee revised the Development Fund grant application.

The committee is looking at ways to use the fund's money.

Wood asked that the committee develop a fund management plan – either internally or recommending that ACE look outside for an investment manager. Although headquarters has managed the fund's investments, it should not be up to the coordinator/headquarters staff to do so. Young will report this to the committee and request a plan by a certain date.

Diversity Committee – McAllister

Members have met monthly via conference call. They set goals for the year and address progress during each call. Overarching reasons for establishing those goals are increasing diversity of ACE members (secure a membership that is more in line with the general population) and foster appreciation for diversity.

The committee wants to make the ACE Web site more accessible, particularly to those who speak Spanish and Russian, and 508-compliant.

Chair Marci Hilt is interested in establishing a benchmark of ACE's diversity (age and race) to determine future progress. Perhaps the ACE board could ask regional directors to work with state reps to develop a "state of the region" report (especially if Diversity Committee comes up with guidelines for asking the questions). Questions also could be asked on renewal forms and/or membership applications; headquarters could include a separate reply card (for confidentiality) with renewal forms/membership applications.

The board recommended that the Diversity Committee give more thought to whether ACE really wants/needs to ask members such questions. Although it could be useful to ACE leadership, it might generate negative feelings among members being asked for the information. If this data were to be collected, anonymity would be important. Board members were confused as to why the committee would ask for cultural background and country.

Perhaps the committee should talk with other organizations to find out if they collect/maintain diversity-related data, and if so, how. Wood suggested that Headquarters might want to set up a listserv for discussion about asking ACE members age/race questions. Members' feedback could then be used to determine whether the questions are asked in the future.

With regard to the committee's goal to apply for a Development Fund grant to cover new memberships, Knecht suggested they consider requiring some level of involvement in return for a free membership.

Diversity Task Force – Wood

The biggest issue cited by the task force: No one who is not a typical ACE member would join ACE unless ACE can prove there is something in it for them. Wood said it is critical for ACE to prove its value through professional development (workshops, SIGs, etc.) and that it may be time again to explore a name change for ACE because people wonder why they should join an organization with word "agricultural" in its name if their jobs have little or nothing to do with agriculture.

Wood shared several ideas for new names, including Association of Communicators in Education, Association of Communicators and Educators, and Applied Communicators in Education.

JAC Board – Varley

The JAC Board held a teleconference in October to discuss the executive editor search/candidate and current production status.

JOE Representative – Wood

Current rep is Bonnie Riechert; Gloria Mosby will succeed her when term expires at end of 2001. Riechert participated in JOE board teleconferences, attended meetings and currently is serving on Marketing Committee.

Membership Committee – Filipic

The committee has held one teleconference. A couple members drafted text for the membership brochure. The review is still under way; the committee wants feedback from the board. Board members should submit comments to Filipic by Nov. 2.

Technology Advisory Group – Penko

This committee changed its name (formerly the Server Committee). Many changes to the Web site and listservs have been made; the committee will continue to help ACE keep its Web site, listservs, databases and other technology updated and functional.

The report included this sentence regarding the online member database/directory the board wishes to have clarified: “There are also issues concerning the usage and composition of the database on which the ACE Board must decide, but the TAG stands ready to provide input if asked.”

The board suggested the database task force should be reconvened to make recommendations on whether the database should be available only to members; as it stands now, anyone can access the data members put in the database.

Workshops and Conferences Committee – Anderson

Three possible workshops are being planned or explored: Web authoring workshop online (winter), marketing workshop (March) and publishing workshop in conjunction with NRMO (tentative).

The board suggested may be worth involving NRMO more – perhaps by having their meeting coincide with ACE’s meeting. McAllister will ask Publishing SIG chair Judy Rude what potential there is for NRMO to partner with ACE.

Regional directors stressed need to be in the loop when workshops are being planned in their regions.

Young moved to accept the committee reports. Calvert seconded the motion. Motion passed.

VII. Strategic planning presentation – Strategic Planning Committee representatives

Larry Whiting, Valorie McAlpin and Ken Kingsley (Strategic Planning Committee representatives) and Garry Gibbons (facilitator) joined the meeting at 11:30 a.m. to present results from that morning’s strategic planning session. That session built upon work done by the board officers and strategic planning committee representatives at the previous day’s session.

The group presented three statements:

1. ACE will be the first to provide leading edge opportunities in professional development, including new training, retraining, and training focused on critical issues.
2. ACE must develop a new initiative that will expand its membership to express more diversity, which will include new ways to define its membership.

3. ACE needs to enhance the Special Interest Group process by reviewing the purpose of SIGs and improving their effectiveness.

They developed an objective (specific objective #1):

By September 1, 2003*, the ACE membership will be increased by 10 percent annually to reflect:

- greater diversity;
- retention of current membership;
- a broader base of potential membership; and
- relevant products and services that meet the needs of the ACE membership.

The recommended actions for achieving specific objective #1 include:

- ACE will evaluate and enhance the current product and service mix to ensure relevancy for existing and future members.
- ACE will enhance leadership development for those in leadership roles: SIG chairs, committee chairs, state reps, etc.
- ACE will define an optimal organization size and structure for increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
- ACE will consider constitutional changes to address issues that historically have limited diversity of membership such as current organizational name, dues structure and membership categories.
- ACE will consider increasing the number of paid professional staff to support professional activities.

Future considerations for specific objectives include:

- Positioning ACE members as communication consultants who are leading change in communication and information technology, and the integration of the two.
- Pursuing alternative funding to support the successful outcome of addressed membership needs.

Other ideas for consideration:

- Organizational public relations and marketing.
- Pursuing a code of ethics that protects the objectivity and independence of the ACE organization.
- Continue to pursue greater integration between communication and IT professionals.
- Involvement of retirees.

Next steps:

- Board reviews and provides feedback on strategic planning products.
- Incorporate feedback and share with entire Strategic Planning Committee.
- Share more broadly with entire ACE membership by strategic planning web site and Signals for feedback.
- Revise and incorporate feedback from membership.
- Devise timeline for above bullets.
- Appoint implementation task force.
- Allow strategic planning members to serve as ex officio task force members.

Meeting recessed at 12:10 p.m. and resumed at 1 p.m.

VIII. Journal of Applied Communications executive editor – Varley

Varley reviewed the responsibilities outlined in the RFP. Eric Abbott (Iowa) sent a proposal. The JAC Editorial Board unanimously recommended to the ACE Board the appointment of Abbott for a three-year term with the first designated as a probationary period. The JAC Editorial Board and the candidate will determine evaluation criteria.

Varley moved that Eric Abbott be appointed executive editor of the Journal of Applied Communications for a three-year term, with the first year probationary, effective Nov. 1, 2001, with a \$2,000 annual stipend. Jirik seconded the motion.

Wood clarified the roles of executive editor and the editorial team that produces the Journal. The board recommended that Abbott track his time.

Motion passed.

IX. Special Interest Group Reports -- Knecht

Knecht encouraged SIG leaders to divide responsibilities between chair, vice chair and vice chair-elect. The Communications Management SIG talked about changing its name and focus to take on leadership development. A few SIGs said they needed Web site help. Some SIGs expressed concerns about instructions to C&A judges, while others were concerned about "stacking" of similar breakout sessions at annual meeting. The Electronic Media SIG raised numerous suggestions regarding technology and collaborating with IT and other groups.

The board discussed the Information Technology SIG report. The SIG had discussed at the Toronto meeting reasons IT professionals would join ACE and developing a database with areas of expertise. In the ACE database, only ACE members are included; SIG was concerned that NETC members are left out. The board determined that the database is a member benefit and that dues-paying members only should be allowed to input data. However, Calvert recommended that ACE appoint a task force to find out how ACE could better serve/attract IT professionals to membership. Fredericks will chair it, and Wood will ask Bob Rubinyi, Dave Rice, Beth Raney and Rhonda Conlon to participate.

Jirik moved to accept the SIG reports. Young seconded the motion. Motion passed.

X. ACE international meetings: proposals and planning –

2000 USACC -- Penko

ACE is free and clear of any debts AgriWash and the Marriott claimed were owed after the meeting.

2001 Toronto -- Filipic

No final financial report is available yet (not all bills have come in), but the situation looks good. The board will discuss this at the December teleconference.

2002 Savannah -- Wood

Plans are under way. The committee is searching for general session speakers, and the call for proposals has been posted to the Web site.

2003 Kansas City -- Young

Young provided the list of program planning committee members for the 2003 meeting, June 14-18.

2004 possible sites – Knecht

Meeting likely will be in the West (New Mexico, Reno, San Antonio). New Mexico State University may be interested in hosting it. A request for invitations will run in Signals and be distributed via e-mail to the membership.

2005 possible site: Quebec City – Maynard

Maynard put the idea out for consideration; board will roll out 2005 proposal in spring.

XI. Workshops and conference planning for year – Wood

Marketing conference/superworkshop

Planned for March in Dallas.

Media relations workshop

Media Relations SIG not looking to putting on a workshop in the next year – did one in fall 2000 and will partner with Marketing SIG on spring workshop.

Regional meetings

Gould is planning a spring 2003 Southern Regional meeting. She was concerned about how it might conflict with workshops and the annual meeting and wondered whether regional meetings are still viable events. Filipic suggested holding a region-sponsored skill-building workshop as an alternative.

XII. Partnering with other organizations/meetings – Knecht and Wood

Wood would like to see ACE explore collaborations with EVP; Knecht will talk with Electronic Media SIG chair Joanne Littlefield, and Wood will talk with Al Williamson (Florida).

Another group ACE should learn more about is the Ag Biotechnology Communications Group. Perhaps a message could be sent to writing and media relations listservs to find out who in ACE attended the meeting. Filipic will draft a note and share with Knecht and Wood.

Filipic moved to recess the meeting; Calvert seconded the motion. Motion passed, meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 8:10 a.m. Oct. 20, 2001.

XIII. Directors' reports

Associates – Calvert

ACE needs to find ways to attract associate members. Calvert thinks this needs to be done at the local level. Maynard said there is potential to attract more associates because no matter what line of work people are in, they need communication skills. Wood said ACE needs to attract potential members to meetings/workshops so they can see what ACE has to offer. Calvert and Maynard need to develop a plan to recruit associate members. It may be worth asking state reps to compile e-mail lists of potential associates so ACE can use in promoting events.

DC – McAllister

It can be challenging to organize DC members because they work in so many different agencies. One-third of members are in their first year of membership, while a total of one-half are in their first three years. McAllister is holding a social luncheon next week so members will have the opportunity to interact.

McAllister is having difficulty finding director-elect candidates. The board discussed possibility of putting one candidate on the ballot and did not see any problem with it as long as members of DC (or other region/membership group) do not view the lack of choice as a problem.

International – Wood

The International Region also has just one candidate for director-elect. Hettel sees many opportunities for establishing more charter affiliates. He wants to produce a brochure to target charter potentials and is asking the board for \$500 to write, design and print it. Young recommended that the design be consistent with other materials that come from headquarters. Young moved to approve up to \$500 for the development of a charter affiliate membership brochure. Filipic seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Northeast – Varley

Most of Varley's activities have focused on committee/SIG work, including assisting with the search for a new archivist, serving as liaison to JAC Editorial Board and exploring possibility of DEID pre-conference workshop at NETC 2002.

She wants to have an informal regional get-together at NETC 2002. She is moving the regional checking account to headquarters. Membership is at 61. The region plans to select a Pioneer Award recipient for 2002. Varley will work with state reps to promote C&A in the region.

North Central – Jirik

Jirik polled state reps on various regional issues and found that their main concern is declining membership in the region. He thinks that local activities are key to revitalizing state chapters and plans to work with state reps on programming and have frequent communication with them. He also plans to promote idea-sharing among states.

Retirees – Fredericks

With the help of Calvert, Jack Sperbeck and Bob Furbee, Fredericks is trying to increase attendance of retirees/life members at 2002 meeting. He is enlisting participation in the development of material for ACE's 100th anniversary celebration. Headquarters will mail a letter to all retired/life members to encourage attendance at meeting and help with 100th anniversary. Fredericks wants to encourage state reps to involve retirees.

He also suggested that at the annual meetings, ACE may want to offer sessions for retirees to bring them up to speed on current communication/technology issues (i.e., web use or purchasing/using digital cameras). Program planners also may want to use expertise of retirees; they could speak on subjects such as what it's like to retire (to those nearing retirement).

South – Gould

Gould is considering a regional meeting for 2003 because it hasn't been done in many years. She has talked to state reps about it. The Southern Region has a full slate of state reps. Gould has set up a newsletter production schedule (four times per year). She will offer \$25 vouchers to new members. South is hosting a refreshment break at SAAS in Orlando.

West – Anderson

There are 120 members in the Western Region. He has talked with some state reps about local activities and hopes to increase communication with them. He plans to promote the Savannah meeting, secure nominations for the Pioneer Award and collaborate with the director-elect to ensure a smooth transition next year.

Filipic moved to accept the regional reports. Young seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XIV. Regional director leadership with state reps – Wood

Regional newsletters are a good idea. Holding teleconferences with state reps also a good idea. State reps can help contact/recruit potential associates. For regional stipends, headquarters will send \$1 per active member; state reps can request more.

XV. Headquarters operations and JAC contracts – Wood

ACE is entering its last year of the headquarters contract with the University of Florida. The JAC editorial team contract also expires next year. Both stipulate that if the board is pleased with the performance, then the board can renegotiate the contracts without issuing RFPs. This will need to be decided at the 2002 fall board meeting. If RFPs are needed, then they will need to be issued in time to be voted on at the fall meeting.

XVI. Nomination Committee report – Filipic

The following slate of candidates was presented:

Vice president:

Robert Casler, Arizona

Judy Winn, Texas

North Central director-elect:

Laura Miller, Iowa

Suzanne Steel, Ohio

Southern Region director-elect:

Marion Douglas, Florida

Dan Rahn, Georgia

DC Region director-elect:

Judy Rude

International director-elect:

Owen Roberts

Fredericks moved to accept the slate of nominees as presented.* Young seconded the motion. Motion passed.

*Does not preclude DC Region from finding a second candidate if they so choose.

McAllister will ask regional members what they think of having one candidate and decide whether he will continue searching for a second candidate. If he decides to include a second candidate, the name will be presented to the board by Nov. 2.

Filipic will collect photos and bios from candidates, except for bios from Southern Region directors-elect candidates (Gould already has these) and photos for Douglas and Rahn (headquarters has these).

XVII. Communicator's Handbook report – Wood and Penko

ACE will purchase remaining copies of Communicator's Handbook and begin selling them in January 2002 through the UF/IFAS extension bookstore on the web. The Federal Communicators Network Communicator's Guide will be there as well.

ACE needs to determine if and when another edition of the Communicator's Handbook will be produced, or if the organization would be better served by another product. Tom Knecht will chair a committee to examine the future of the handbook; he will find SIG chairs who want to participate.

XVIII. ACE Service Award – Wood

Board members should think about potential candidates and forward ideas to Wood.

XIX. Critique & Awards Program – Young and Penko

The Diversity Committee proposed adding a question on the evaluation form that would read “Does this entry reach and serve diverse audiences?” The question would not add or deduct points, rather it would serve to remind people to consider diversity. The board discussed the proposal and is not in favor of considering it.

Young highlighted comments from SIG leaders about possible changes to the rulebook/classes, though nothing specific was proposed yet. Young will follow up with SIG leaders to find out whether there are specific changes, and if so, submit them to the board for a vote.

Varley moved to accept the C&A report; Jirik seconded the motion. Motion passed.

XX. Centennial project – Calvert and Fredericks

At the past presidents meeting in Toronto, Calvert, Fredericks, Jack Sperbeck and Bob Furbee formed a committee and decided to get as many retirees as possible on audio/video talking about ACE. Calvert will write an article for Signals about it. The group will find people (state reps and local members) willing to record retirees and people willing to be recorded.

XXI. ACE archivist

A meeting with the archives rep at the library was postponed and rescheduled for 10/26/01. The committee will see what is in the collection and discuss possible candidates. Varley is investigating possibility of involving University of Maryland students in digitizing archive materials.

XXII. December teleconference – Wood

The teleconference may deal with strategic planning issues. May be a short teleconference between now and then to address C&A changes.

XXIII. Miscellaneous business – Board

ACE promotional materials (cap and t-shirt) now available; will be promoted in Signals and available for sale on ACE Web site.

XXIV. Adjournment

Filipic moved to adjourn the meeting. Calvert seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting concluded at 11:25 a.m.