**Communications Report for Period April 23 to May 7**

**Executive Meeting May 7, 2019**

**Michele Kramer**

Due to timing at the Executive meeting, I did not provide my oral report and so am submitting this written report after the fact.

**Website:**

* Continued research into how to approach redesign of WLUFA website.
* Current website is a Wordpress site and utilizes a customized (by someone a number of years ago) Wordpress theme. The creator of this customized theme is the only one with the ability to manipulate a number of the basic building blocks of the theme. Not only can Larissa and I not make changes to some of these parts of the website (eg. layout of the homepage), we also can’t update the site to the latest version of Wordpress without having a number of items get rearranged. This has created a cascading effect. Without an updated version of Wordpress, we are now barred from using most of the newer widgets and plugins that would allow us to make the changes to our website that we would like to make (eg. the bulletin board).
* This leaves us very little choice but to create a new site from the ground up – and to make that site as basic to Wordpress as possible so that Larissa or I or anyone who comes after us will have easy access to updates, ability to manipulate pages etc.
* I have begun the research into the best approach to doing this and am looking into using a standardized WP theme (premium version) or possible a web-builder (WP version or WP-friendly version). I’m currently leaning towards BeaverBuilder/ BeaverThemes but Larissa and I still need to look further into this.
* Larissa has checked with our web host re: the possibility of having a “ghost” site (sub-domain) for WLUFA hosted by the provider so we can work on the new site – leaving it dormant while we construct it – while still leaving our current site up and running as is. We’ve been told this can be done by CAUT (who is our host/ provider)
* I’ve started working on a “style” for the site by trying to find a logo that will update our image.
* I’m working on a draft document re: website layout – that will then become the working document for Larissa and I to hash over, amend, edit etc.
* I am hoping that Larissa and I will have the website layout plan, style decisions, implementation decisions completed by end of August. This is taking into account that summer also includes CF Negotiations and that Larissa and I will have some (I hope!) vacation time.

**Meeting with Laura MacDonald (FAUW):**

* At Sheila’s suggestion, I arranged a meeting with my counterpart at FAUW in order to learn about how she approaches FAUW communications, what her roles and responsibilities are, how communications are organized at FAUW, whether she had any recommendations of helpful resources I should access or courses I should take etc.
* While I still feel that the meeting was quite productive, the fact of the matter is that Laura’s job is quite different from mine for a number of reasons:
  + The structure of the (non-unionized) association is comprised of President, VP, Treasurer – but then a number of Directors and Chairs, as well as three office staff (including Laura). The group works in a way that is similar to a steward system. Most information/ communication (to and fro) is carried out by having Directors/ Chairs meet (in some way) with smaller groups for which they are responsible.
  + Very little communication, then, comes directly from “FAUW” (ie. from Laura, from FAUW admin. asst., or from President via email etc.)
  + All communication that *does* come out of FAUW is through Laura.
  + FAUW sends very little email. Its main method of communication is via a newsletter that Laura puts together and sends out every 3 to 4 weeks.
  + Laura does not develop communications (except mainly for social events and newsletters) – she is mainly responsible for copy-editing and formatting already-developed communications that are then sent out by FAUW.
  + Laura is not responsible for the FAUW website – she posts to it, but the website is hosted, developed and maintained by UW.
  + Laura is responsible for sitting on a number of faculty-related committees.
* Having said all of the above, I still came away with some interesting ideas to pursue including:
  + Courses on “Writing for the Web”
  + Her recommendation that the Canadian Labour Congress Summer School is especially helpful
  + Possible use of Groupmail for newsletters – esp. in order to address accessibility requirements
  + Adopting her newsletter practice of including “3 (or 4) Takeaways From Your Executive’s Meeting” – allowing you to give members a view of Exec discussions without running the risk of breaching confidential discussions etc.

**WLUFA Spring Social Newsletter:**

* This took me a little while to put together, mainly because I hadn’t thought about doing it until after the fact and, therefore, had to go hunting for images etc. I think, though, that it’s a good idea to continue – esp. since so few members attend in order to acknowledge our retiring members, CF Century Club, possible WLUFA Service Awards etc.
* I did have to do some slight editing of the bio contributions in order to keep the publication on the short(ish?) side. In future, if I can get the bios ahead of time, I would have more time to give them edits. I’ll also be able to request photos of members (if they care to share them) vs. reworking images found on the web.
* I got at least one email thanking us for recognizing the retiree in the mail-out.

**Leanne Holland Brown:**

* After some discussion with Exec. Members re: the appropriate way for WLUFA to address this terrible loss, I created and posted a Facebook image for the WLUFA site.

**Looking Ahead:**

* I have begun to collect some research on Public Sector Bargaining and on Performance-Based Funding/ Use of Metrics in PSE. Some of this has been used for Tweets – I’m also thinking ahead to a possible newsletter on the issue.
* Pending the possible effect of possible legislation re: public sector bargaining, I may be needing to direct some of my time to communications for CF negotiations/ CF members.