



## **IAF Canada Newsletter - February 2008**

*The mission of the IAF is to promote, support, and advance the art and practice of professional facilitation through methods exchange, professional growth, practical research, collegial networking, and support services. This is accomplished through peer-to-peer networking, professional development, and annual conferences which are critical means for fulfilling the mission and reflecting our core values.*

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### **Welcome New Members**

A very warm welcome to IAF to our newest Canadian members, who have joined (or re-joined) since our last newsletter in November 2007:

- Dennis Baird, Otterburn Park, Quebec
- John Benesh, Ottawa, Ontario
- Stephen Brown, St. Albert, Alberta
- Stephen Finestone, Ottawa, Ontario
- Patti Gilbertson, Burnaby, British Columbia
- Dally Gutierrez, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Ann Laidlaw, Ottawa, Ontario
- Terry Lineham, Victoria, British Columbia
- Daniel Pollack, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba
- Richard Steer, Toronto, Ontario
- Denise Withers, Vancouver, British Columbia

## Conference Updates

### North America (Atlanta, April 10-12, 2008)

By now you all should have received the final Conference brochure. Registrations are going well, and some of the most popular workshops - including those being offered by our own Dorothy Strachan and Coleen Davidson and Marian Pitters - are now almost full. (*My workshop, I'm sad to say, has only two registrants to date, so I may get kicked out of the program if some of you don't take pity on me.*) You will find all of the latest information on the IAF North America Regional web site ([www.iafna.org](http://www.iafna.org)). So do come and join us in Atlanta, and participate in what will be an exciting learning, networking, and social event, in one of the most interesting cities in the United States.

**Program + People + Place + Price = A Great Conference**

### Africa (Johannesburg, South Africa, July 23-24, 2008)

Okay, so the United States is not exotic enough for you. Then think about attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> IAF Africa Facilitators Conference to be held at the Pilanesberg Reserve, outside Johannesburg. The Conference will feature the first IAF facilitator certification event in Africa (on July 21-22). The Conference program is being built around the six core facilitation competencies, with each competency represented by one of the "Big Five" African mammals (with one competency left over for the meerkats). The Conference web site is [www.sbs.co.za/iaf2008](http://www.sbs.co.za/iaf2008). The IAF Africa Regional Representative, Jerome Passmore, would love to welcome you to his country.

### Asia (Bangkok, Thailand, August 27 – 28, 2008)

Plans are proceeding for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual IAF Asia Facilitators Conference. Registration will be open in April. This conference attracts participants from around the world, both for its wonderful locales and for its excellent program. This year's theme is "The Savoury Spices of Facilitation". The Conference web site is accessible via [www.iaf-world.org](http://www.iaf-world.org).

### Europe (Groningen, Netherlands, October 3 – 5, 2008)

Information on the 15<sup>th</sup> IAF Europe Conference is available via [www.iaf-europe.org/groningen](http://www.iaf-europe.org/groningen). Canadians are always well-represented at this Conference, both as participants and as workshop leaders. The city of Groningen was founded in 1040. The Conference itself will be held on the campus of Hanze University of Applied Sciences, a nice change from our normal hotel venues. Maureen and Jon Jenkins, well-known to many members of IAF, are the Conference's lead organizers.

### Australia/New Zealand (Bathurst, New South Wales, November 2008)

Watch the IAF global web site for information on this Conference as it is posted.

## **Below the Waterline: News from the Board of Directors**

*This is a feature in each IAF Canada Newsletter to update members on at least a bit of what the Board of Directors has been doing, discussing, and deciding over the past months.*

..... In December 2007, the Board formally considered the report and recommendations of the “IAF CPF Workgroup”, a 13-member task force co-chaired by Gary Rush, IAF Chair Elect, and Cameron Fraser, IAF Past Chair. The Workgroup’s mandate was to “develop a recommended vision, association structure, and marketing plan to support the growth and development of the Certification Program”. Its detailed report contained an ambitious set of recommendations and analysis. For the present, the Board agreed to proceed on several fronts.

- A three-year re-certification requirement will be implemented to ensure that IAF certification continues to be held by those actively working in the field, to sustain and enhance the credibility of the designation, and to encourage holders of certification to pursue ongoing professional development.
- The Board confirmed that continued membership in IAF is mandatory for anyone who wishes to use the designation “IAF Certified Professional Facilitator”.
- The Board established three workgroups to follow up on several of the report’s recommendations:
  - o implementation of a “Training Accreditation Program” covering the providers of facilitation training;
  - o refinements to the certification and re-certification processes; and,
  - o marketing and promotion of the IAF Certified Professional Facilitator program both within IAF and among prospective members, employers, and clients.

The Board will also return to several other sets of recommendations from the Workgroup report in the future, including staffing, web site presence, and the use of continuing education credits in re-certification.

..... The Board is holding an ongoing dialogue around the question of “Shared Services” that could be cost-effectively provided to each of our Regions and Strategic Initiative Coordinators. To date, the Board has developed criteria for Shared Services, identified eight discrete operational areas that potentially meet those criteria, and fleshed out what each Shared Service might entail, its benefits, the challenges that we might face in implementing it, and how it should contribute to meeting the Board’s key directions.

..... Ann Epps, IAF’s Strategic Initiative Coordinator for Conferences, and Carol Sherriff, are just concluding an in-depth study of our approach to conferences, and the continued relevance and operation of the various “Pillars” that guide our conferences’ design decisions. The IAF Regional Representatives devoted an entire teleconference in early January to this topic.

## **IAF Statement of Values and Code of Ethics**

For me, one of IAF's most important achievements and continuing points of pride is our "Statement of Values and Code of Ethics for Group Facilitators" to help guide practitioners in our daily work. The Ethics and Values Think Tank (EVTT) that developed this document included some 85 members from around the world who worked on-line together for two years. Sandor Schuman of the United States and Dale Hunter of New Zealand co-chaired the EVTT. Canada's Tony Nash handled the Think Tank's on-line facilitation. As well, face-to-face discussion groups in Canada, the United States, South America, and Australia studied and responded to drafts of the Statement and Code.

Many new members have joined IAF since the Board adopted the Statement and Code in May 2002. Some of us may not be aware of this important document. So here is the "Preamble" and "Statement of Values". I'll bring you the "Code of Ethics" in a future issue. For me, these remain inspiring and definitive articulations of what is at the core of group facilitation

### **Preamble**

Facilitators are called upon to fill an impartial role in helping groups become more effective. We act as process guides to create a balance between participation and results.

We, the members of the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), believe that our profession gives us a unique opportunity to make a positive contribution to individuals, organizations, and society. Our effectiveness is based on our personal integrity and the trust developed between ourselves and those with whom we work. Therefore, we recognize the importance of defining and making known the values and ethical principles that guide our actions.

This Statement of Values and Code of Ethics recognizes the complexity of our roles, including the full spectrum of personal, professional and cultural diversity in the IAF membership and in the field of facilitation. Members of the International Association of Facilitators are committed to using these values and ethics to guide their professional practice. These principles are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical practice; they provide a framework and are not intended to dictate conduct for particular situations. Questions or advice about the application of these values and ethics may be addressed to the International Association of Facilitators.

### **Statement of Values**

As group facilitators, we believe in the inherent value of the individual and the collective wisdom of the group. We strive to help the group make the best use of the contributions of each of its members. We set aside our personal opinions and support the group's right to make its own choices. We believe that collaborative and cooperative interaction builds consensus and produces meaningful outcomes. We value professional collaboration to improve our profession.

## **IAF Canada Succession Planning**

I can say without reservation that the first six months of my term as IAF Canada Regional Representative have been the most stimulating, challenging, and busy period of my 35 years of volunteer involvement. And this from someone whose volunteer work has ranged from hockey refereeing, through the organization of public policy colloquia, to church-related activities.

But it is not unfair to me or to any of my predecessors to say that the job is (and always has been) too big for one person. As a result, Regional Representatives have all had to prioritize, shave the edges off some work, avoid other things, and generally try to cope as best we can - all the while feeling that struggle just to keep up with all that needs to be done. This approach is no longer sustainable if we are to ensure quality in all aspects of our operations in this country, and if we are to continue to be valued contributors to IAF globally.

The IAF Canada Regional Representative's job is really four jobs, each with a different set of required skills and each probably appealing to different types of people. First and, I think, foremost, there is the job of "**IAF Canada Director**", our representative to the global IAF Board of Directors. This is about policy-making, resource allocation, operational oversight, global initiatives, and all the other things that need to be done to make IAF work as a truly international organization. It also entails member liaison, and being the first point of contact for members' questions and concerns.

Then there is the "**IAF North America Conference Coordinator**" job. This is the work needed to support (and sometimes lead) the organization of an annual conference that involves hundreds of participants, many dozens of volunteers working through "virtual action teams", and a host of logistical and policy decisions and tasks.

A third component of the job (the one you are "up close and personal" with at this very moment) is "**IAF Canada Member Communications**". This newsletter needs to be a regular, high-quality feature of your member benefits. That takes planning, member input, research, writing, editing, and publishing skills (or at least the ability to tap those skills at no cost to the organization). There is also our web site presence that needs creative attention and nurturing, and the nascent monograph series that needs expanding.

Finally, there is a relatively unexplored area, and that is "**IAF Canada Member Programming**". I came into this job with a vision of regional professional seminars and workshops that would enable our members to network and learn, and that would provide less expensive, more accessible, and lower-key opportunities to meet at least some of our shared professional development needs outside the major annual conferences. To my embarrassment and regret, I have already had to postpone a series of regional workshops involving two outstanding senior facilitators because I just could not find the time and focus to recruit volunteers and set up the infrastructure necessary to mount a quality and profitable event.

So the solution, I think, is to carve the job into four parts and create an “**IAF Team Canada**” to plan and manage our presence here. (Okay, okay, that title made some of you gag, and there is probably a better one, but you get the drift.) The IAF Canada Director would probably be elected from among the general membership (as is now the case). And the other positions might come to that too. But, for now, we would do well simply to have some expressions of interest from you members who might like to start taking on (or at least considering) these roles. I am certainly intending to serve out my term until mid-2009, but it makes so much sense to me to start to build our team now, so that there is continuity in our IAF Canada structure and among the main players. **The key qualities in any team member must be commitment, reliability, and energy.**

Thanks for reading and reflecting on these ideas. And do let me know if you would like to be involved, or talk about it.

### **And Finally .....**

One of the most serious challenges in an organization that is as volunteer-dependent as IAF is to maintain a record of our policies, procedures, and all of the things that make up our “organizational memory”. It is one of the “grunt jobs” in any association, but Gary Rush, our Chair Elect, has taken on the task of creating an “IAF Policy and Operating Manual” to house in one easy-to-find-, easy-to-update place everything from our By-Laws, to information on our programs and services, to our sponsorship and endorsements policies. Thanks, Gary.

**Don't forget to cruise around the IAF global web site. There is a wealth of resources, contacts, and interesting information just waiting to be retrieved and used to further your professional practice and networking. Jim Campbell, our IAF Europe Regional Representative, has produced a quick guide to the web site (it was reproduced in the September 2007 IAF Canada Newsletter). If you can't find that Newsletter with Jim's guide, let me know and I shall forward it to you.**