

PAL NEWS

Caring for Professional Artists | palcanada.org

FEBRUARY 2015

LETTER FROM KEN KING AND DENNIS KUCHERAWY, CO-EDITORS

We are pleased that we have been selected as co-editors of *PAL News*, your national news source.

From now on there will be two sources of news about PAL: one for “breaking news” and the other similar to the newsletter with which you are all familiar but which will now be titled *PAL News*.

Why are changes being made? We want to ensure more timely dissemination of news about what is happening at the national and chapter levels. We want to do more to celebrate the lives, the past work and the ongoing work of PAL members. And, perhaps more important, we are hoping to be able to facilitate and encourage communication and discussion between chapters and members.

“Breaking News”

There are two types of “breaking news”:

1. The first are events just held (within the last couple of days) of which a chapter or the national office is particularly proud and anxious to share the good news with others. This could be such things as an event; initiation or completion of a study looking into the feasibility of building a new lodge; municipal approval to proceed with the building; or obtaining a particularly large donation.

Photos would be most welcome. They should be as professional in quality as possible. Please ensure though that anyone in the photo is clearly identified. As most of us know there is nothing worse than looking at a photo and asking “Who are all those people?”

2. The second are events being planned or proposed for which you might want assistance. Has someone else done a similar activity and have suggestions how to make it successful? Are there pitfalls you might want to avoid?

This information should be sent to news@palcanada.org. It will automatically

MEET THE CO-EDITORS



KEN KING

I've had considerable on-hands experience with the arts.

I had some months of piano lessons when young...until it became clear that I was unable to play using both hands at the same time, likely limiting any chance of a career as a concert pianist.

My only memory of Grade 8 drama class is forgetting my line, admittedly a tough one: “Psst, wrong ketchup”. Our teacher was obviously preparing us for a life of voice-overs. This, however, did not stop me enrolling in a drama class at university, a great success until we were told to form a circle and then run into the middle of the room pretending joy. I turned on my heels and left the class. Luckily it was the first class so I didn't waste any time, either mine or the professor's.

An art class at university showed I was good at colour field work but terrible at life studies; one poor model ended up looking like the

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come to us to ensure that everything is clear. If necessary we will get back to the sender for clarification or additional information. It will then be posted on PAL Canada's Facebook page (facebook.com/PALCanada.org).

By instituting this, we hope to overcome the disadvantage of a quarterly, or even a weekly, newsletter where the news is all too often old and, because of that, already known by most people.

PAL News

It is planned for *PAL News* to come out every two months, around the middle of the month like this first issue. The newsletter will look at some or all of the following content.

A Wrap-up of the "Breaking News"

We will review all of the "breaking news" posted to the PAL Canada Facebook page and select those items which we feel should be included in the newsletter so they are accessible to more people. (We do, however, urge everyone to become a "friend" of PAL Canada's Facebook page).

A Focus Topic for Each Issue

We hope each issue from now on will focus on a specific topic. The August issue's focus will continue to be the Annual General Meeting and items that arise from that.

We intend to select other topics that may be of interest to all chapters. For example:

- fund-raising successes and challenges;
- how to encourage and grow membership in chapters;
- the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers;
- the work of board members (this would also include governance issues), staff and volunteers;
- the question of and issues around assisted living; and
- the development of new partnerships and the work being done to strengthen existing ones.

The coverage of each could range widely.

We might simply offer a series of questions which readers would be asked to consider. This could lead to discussions within chapters or on the PAL Canada Facebook page.

Alternatively, there might be an article on the topic written specifically for *PAL News* by either a PAL member or by someone from another organization having expertise or experience with the topic.

MEET THE CO-EDITORS, con't from page 1

Frog Princess (hey, hands and feet are very hard to draw).

I also took a university film-making class where the "final" was the making of a short 16mm film. About all that could be said for mine was a good use of colour (or lack of it, given that it was filmed outside in Alberta winter), some amateur (i.e. cheap) special effects, and a lot of editing (heavily influenced by the cut-by-cut review of the shower scene from *Psycho*). Canadian film history has not suffered from the loss of this film or of me pursuing a career in the field.

Finally, the Alberta Ballet School put up with me for a couple of months of Ballet for Fun classes (the only male and one of the few older than twenty – indeed, one of the few older than twelve), staying until it became clear that I have no sense of rhythm.

I proved better on the production end, serving as producer of a Becket play in the Alberta Drama Festival. Among the more difficult tasks was coming up with two garbage cans – for weeks my parents had to put their garbage out in bags.

Then we come to actual work experience: management of London Music Digest concerts and office production for an artist management firm in London, England; administration of the Alberta Performing Arts Cultural Assistance Program and the Summer Music Workshops; and administering programs related to the development of Alberta cultural facilities.

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Or a short description of the topic could be provided with links to relevant articles and websites. (We would not want to recreate the “wheel” if this has already been done.)

In most cases, each chapter would be asked to provide their own perspective on the focus topic. And we will, naturally, be looking to you to suggest other topics.

We know that the next issue of *PAL News* (April 2015) will need to look at and possibly respond to the reactions received about this issue and on how well the ongoing news provided through the Facebook page has worked. However, the focus of the April issue will be the “supporting cast” program. Contributing Editors will be asked to provide answers to questions such as:

- Does your chapter have a “supporting cast” program?
- If “no”, why not? Are there plans for such a program to be initiated?
- If “yes”, when was the program put in place?
- Who is responsible for running the program?
- How do you go about recruiting volunteers? How many volunteers are currently in place? Is this the optimum number you want or are you planning to recruit additional volunteers?
- How many people are served by the program? What services are provided?
- Are those served happy with the help they are given? Is there additional help they would like which cannot now be provided?
- What training is provided to volunteers? Is the training informal or formal? Is this provided in-house or contracted out? Is there written material which could be shared with other chapters if they were interested?
- What turnover have you experienced with volunteers? Why do they leave?
- Are there changes being proposed as to how the program is run?
- Are there volunteers or those being supported who you would like to feature in *PAL News*?

MEET THE CO-EDITORS, con't from page 2

For the fifteen years before retirement, I developed and delivered training to Government of Canada program delivery staff. The courses for which I was responsible included program and project management, community development, and the initiation and maintenance of community partnerships.

Finally, throughout my life, I have attended all types of performances and visited many art galleries, enjoying them all (well, except for a few I'd like to forget). All of this confirmed that I wasn't cut out to actually produce any art but gave me a very healthy respect for those who did.

National Office Reports

Jeff and/or Adrian may wish to include a message about specific issues or events.

Chapter Reports

We assume each chapter keeps its members informed of its daily operations. Much of this is probably not of great interest to others. However, we believe that what does need to be shared are the “lessons learned”.

- What activities happened that were successful? Why? Could they have been improved? The latter question can only be answered, of course, if those in charge actually evaluate the activity afterwards.
- Have chapter members suggested other activities be added to the “curriculum”? Why? Are there activities which have proven not to be that popular? Why do you think this is?
- Could planned activities benefit from the advice or input from others?

- In Ken's last job with the Federal Government, he developed a training package on the initiation and maintenance of community partnerships. Most chapters and the national office have partnerships with other organizations working with professional artists in Canada. We would like to "talk" about the work and results they are achieving.
- Finally, and equally important, what critical events does each chapter have planned for the future? We have found that too many newsletters concentrate on the past and not the future.

"Humour"

We are hoping that future editions will not be too serious in tone, even if the topics raised are serious. Including jokes has been suggested; however, we think it would be more interesting to obtain stories and anecdotes from those involved with PAL such as the unlikely things as stage designer or carpenter was asked to design or build; the musician who completely forgot which piece of music she or he was supposed to be playing; the play where a piece of stage business did not go right.

PAL Members and Volunteers

We or the contributing editors from each chapter will interview PAL members, residents and those benefiting from services provided by PAL. We would like to especially focus on the benefits experienced by not only PAL members but by the volunteers themselves, emphasizing the role they play. One idea is a regular column featuring a "supporting cast" member.

As well, this could include activities where PAL members are playing a role such as theatrical, dance or musical performances, and exhibitions of art by PAL members. The timing of the April issue would be ideal to highlight work being done by PAL members with summer programming (the upcoming Pan Am Games, summer festivals and the like). While specific events might only be of interest to people residing in the community, the purpose would be to highlight the fact that members are continuing to pursue their careers, or perhaps acquiring new interests or talents.

Articles of interest to PAL chapters and members

This section could include specifically-written articles or links to articles written for other organizations, such as the Canadian Senior Artists' Resource Network (CSARN), which we believe might interest PAL chapters and members.

"Classified Ads"

No, this section will not provide space for those seeking particular companionship. Sorry! Rather, this can be used for things like the following:

MEET THE CO-EDITORS



DENNIS KUCHERAWY

A veteran entertainment executive, Dennis Kucherawy has worked in film exhibition and live theatre on Broadway, in London's West End and in Canada. An award-winning journalist, he has covered the Canadian and international arts and culture scene for more than 35 years including stints with the London and Winnipeg Free Press and the Edmonton Journal. His work has been published throughout Canada, the United States and in Austria. He has appeared on TVOntario as well as on various CBC Radio programs including "Sunday Morning" and "Morningside." His long and varied career also includes extensive work in business, government and politics, especially in areas of civil rights, tolerance, inclusion and culture. He is also a skilled classical and popular music pianist. A graduate of the University of Western Ontario, Dennis was born and raised in Welland, Ontario and now lives in downtown Toronto with his wife, Karen. He throws right and bats left.

- Do you have a Strad you want to sell or donate to some organization?
- Do you want to know if anyone has the programme for a show you were in twenty years ago, your own copy of which seems to have gone missing?
- Similarly, does anyone have a copy of a recording from thirty years ago on which you played third trombone?
- You had an exhibition of your paintings (or photographs) a few years back. The card advertising this event showed a couple of your works. Might anyone have kept a copy of this?
- Do you want to track down someone with whom you shared the stage some years back but with whom you have fallen out of touch?

The role of the Contributing Editors

We will not be compiling and editing *PAL News* on our own. Many of you know that Chapters have been asked to nominate a *PAL News* Contributing Editor. The Contributing Editors would:

- send “breaking news” to news@palcanada.org so it can be included on the PAL Facebook page;
- ensure that the thoughts of the chapter and its members were added to conversations around an issue’s topic; and
- most important, help us obtain the stories and anecdotes mentioned above, as well as interviews with interesting PAL members and volunteers.

It is likely that some of the stories would come from chapter newsletters. Contributing Editors should, therefore, develop strong ties with the editors of these, if they are not, in fact, holding these positions as well as being a Contributing Editor.

With a publication date for *PAL News* in the middle of every second month, all content will have to be received by the 1st of that month. So, for the April issue, the deadline for submission would be April 1st. As with “breaking news”, all submissions should be sent to news@palcanada.org.

We are hoping to arrange a conference call of all Contributing Editors in the coming weeks, assuming that we have names from all chapters (we are still missing four).

Looking forward to working with you.

Ken and Dennis

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



JEFF BRAUNSTEIN

Where has the time gone, it seems like only yesterday.....

PAL Canada and its Chapters have been fortunate to have had many caring people in its history to whom we are all grateful.

That has brought the organization to this point. The torch has been passed on. I’m looking forward to a year of growth of the organization.

We have sustained ourselves in 2014; however, this year with the leadership of the board, our Executive director Adrian Luces and our administrator Melanie Ferrara, I strongly believe that PAL Canada will have its best year ever.

Some of our plans are to raise the awareness of PAL Canada within the artistic community and beyond, across the country, through our website, our newsletters and by using the media through print, radio and TV.

We plan to increase our membership and fundraise throughout the year so that we can help our various chapters with specific projects.

I see PAL Canada as a necessary cog in the wheel for the continued growth of housing and services that all of senior artists need.

I’m very excited about the future of PAL Canada in 2015.

JIM BIROS TRIBUTE

by Dennis Kucherawy

“A glorious warrior in the service of an embattled cause.”

Those words by renowned Canadian jazz trombonist Russ Little were just one of the many tributes celebrating the life of Jim Biros, one of PAL Canada’s greatest supporters at a concert in his memory held January 12th at Toronto’s Panasonic Theatre.

Biros, the beloved former executive director of the Toronto Musicians’ Association (TMA), passed away from cancer last September 19th, aged 66.

Russ Little’s tribute was read by Linda Cara, Vice-President of The Toronto Musicians’ Association. He could not attend as he was working. It went on to say Biros’ weapons, as a warrior, were “reason, empathy, honesty, common sense, intelligence, sensitivity, respectful fairness and a glowing, magnificent kindness.”

It was a rare and special night of celebration, uniting some of Canada’s most distinguished artists and entertainers including Jackie Richardson, Juan Chioran, Melanie Doane, Dan Chameroy, Broadway vet Michel Therriault and emcee, Tony nominee Louise Pitre. A 35-piece onstage orchestra accompanied them consisting of members of the Canadian Opera Company, National Ballet and Toronto Symphony orchestras and various top theatre musicians from the local scene.

The concert attracted an audience of more than 500 with proceeds going to organizations with which Jim Biros was associated – PAL (Performing Arts Lodges) Canada and the TMA’s Members’ Assistance Fund.

Louise Pitre, also a multi-Dora Award winner, exploded on to the stage to launch the evening with an exciting rendition of “Some People” from the Jules Stein/Stephen Sondheim musical “Gypsy.” It was a treat as a year ago she sang the very same song when she starred as Rose in the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre’s production of the classic, receiving universal acclaim. The Chicago Sun-Times called her “astonishing.”

The evening continued with reminiscences from Jim’s family, friends and colleagues and Juan Chioran’s stirring and inspiring performance of Jim’s favorite song, “The Impossible Dream” from “Man of La Mancha.”

It’s not hard to see why he adored it, because, as the audience heard from each speaker, how important Biros was to everyone in the arts community. He was enthusiastic, a tireless supporter devoted to artists’ well-being, characteristics that, as the press release said, endeared him to all that knew him.”

As the TMA’s Executive Director, Biros negotiated on behalf of musicians associated with the city’s premiere musical organizations.

Nationally, Jim participated in negotiations of the Commercial Announcements and CBC agreements. Internationally, he worked with the American Federation of Musicians in negotiating the Sound Recording Labor Agreement and the Film-Television Agreement. Everybody loved him” said Dan Broome, Executive Director of the TMA, “even his opponents.”

Perhaps the most eloquent and passionate tribute was the one from Russ Little who could not attend: (Little knew him well over the year, especially during his own tenure as a member of the TMA’s Board of Directors and ultimately President.) “Jim always represented to me the absolute definition of a kind, empathetic and almost absurdly decent gentleman...

“He will be sorely missed by those of us who loved his decency and his unfailing good cheer..”

“Bless him. He was a rare man.”

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I took on the role of Executive Director of PAL Canada just over a year ago, I was excited about building upon this organization's past successes, with a great understanding and first-hand knowledge of how truly vast is this country, but also of how regionally divisive it can be. For though I have lived and worked for most of my life in the Toronto area, I also lived and worked for two years in Vancouver. In addition, I have had the privilege of visiting every province and major city (and several in between) across this land, so I believe that I have a good understanding of the fabric of the nation as a whole, and thus a good understanding of the challenges that I face in my position at PAL Canada.



ADRIAN LUCAS

Having no star system incorporated into Canadian society, the tremendous contribution that our artists/entertainers have made to help make this country a household name across the world, has rarely translated into a truly self-sustaining career, and thus the continuing need for national foundations like PAL Canada. So it is imperative that we work at developing and promoting a PAL Canada brand. However, for this to be effective, it will be important for the eight chapters to be united under this umbrella.

As the only national arts organization in this country dedicated to promoting and developing affordable housing for its community, PAL Canada also has a responsibility to its members to deliver the message of the basic needs of artists to every level of government, as well as to the corporate world, in every region of the country. However, we can again only accomplish this as a strong and unified organization.

Recently, PAL Canada had faced some unforeseen challenges, which prevented it from achieving its goals, but the board members' commitment to its mission, has never waned. It took much of 2014 to get things in order so that the organization can now move forward.

Our primary purpose as a foundation is to serve arts communities across the country through our eight current chapters and its members. To expedite this cause, we are reviewing various mediums through which we can effectively, efficiently and prudently deliver a national awareness and fundraising campaign like:

- A direct mail program
- The creation of a fundraising committee
- Internally managed events and third-party events
- Various media

Your continued support is integral to our success. We need you. We welcome and greatly appreciate any way you can help us to reach our goals of attaining a stronger national presence and encouraging corporations and organizations to support us financially, especially those seeking exposure through an affiliation with the arts.

Please tell your friends and associates about PAL Canada and its mission. Direct them to our website and encourage them to donate to our great cause. Invite them to join PAL Canada. For the arts are essential to our communities and society. From choirs, amateur theatre, and arts programs in schools that encourage and excite youth, the arts bring joy, and a sense of pride to every community. History has proven that the arts enhance our lives, adding greater meaning to the human condition. I invite you all to work together with me to enable PAL Canada Foundation to help meet the needs of some of Canada's greatest people.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO PAL CANADA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PAL CANADA is looking for several persons who want to make a positive difference in the lives of seniors who work (or have worked) in the professional performing arts or allied crafts. At our Annual General Meeting on June 22, 2015 we shall be electing our new Board of Directors. We strive to build a strong and effective board by ensuring that it is comprised of a broad and diversified base of talented and skilled people. Our Board will be made up of 10 persons elected at-large from across Canada as well as representatives from the 8 PAL Chapters in Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Stratford, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver, and ex-officio representation from the four professional associations and performing arts unions who founded PAL Canada in the 1990's.

This year there will be at least 3 vacant seats to be filled. We have a particular need right now for candidates with backgrounds in the legal and communications professions and, as always, candidates with fundraising experience and knowledge of government programs.. As well, we are most interested in hearing from potential candidates in Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Board meets 6 times a year in Toronto, with members from other parts of Canada connected by conference call. Meetings last approximately 2 hours. Each member of the Board is expected to be actively involved with the activities of at least one of the Board committees. All Board members need to become current members of PAL Canada if they are not already.

Our Board members are passionate about the arts — the people who devote their lives to creating outstanding work in all mediums of the arts in Canada and to our mission: Caring for Professional Artists. Previous experience as a Board member for a non-profit organization is an asset, as is experience in business or other professions.

If you are interested in being considered by the Nominations Committee, please contact Allan Macmillan, Secretary at macmillan22@gmail.com at your earliest convenience. Note also the **final date of May 8, 2015** for receipt of formal submissions of nomination for election to the Board in the Notice of Elections on the following page, as well as the mailing address.

PAL NEWS

(formerly Palingenesis)
Published bi-monthly by
PAL Canada Foundation

Co-Editors

Ken King
Dennis Kucherawy

Layout Design/Execution

Adrian Luces
Melanie Ferrara

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acknowledgement*

Contributing Editors

Ann Pocket, PAL Halifax
Robert Clinton, PAL Edmonton
Merle Matheson, PAL Toronto
Karen Woodman, PAL Vancouver

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Letters, Articles, Notices:
news@palcanada.org

Or, mail correspondence to;
PAL Canada

1000 Yonge Street, Suite 300A,
Toronto, ON M4W 2K2
416-203-3051
info@palcanada.org

PAL Charitable Number:

89788 0902 RR0001

NOTICE OF ELECTIONS: BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PAL CANADA FOUNDATION

The By-laws of PAL Canada Foundation currently make provision for ten (10) Members-at-Large to be elected to its Board of Directors by the membership. The term of office is for two (2) years from the date of the Annual General Meeting which, this year, will be held on June 22. The term of six (6) current members of the Board who are Directors-at-Large will expire at the 2015 Annual General Meeting. The incumbents have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election for a further term. The seventh Director-at-Large has one more year remaining in his current two-year term of office.

There are three (3) seats to be filled. If, by the deadline for nominations there are more nominations received than seats available, there will be an election and nominees will be advised as to the election procedures.

We encourage any member in good standing who would like to become a candidate for a seat on the Board of Directors to submit a nomination. If you are not currently a member in good standing and would like to be eligible for nomination, please contact the PAL Canada office to make the necessary membership arrangements.

The nomination will bear the signatures of two other paid-up members of PAL Canada, as well as that of the nominee indicating a willingness to serve. The inclusion of a brief biography of the nominee would be helpful, but it is not an absolute requirement at this point.

Nominations should be directed to the Secretary, PAL Canada Foundation, 1000 Yonge St., Suite 300A, Toronto, ON M4W 2K2 and must be received ***no later than May 8, 2015.***

BECOME A MEMBER

PAL Canada is proud to offer online membership enrollment. Visit www.palcanada.org and click on the *Join* button in the top menu.

PAL CANADA FOUNDATION

1000 Yonge Street, Suite 300A, Toronto, ON M4W 2K2
T: 416-203-3051 E: info@palcanada.org
www.palcanada.org

Executive Committee:

President: Jeff Braunstein jb.asterix@sympatico.ca
Vice-Pres: Jim Bradford
Secretary: Allan Macmillan macmillan22@gmail.com
Treasurer: Ron Zammit rzammit@actrafrat.com
Past President: Chris Marston cjamblu@gmail.com

Without Portfolio:

Alison Atkins atkins.alison@gmail.com
Christina Smith christina.smith@wellspring.ca
Patty Gail Peaker pattygailp@gmail.com
Dan MacDonald clanmac@eastlink.ca

Executive Director: Adrian Luces ed@palcanada.org
Administration info@palcanada.org

Co-Editors: Ken King & Dennis Kucherawy
news@palcanada.org

CHAPTER CONTACT INFORMATION

PAL Calgary | palcalgary.ca
T: 403-252-9255 E: lereaney@telus.net

PAL Edmonton | artistsurbanvillageedmontonab.com
T: 780-431-1353 E: artistsurbanvillage@gmail.com

PAL Halifax | palhalifax.org
T: 902-441-4791 E: info@palhalifax.org

PAL Ottawa | palottawa.org
E: info@palottawa.org

PAL Stratford | palstratford.org
E: info@palstratford.org

PAL Toronto | paltoronto.org
T: 416-777-9674 E: admin@paltoronto.org

PAL Vancouver | palvancouver.org
T: 604-255-4312 E: info@palvancouver.org

PAL Winnipeg | palwinnipeg.org
T: 204-339-9750 E: info@palwinnipeg.org