OFFICE REPORT

New Administrative Assistant

We welcome Janice Allen to the SOAR office. Janice came here from a training job at the Red Cross where the Office of the Aging was assisting her in moving into office work from a lifetime career in hospital and home health care. Janice is a lifelong resident of the Adirondack - St. Lawrence Valley region.

SOAR Office Information

The SOAR office is located on the third floor of the Van Housen Extension in Room 382. The mail is delivered to Room 389, thus our mailing address is: 389 Van Housen Extension, SUNY Potsdam, 44 Pierrepont Avenue, Potsdam, NY 13676. The SOAR telephone number is (315) 267-2690.

If our administrative assistant, Janice Allen, does not answer the telephone immediately, it means that she is not in the office or she may be answering another call. Please leave your name and telephone number and someone will call you as soon as possible.

Our administrative assistant works part time for which she receives a modest stipend of $5000 per year. We are instituting “flex time” in order to use her work hours most wisely. During the busy registration times Janice will work more days a week, and during the slow periods she will work only one or two days a week. We may be asking volunteers to answer the telephone when Janice isn’t working. Thank you for your understanding.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administration and Finance Committee - Neil Johnson, Chair

In the spring the A&F Committee dealt with the preparation of the 2006-2007 budget proposal, the purchase of a new computer and laser printer, and an air conditioner for the SOAR office. Pat Horan, administrative assistant, resigned in the spring, and the Committee was fortunate to obtain the services of Janice Allen as the new administrative assistant.

The August meeting of the A&F Committee included discussions on: presenters gifts, approval of a new SOAR brochure and letterhead, including the funds to print them; and eliminating the twice a year membership renewal, i.e. starting in Fall 2007, SOAR will have only an annual membership, renewable each year at the time of fall registration.
“Spring Forward” Half a Step in 2007

Are you a SOAR member whose yearly membership fee is paid at the time of spring registration? If so, this is an important article for you. Your situation is about to change.

Sometimes change brings confusion. This time, however, confusion is bringing about change. Let’s explain.

For each of our two semesters, your volunteer crew of registrars prepares a complicated package for the mail. Well, actually, it’s two packages: different mailings are prepared for the two groups of members, fall and spring. With over 275 of us, the potential for confusion over who is spring and who is fall becomes reality, and it happens with every semester mailing, i.e. twice a year.

Add to the mix the dated parking permits and dated Maxcy Hall facilities cards for those of us who sign up to use the Fitness Center. Add any changes in membership fees when the budget is approved in May. Add the turnover in our staff and volunteer workers. You get the picture. Murphy is looking over our shoulder, smiling.

We want to make things a little more foolproof by putting everyone on the same basis. The Board of Directors has voted that by the Fall 2007 semester, all SOAR members will be paying their yearly membership fee on the same schedule. How will this be accomplished?

The “correction” will be done by means of a one-time only payment of a half-year membership fee by the current spring members when they register for their Spring 2007 classes. If this includes you, expect to pay $30 at the time of spring registration, rather than $60. Sounds like a bargain, doesn’t it!

New members may join SOAR (or lapsed members who don’t take fall classes may rejoin SOAR) at any time by paying the SOAR yearly membership fee, and, from then on, they will renew their yearly membership at the time of fall registration, as is the case for all renewing SOAR members.

Confused? Don’t worry! Your 2007 spring mailing will explain all this again. Stand by!

Curriculum Committee - Jim Barry and Ed Russell, Co-Chairs

Preliminary List of SOAR Courses Spring 2007 (The final course list will be published in the Spring Course Booklet. The online version of the list below will be updated as changes and new information become available)

Courses offered on the SUNY Potsdam Campus

Advanced Contract Bridge. Don Burlingame. 6 sessions.
Archeological Research Work. John Barthelme. 1 session.
Art Workshop B. Leon LeBeau. 8 sessions.
Beginning Decorative Painting. MarshaLee Champagne. 6 sessions.
Beginning Tai Chi. Pam Marsh. 2 sessions each week
Bluebird History and Birdhouse Building. Ron Howe. 1 session.
Caterpillar Invasion. Mary Rutley. 1 session
CD Preparation of Historical Archives. Tom Robarge. 4 sessions.
Creative Writing. Betsy Tisdale. 4 sessions.
The Extraordinary History of Ordinary Telescopes. Jan Wojcik. 4 sessions. (May include a day session and/or night session)
Fun With Readers Theater II. Art Johnson. 4 sessions.
Gentle Exercise For Seniors. Juanita Babcock. 8 sessions.
GPS - Global Positioning System. Dick Mooers. 2 sessions.
Knitting for Beginners. Jacqueline Cutler. 4 sessions.
North Country Birding. Joan Collins-Yellott. 5 sessions.
North Country Geology. John Bursnall, 6 sessions. (Includes 2 half day weekend field trips)
The Old Order Amish. Karen M. Johnson-Weiner. 2 sessions.
Paper Making. Rene-Paul Forier. 4 sessions.
Railroads of the North Country. Art Johnson. 2 sessions.
Starting a Business in Retirement. Dale Rice. 3 sessions.
Take the Mystery Out of Your Automobile. Roger Hutchinson. 4 sessions.
Tatting. Betty Mauk. 5 sessions.
Tutor Training for Literacy Volunteers of Northern NY. Bobby Gordon. 8 sessions.
Vicarious Voyagers. Ruth Kreuzer, Lynn Eklfet, and Anne Mazzota. 5 sessions.

Courses offered at Partridge Knoll
Current Events. John Casserly. 8 sessions.
Early Recollections. Art Clark, 2 sessions.
Home Sites of Laura Ingalls Wilder. Barbara Trerise. 2 sessions. (Second session at the Almanzo Wilder Homestead near Malone.)
Mah Jongg. Brenda Francey and Kay Russell. 4 sessions.
The Presidents’ Wives: Looking Backward From Laura Bush. Fran Van Horne. 4 sessions.

Other courses offered off campus
Computers a la carte. Rita Goldberg. 1-4 sessions. (one-on-one instruction in the Canton/Potsdam area)
More Medical Ethics. Dave Hornung. 6 sessions. (Silas Wright House, Canton)
“Pysanky” (Ukrainian Easter Egg) Workshop. Ruth Kreuzer. 1 workshop (offered twice at presenter’s home in Canton)
Vegetarian Cooking. Juanita Babcock. 4 sessions (at presenter’s home in Norwood)
Registration Committee
Jean Theobald, Registrar

SOAR membership is growing! We have had over 50 new members join this fall. The membership count on September 8th was 275. This breaks down into 187 Fall Members and 88 Spring Members, according to which semester you joined. It is interesting to note that 198 of us have provided e-mail addresses so we are in the tech savvy generation along with younger groups.

People helping in the office for this semester’s registration were: Jackie Cutler, Janice Fourier, Marion Blauvelt, Fay Husted, Jean LaPlante, Dick Mooers, Doug Theobald, Candace Wright, and Barbara Trerise. In late July the Board of Directors had a mailing “party” to get the packets of booklets and inserts ready to be mailed to our members and to an equal number of others on our Interest List.

Special thanks go to Sharon Trerise (Barb’s daughter) who designed our new computer program for registration purposes. She came twice from Tully (south of Syracuse) to set up Access, that we are now using, and to train us. There are several reports we can now generate using this program. As one application, we hope you find the letters from the computer registration process an easy to read resource. Thank you for the many suggestions written on the pink registration forms. We do read your comments and copy them to give to the appropriate committee for consideration. Often we see your name offering to be a volunteer or an idea for a new course; all are helpful and appreciated!

Ambassadors Committee
Claire Begeal, Chair

Have you ever felt you’d like to be a SOAR Ambassador, or said “I could do that.” Ambassadors are the liaisons between the Presenter and SOAR members. It sounds like a fancy title but those who have taken on the responsibility before have found the title may also mean - go-for, go-between, trouble shooter, problem solver, porter, unpacker and packer, keeper of the keys, lost and found department, electrician, computer technician, blackboard eraser, paper passer, attendance taker, chair setter, greeter, announcer, thank you for the many suggestions written on the pink registration forms. We do read your comments and copy them to give to the appropriate committee for consideration. Often we see your name offering to be a volunteer or an idea for a new course; all are helpful and appreciated!

Each fall and spring, Ambassadors volunteer or are recruited. If you’d like to serve, call Janice Allen in the SOAR office (267-2690) and ask to be placed on the Spring 2007 Ambassador list. Ambassadors are not assigned until the semester class lists are ready. Call Claire Begeal for more explanations or for help; her number is 322-4309.

The committee would like to thank SOAR members who are serving as Ambassadors for Fall 2006 (* indicates those who are also on the Ambassador Committee): Edward & Sandra Bage, Jim Barry, *Claire Begeal, Sandi Di Giovanna, Lori Dunne, Rene-Paul Forier, *Pat Harrington, Fay Husted, Marilyn Johnson, Ruth Kreuzer, Penny LeBeau, Mary MacKinnon, Dorothy Madden, Beverly Markkula, Peggy Mooers, Mary Nocerino, Arliene Oey, Robert Pickard, Marilyn Ross, Ed Russell, Patricia Sabir, Nancy Siegel, Douglas Theobald, Jean Theobald, Sandra Tomalty, Barbara Trerise, Becky Van de Water, *Fran Van Horne, Otis Van Horne, Robert Washburn, Hazel Wilson.
Membership Committee
Hazel Wilson, Chair

In just a few short years we have soared from just an idea to an organization made up of over 275 people who are busy planning, teaching, studying, and learning all kinds of new things. There is no telling where we will go next. However, there are still a lot of people out there who do not know about us yet, so every one of us needs to be an ambassador. Every one of us needs to contribute ideas, suggestions, plans; every one of us needs to spread the word!! Tell your friends: “Here we learn so many new things! Here we have so much fun! Join us!!”

Outreach and Publicity
Ruth Kreuzer, Chair

When you think about outreach and publicity you probably think about the articles you see printed in the newspapers. However, publicity is anything in print (including pictures and clip art) that comes from the SOAR office: booklets, brochures, newsletter, and even our letterhead. This committee has been working hard to improve SOAR’s overall public image and be a support to our program and group.

SOAR also has a growing web presence: [http://www.potsdam.edu/soar](http://www.potsdam.edu/soar). Besides repeating the general information about our courses and organization that you may already know or can read about in the SOAR mailings, on the SOAR web site there are such things as a web version of SOAR forms and documents; photos from our classes, events, and trips; links to information about the topics covered in our SOAR courses; archived information from the previous semesters, and maps. Our web site can be changed readily (even the most minute spelling error can be easily corrected!), thus making our web site the place for disseminating the most accurate and up-to-date information. Check the “Announcements” section of the SOAR home page web page for notices and last minute information.

Send pictures and stories about your classes and the events you attend, send notices to post and corrections to make on the web site, send suggested supplementary links for your courses - to Ruth Kreuzer: rkreuzer@stlawu.edu.

P.S. You will often see Ruth with her camera in hand. If you don’t want your picture taken, tell her (or just step out of the picture).

Newsletter
Jean LaPlante, Chair

As you are evidently reading our newsletter at this moment, our committee hopes that our combined efforts will inform, interest, and excite our members and make you want to help as a volunteer wherever you are able, to keep our organization a vital and working group that continues to offer more wonderful courses to meet all of the various interest of our members. Our committee consists of: Barbara Trerise (who develops the content of the Newsletter with the contributions our committee chairs and members submit), Jean LaPlante (who prepares the rough draft), Dick Mooers (who contributed the “Spring Forward” and “The Early History of SOAR” articles), Ruth Kreuzer (who prepared the finished newsletter), and Betty Graham (who proofreads the newsletter before it goes to print). With many helping, the job is easier. We hope you enjoy the result.
Trips and Performances - Peggy Mooers, Chair

July 12, Singer Castle Trip
On July 12, 2006, twenty-three SOAR members and guests enjoyed a trip to Singer Castle on Dark Island in the St. Lawrence River. The group gathered in Morristown to board the Morrisania, a restored antique tour boat. Although the day was a little cool and showery, the trip with the accompanying commentary, was very interesting and fun. The guided tour of the castle required about an hour and a half, after which we returned to Morristown by a different river route.

The group then gathered at the Cattleman’s Restaurant adjacent to the marina, for a buffet lunch, the proceeds from which were donated to the new Morristown museum. Consideration is being given to repeating the trip next year as a twilight or dinner cruise.

Thanks to Fran Van Horne for running this trip for SOAR!

Sept 8, “Dessert and a Mystery” Event
SOAR members and would-be members gathered for our first mystery dessert event at the Canton Unitarian-Universalist Church. Fifty people enjoyed delicious desserts and coffee and tried to solve the Lake Quaddymoggin Mystery, presented by the SOAR Players.

Like all SOAR events, this one could not have been done without a wonderful committee: Hazel Wilson, oversaw the table setup, Rene-Paul Forier purchased cakes, ice cream and coffee, and Mary Jo Whalen provided gifts and loaned us card tables. Mindy Loucks and Betty Rush collected money at the door. A great mystery written by Art Johnson, fooled most of us, but we had fun interacting with the players: Marsha Akins, Juanita Babcock, Joyce Chambers, Kathy Kirschner, Irwin Selleck and Hazel Wilson.

Thanks to Art Johnson and the SOAR players, and also to the organizers of this opening event for the fall semester!

September 30, “Adirondack Trip”
SOAR members filled up the bus for the Adirondack trip on September 30. The boat cruise on the W. W. Durant provided us with great views of the Raquette Lake scenery while we enjoyed our lunch. This was followed by a great visit to the brand new “Wild Center” (Natural History Museum of the Adirondacks). We had a wonderful trip!

November 18, The Opera “The Sailor Boy and the Falcon”
We originally requested a block of 25 tickets, but the premiere of this opera has been a real draw; people kept asking for tickets and we eventually sold almost 40 before we reached our final limit of seats reserved for SOAR. All available general admission seats for this event are being sold through the CPS box office. The event runs from November 16-19, with pre-performance lectures offered on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and a roundtable discussion will be held on Monday, November 20. Call the CPS box office at 267-2277 if you haven’t yet reserved your seats.
The Super SOARer Award was presented to a very surprised Jim Barry at the Annual Meeting on May 12th. The Nominating Committee felt that much of SOAR’s success stems from Jim’s contributions as Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the past three years. During this time class offerings have expanded from eighteen to over thirty-six courses, while the quality and the variety of instruction has also grown. The development of the curriculum is the most important part, and one of the most time-consuming duties, of the SOAR operation.

In addition, Jim has been instrumental in marketing SOAR through helping improve the course booklets and SOAR brochures (and seeing that they are distributed widely in the local community), phoning members who do not register for classes, and founding the “Mugs Program” to reward presenters.

MORE NOTES

Volunteers - An Indispensable Asset

SOAR exists because of the unusual generosity and great talents of our many volunteers.

All courses are taught by very able volunteers who give so generously of their time and expertise. We have well prepared, well presented, and very informative classes.

SOAR is administered by volunteers who give so generously of their time and talents. Classroom volunteers, to office volunteers…all the way to volunteer SOAR leadership. We especially want to thank Neil Johnson, former Board Chair, for his very able leadership of SOAR for the last two years. We also owe him our gratitude for coming up with the idea for organizing SOAR in the first place. (Neil is one of our founders.)

This voluntary collective effort has made SOAR what it is today.

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!
SOAR Course Booklet, etc.

What a wonderful SOAR course booklet this fall! It is very eye catching and so well put together. This is the product of Ruth Kreuzer, Chair of the Outreach and Publicity Committee. Ruth spent many hours working on the booklet, even finding a number of volunteer proofreaders to work on it.

Ruth also created a new SOAR brochure that we will use for outreach and publicity this year. We would appreciate it if members take some of these new brochures and put them in public places in their communities.

In addition, Ruth has designed an attractive letterhead to be used for correspondence from the SOAR office. Like the other publications, it is very colorful and uses our hot air balloon logos.

We thank Ruth for sharing her expertise with us. (And we thank the Administration and Finance Committee for recommending to the Board that the costs of these items be approved.)

SOAR Artist Showcase
On display October 14-31, 2006

New Computer Program for SOAR Registration

We have been fortunate to obtain the expertise of Sharon Trerise to develop a registration program for SOAR - the Microsoft program: ACCESS. It has made the registration process much less labor intensive. With 275+ members and 36+ courses this semester, registration would have been an almost insurmountable task this fall without having the ACCESS program in place.

Sharon is Coordinator of Accessible Information Technology for the Northeast American Disabilities Act and Information Technology Center, based in the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell University. She also had consulting help from her husband, Jeff, who is a computer program engineer. These two people have given us, and continue to give us, help with our tailor-made computer registration program. Many thanks to Sharon and Jeff for volunteering their expertise and time to SOAR.

Special thanks also go to Jean Theobald, Registrar and Chair of the Registration Committee. She was trained by Sharon, and in turn Jean trained other SOAR volunteers to help with the registration process. Jean put in untold hours to make our new computerized approach to registration work for us.

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SOAR watercolors, drawings and more by a variety of SOAR artists, former participants in Leon LeBeau’s SOAR classes, are currently featured artists at ARTS CENTRAL, 51 Market Street, Potsdam. There was an opening reception on Saturday October 14th to celebrate this show. The show runs until the end of October. Do stop by and take a look at some great art pieces created by your SOAR friends!
Chapter 1: The Early History of SOAR: Getting SOAR Up and Running

When SOAR was established in 2001 at the State University College in Potsdam, the organization chose the name “SOAR” which was an acronym for “Stimulating Opportunities After Retirement.” SOAR was set up to be a voluntary, member-organized and operated Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR). The organization’s purpose was to help people remain intellectually active in their retirement years, but membership was to be open to all, without regard to age. But where did the idea come from to form an ILR?

Neil Johnson had heard his brother-in-law extol his ILR, and Dick and Peggy Mooers had heard about Peggy’s mother’s ILR. These family conversations planted the seed of the idea to form such a group to serve our area - the western half of Northern New York, a rural area of over 3,000 square miles with a population of about 160,000. Neil recruited his friend Bill Cullen, another retired professor, and Bill re-recruited Dick Lisbon, a retired university administrator from Syracuse. These three men then met with Nancy Hess, a newly hired administrator at Potsdam’s Continuing Education office, and their idea of forming an ILR was warmly received. Tom Fuhr, Nancy’s Director also liked the idea, and he assigned Nancy the job of helping to start the ILR at Potsdam State. Neil, Dick and Bill introduced the idea to their friends, and Nancy conducted an interest survey. By late 2000, enough interest was expressed that meetings were held to develop the idea further.

These meetings began hopefully, although at least a few members of this nascent group were skeptical, and all of them had no idea whether the general population held enough interested people to make the idea work. However, by June, 2001 the group had coalesced enough to decide to proceed. A Board of Directors was established, which was to elect officers, adopt bylaws, form an official agreement with SUNY, create a Membership and Publicity Committee, and organize a Curriculum Committee to put together a list of courses and presenters for its first fall program. A Finance and Administration Committee, provided for in the Bylaws, was also constituted, and in October, 2001, it was given its first assignment: study SOAR’s incorporation and insurance needs.

The originating group and founding Board of Directors included: Bill Cullen, Mary Carmen Earle, Alma Garner, Neil Johnson, Leon LeBeau, Bill Lewis, Dick Lisbon, Dick Mooers,
Peggy Mooers, Arliene Oey, Jan Peters, Marie Regan, Andy Soutar, Hazel Wilson, and Bea Woodward. Nancy Hess became the College Liaison for the group. The first officers of SOAR were: Dick Mooers, Chair; Marie Regan, Vice Chair; Jan Peters, Secretary; Dick Lisbon, Treasurer. The very important job of Curriculum Committee Chair was first held by Bill Cullen. Peggy Mooers was the first Chair of Membership and Publicity.

The first major task for the new SOAR Board was to identify potential SOAR members. Various mailing lists were obtained, such as lists of retirees and alumni of the four colleges in Canton and Potsdam. The first mailing went to over 850 addresses. SUNY sent out articles written by SOAR members to a large list of media outlets. As people responded to the articles, they were added to the mailing list.

Membership recruitment went slowly at first, with only a few membership applications arriving at the Continuing Education office on any one day. However, the Open House<photo> held at the college in early September recruited a number of new members, and SOAR’s membership reached 100 at that point. By the beginning of the first fall semester, there were 112 members on record.

That first semester, Fall 2001, SOAR offered 14 classes, and only one course did not register enough students to hold the class. These classes ranged from academic in content to arts and crafts demonstrations. The more rigorous classes tended to be longer, with 8 class sessions being common. There were several one-time demonstrations. The Board of Directors decided to limit the first year’s fall and spring semesters, to 8 weeks, with no winter or summer classes.

During the first year SOAR expanded its social role. There was one Friday “Coffee” held in the fall (26 participants heard comments by a local antiques appraiser, who then discussed items members had brought with them). In the spring program there were three Friday “Coffees.”

That first year SOAR courses were held in Maxcy Hall, for the most part. Although it is SUNY Potsdam’s physical education facility, Maxcy was selected because it has the most accessible parking lots and has adequate classroom space on the ground floor. Elevator access is available for a second floor classroom that also was used. Furthermore, the college’s provider of food services was able to deliver to Maxcy; refreshments were provided for both the Open House and for the Friday Coffee events. A few classes were also held at various museums around St. Lawrence County, and there was one field trip for a class involving one’s relationship with the land.

The fall feedback from participants about the first semester of SOAR was entirely positive, and the relations with the college were excellent. SOAR members were eagerly anticipating the 25 courses scheduled for spring.

SOAR was up and running!

*(Look for Chapter 2 of the History of SOAR in the Spring Newsletter)*
Also remember to...

wear your name tag!

hang your parking permit on the rearview mirror!

sign up for the SOAR luncheon (please turn the page over)

Remember what life was like before SOAR?

Or are you now having just too much fun?
SOAR FALL LUNCHEON  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2006  
12:00 NOON  

at  
THATCHER HALL  
SUNY POTSDAM  

MENU  
Fresh Green Salad w/dressing, Carrot-Raisin Salad, Fresh Fruit Salad  
Roast Turkey w/gravy, Sliced Roast Beef w/gravy  
Whipped Potatoes, Green Beans Almandine  
Fresh Luncheon Rolls w/butter  
Chocolate Mousse  
Coffee, Tea, or Herbal Tea  

PLEASE NOTE: If you sign up for the luncheon and later decided you are unable to attend, you are requested to notify the SOAR office (315-267-2690) at least one week prior to the luncheon. Otherwise, SOAR is charged for the reservation even though you did not attend.  

*Please phone the SOAR office or return the reservation form below by November 3*  

Fall Luncheon Reservation Form  
Friday, November 10, 2006 - 12:00 Noon, Thatcher Hall SUNY Potsdam  

____ Number of people attending @ $11.00 each *(same price member / non-member)*  
Name(s) ________________________________________________________________  
Address ________________________________________________________________  
Phone Number ___________________________ E-Mail ____________________________  

Please make checks out to: PACES 235.  
Reservations must be made on or by November 3, 2006  

For reservations phone 315-267-2690 or mail this reservation form to: SOAR, 389 Van Housen Extension, SUNY Potsdam, 44 Pierrepont Avenue, Potsdam, NY 13676