



AAGT Annual Committee Report June 13 &14, 2015 Kean University, Union, New Jersey, USA

Archivist Report

Prepared by *Ansel Woldt*

General Information Regarding Archival/Archivist Activity

I have continued to attempt to keep abreast of all newly published books and manuals pertaining to Gestalt therapy theory and practice. The GT Library located in our office now contains over 400 Gestalt books and manuals, numerous Gestalt journals and a few Gestalt DVDs. Since it has become rare that publishing companies will provide gratis books, nearly all are purchased with personal funds. Since many in the worldwide Gestalt community are aware of my having created this GT Library Collection, I am often contacted for assistance with providing author and publisher information, accuracy of quotations, and so forth.

I continue to request gratis and 'author-signed' (when possible) copies of books for the Gestalt Therapy Archives and Research Collections at Kent State University. However since there was a drastic change in the persona of the University archivist employed by Kent State University a few years ago who seemed to have a disdain for certain collections, the Frederick & Laura Perls Gestalt Therapy Special Collections being one of them, she worked in cahoots with Joe Wysong to ship the heart and soul of the Gestalt Therapy Special Collections to the University of California Santa Barbara Humanistic Psychology Archives. The time, energy, heartfelt and often financial commitment I had invested in this archival research enterprise for 30 years rather crushed my spirit. Not only were all of Fritz and Laura's collections sent to UCSB, but several of the unique contributions such as photo collections from the Edwin & Sonia Nevis, art pieces from Joseph Zinker, and Fritz's antique Wollensak reel-to-reel tape recorder with original leather carrying case and numerous reels of Fritz's tapes that were contributed by George & Judith Brown and shipped to me personally from Santa Barbara for entry into the Archives, shipped to UCSB without my knowledge or consent. As a result my motivation and energies to work with the University archivist has dwindled. However, as with many misfortunes, there is often an "upside" as well. While the University archivist seemed dismayed at the size of 2 large Gestalt Therapy Libraries that were donated, these collections helped fill some of the void left with the dysmemoring of Perls' Special Collections; namely the GT Library of Jim & Anne Simkin (thanks to friendships with Violet Oaklander and Bob Resnick who introduced their daughter, Sharon Simkin Meinhoff, to me) and the GT Library of Sol Rosenberg, long-time editor

of Voices: Journal of American Academy of Psychotherapy, (thanks to friendships with Charlie Bowman and Bruce & Judy Robertson who introduced Sol's widow, Bernice Rosenberg, to me.

Although not considered part of the Gestalt Therapy Archival Collection, a mainstay that is often sought out for research purposes is the Research Collection of Gestalt Therapy Doctoral Dissertations containing over 300 dissertations and theses that researched various aspects of Gestalt therapy. This collection was made possible with funds from a competitive grant I won shortly before my retirement. You will find an example of almost any type of research amongst this collection. Unfortunately, the absence of funding, combined with my retirement, has precluded continuous updating of this prized archival collection. Whenever I hear of a new GT dissertation having been defended, I request a copy to be included in this GT dissertation collection.

I regularly watch for new Gestalt Websites in Online resources such as Gestalt News and Notes and other GT Newsletters from around the globe to add to the robust list of GT Websites that was initially created as "Digital Gestalt Resources", Appendix A in Sarah Toman's and my textbook, Gestalt Therapy: History, Theory and Practice.

Recommend consideration of creating a budget line for Archives.

Introducing AAGT Constitution & By-Laws additions, edits and updates

1. AAGT's International Biennial Conference Task Force proposal to add a statement to Article IV, Section 5 of By-Laws regarding the process of selecting the conference coordinators and sites for Biennial International Conferences
2. Addition of AAGT Board members' responsibilities, role and function for recently created offices, missing information for some and edits for others.
3. Addition of a Policy on Grievances that applies to AAGT in general as well as to conferences. Hopefully there will be additions for us to consider regarding how best to moderate grievance processes and content.
4. Honoring Deirdre Winter's request that we consider deleting the end phrase of item "B" in the Covenant about how best to deal with projection.
5. Lots of minor corrections in phrasing, word choice, etc.

Continuing Education Committee Report

Prepared by *Dina L. Miller, AAGT CE Officer* and *Ansel Woldt, Associate CE Officer*

Activities of the Continuing Education department since the last AGM

- Annual report to the American Psychological Association (APA) to continue as a Sponsor of Continuing Education for Psychologists.
- Annual report to the National Board of Clinical Counselors (NBCC) to continue as provider of CE credits for Counselors.
- AAGT was renewed to provide CE credits for the California Nursing Board.

- NBCC changed their requirements of CE providers. We will explore if these changes are such that we want to continue providing CE credits to Certified Counselors.
- APA's expectations for sponsors of CE credits for psychologists.
- California Board of Behavioral Sciences: discontinuation of approving sponsors of CE credits. AAGT will explore options for social workers...
- Suggestion of AAGT possibly providing CE credits for home study courses. This will be explored in the future.

Interest Groups Committee

Prepared by *Daniel Bak* and *Bob Witchel*

What we have accomplished

- Reviewed the report of the Interest Group Survey, and Roles and Responsibilities of IG Co-Chairs.
- Using the AAGT "Covenant of Community" and the AAGT "Constitution and Bylaws" as ground for Interest Groups (IGs), we created a guide for roles and responsibilities of a specific Interest Group Chair/Co-chair.
- Created and maintaining a Facebook page for AAGT IGs (82 likes so far)
<https://www.facebook.com/InterestGroupsAAGT>
- Written to membership about revitalizing IGs utilizing every Newsletter, using the listserv, and developing an ad for the AAGT NE conference brochure. Provided examples of IG topics, roles and responsibilities guide, and offered support to those who want to chair/co-chair an IG.
- Heard from specific members about their interest in developing an IG: Process Writing IG (Tine van Wijk), Social Interventions in Communities (Dominique Chabre and Patricia Tucker).
- Supported Laura Carite in her creation of a Gestalt Group Therapy IG, including identifying a co-chair(s). The group was set up and its activities have been discussed by group members.
- Reviewed historic information about IGs and former chairs sent to us by Ansel Woldt.

Plans for Continuing Our Work on IGs

- Continue to utilize Facebook page, Newsletter, and email list to engage and stimulate members to develop an IG.
- Identify specific members who have a specialized interest to encourage and support them to develop an IG. For example, those who present workshops at Regional and Bi-annual international conferences or former IGs (co)-chairs would be contacted. Perhaps, we could also contact someone who is doing research, written a book, etc.
- Explore face-time mechanisms (e.g., internet, like the system we use for Board Meetings) for IGs to meet and maintain contact.
- Continue to process with the Board ways to generate ideas to promote IGs.

Membership Committee

Prepared by *Nancy Woldt* and *Maryanne Nicholls*

Membership Statistics

- Individual: 222
- Organizational: 20
- Nations represented: 20. With the exception of the USA, UK and Canada the nations represented have less than 10 memberships. Very often 1 or 2 members. This may be a place where AAGT can create energy to increase the international base
- New since Asilomar: 41
- Students/Trainees: 28. This is a fair number, but the co-chairs are suggesting a push to increase the student/trainee participation

Recommendations Moving Forward

- a. Resolve online membership enrollment issues and update the information
- b. Insure that the online membership directory is inclusive and current
- c. Consider membership and promotional material in professional publications. Poll membership to gather a list of publications they use and how to access those marketing departments
- d. Promote the idea of current members "GIFTING" memberships to student and trainees.
- e. Require Organizational Members to offer and actively support AAGT membership and marketing materials at their institutions and events.
- f. Offer printed membership brochures at all AAGT events.
- g. Continue to advertise membership enrollment and reminders (when applicable) in the newsletters
- h. Continue to send 2 dues reminder letters in the spring, before the May deadline
- i. Continue to send welcome letters to new members, with the gift of the recording of the first annual meeting until the supply is depleted. Then select a new gift idea.

Organizational Membership Committee

Prepared by *Marlene Blumenthal* and *Janneke van Beusekom*

General Overview

- We had a successful meeting at the Asilomar Conference with the representatives of the Organizational Members.
- One of the topics at the Asilomar Conference was creating ways to support each other. For that reason, Marlene and Janneke asked Michael Sasiain to create a listserv for our representatives. That has been done and, up until now, the listserv has been used mainly to communicate about the NE conference and the AGM.

Regional Development Fund

The Regional Development Fund Committee has few activities to report for the period October 2014 – May 2015.

This is due on the one hand to the fact that we have not received any new requests for funding during this time and on the other to the ongoing discussion about the role and participation of the regions in AAGT.

This discussion, which we welcome, has, among other things raised questions about what criteria should be met by conferences organised by regions in order to qualify for financial support from the AAGT.

In this situation we have both taken an active part in the discussions and waited before initiating further activities to advertise the Regional Development Fund and its possibilities. In April 2015 we received grateful thanks and feedback in the form of a written report from Ariel Déniz Robaina on behalf of the organisation committee of a Gestalt conference supported by AAGT funds which was held in Gran Canaria last June. The conference was entitled: Congreso Internacional de Integración Científica – Revolución en la Salud Mental y Social. The Regional Development Fund currently contains \$ 5,630.66 for disbursement to applicants. We look forward to continuing the discussions on the regions

Regional Task Force

Prepared by *Adam Kincel*

General Overview

Regional task force met twice in the last few months to discuss our relationship with regions and regional events. There seems to be consensus on keeping regions relatively undefined (everyone should be able to create a region if they want), however, the discussion gets more difficult when we try to decide on when a conference should be endorsed by the AAGT.

Although we believe that all conferences should be dedicated to Gestalt therapy and share our values, it proves to be difficult to control how these requirements will be met. A dialogue needs to be provided for discussing both values and content of regional conferences as well as prejudices which may be included in the way we interpret our values and Gestalt therapy. Since recent discussions about the regional task force were dominated by one particular region, we decided to offer a meeting dedicated to feelings and opinions regarding that situation. This call will take place on Sunday the 21st of June and will be facilitated by Toni Gilligan and Adam Kincel. Afterwards, the Regional Task Force will carry on working towards creating procedure offering clear and supportive relationship with regions which we hope to be able to present for discussion during the next AGM in Sicily.

Regional task force currently includes: *Deirdre Winter, Patricia Tucker, Maryanne Nicholls, Burt Lazarin, Brad Larsen-Sanchez, Dan Bloom, Robert Resnick and Adam Kincel.*

Research Committee

Presented by *Mark Reck*

General Overview

At present, the AAGT Research Committee has had two main foci: conference coordination and research fund management.

Conference Coordination

The AAGT Research Committee has been included on the coordination of a variety of conferences. Most recently, the committee helped to facilitate cooperation between the AAGT and the Gestalt International Study Center (GISC) for the 2015 International Research Conference (*The Challenge of Establishing a Research Tradition for Gestalt Therapy, Part II*) in Cape Cod, USA in late May 2015. Additionally, the committee's involvement in the coordination of the 2017 International Research Conference in Paris, France has already been tentatively established. Finally, due to a desired emphasis on research and specific workshop and events at the conference, the committee has also been included on conference planning for the upcoming joint EAGT-AAGT Conference in September 2016 at Taormina, Sicily.

Research Fund Management

The AAGT Research Committee has been working on formalizing a procedure to be able to disseminate monies from the AAGT Research Fund in order to help support members' research-related activities. An initial proposal for such a procedure has been submitted to the members of the AAGT Board, who will provide feedback on the procedure. It is hoped that an approved procedure will be established soon and be shared with the AAGT membership in order to begin the financial support of AAGT members through the committee and fund.

Next Steps

The AAGT Research Committee will continue its aforementioned efforts and is also open to feedback from the AAGT membership about how it can best support members around research-related efforts. Furthermore, those members interested in being involved in the Research Committee are welcome to contact the committee chairperson (Mark Reck, mark.reck.psyd@gmail.com) to learn more about the committee and/or join the committee.

Scholarship Fund Committee

Prepared by *Dominique Chabre* and *Adam Kincel*

General Overview

The AAGT Scholarship Fund had \$16,263.04 on June 8th, 2015. At the start of the year 2015 there was \$5,713.04.

Of the 2015 amount:

- Direct contributions: \$1,430
- Conference fund contribution: \$10,000 (\$8,000 earmarked for the 2016 Taormina conf.)

- SF money allocated to the GISC Research conference: \$1,000
- SF money allocated to the NE Regional conference: \$1,000 (\$300 still to be paid)
- (The accounting discrepancy comes from money being deposited into the general fund for the SF and then transferred over.)

Direct contributions include people on our website as they pay membership dues or as they register for the conference; people contributing by checks to the Fund, people donating their plenary honorariums, people doing fund raising activities and sending in the proceeds, etc.

The AAGT Scholarship Fund and AAGT endorsed regional and research conferences

The Scholarship Fund is available to allocate funding to AAGT endorsed conferences. Regional and research conference organisers may request funding from the scholarship committee.

In that event the Scholarship Fund Committee will allocate one member to work closely with a designated person from the conference planning committee (CPC), to:

- Encourage the conference to have a fundraising strategy in place before and during the conference; e.g., conference participants are asked to contribute money to the scholarship fund when they sign up and/or they have one evening event where fund raising will take place
- One conference organiser and one SF committee member will together assess individual applications for scholarships
- The amount available to each eligible conference will be decided by the SF committee based on a maximum of 20% of the funds fundraised since our last conference.
- The SF committee designed a standard scholarship application form for regional and research conferences: www.aagt.org/scholarship_fund_regional

In 2015 to date, the Scholarship Fund allocated funding to the following AAGT endorsed conferences:

- \$500 to \$750 (to be confirmed) to the International Research Conference, “The Challenge of Establishing a Research Tradition For Gestalt Therapy, Part 2”, May 27-30, 2015, GISC, Wellfleet, Cape Cod, MA.
- \$1000 to the AAGT NE Regional Conference, “Living as Part of the Whole: Self in Community, Community in Self”, June 12-13, 2015, Campus of Kean University in Union, NJ.

The AAGT Scholarship Fund and the 2016 Taormina AAGT/EAGT Biannual Conference

The AAGT SF committee provided consultation to EAGT on how to set up an EAGT scholarship fund for their members attending the 2016 conference in Taormina, Sicily. Both organizations decided to have an integrated scholarship application system. However each organization will offer priority to their own respective members.

The Scholarship Fund current goal

The SF aims at fundraising \$40,000.00 of which \$32,000.00 will go towards the Taormina 2016 conference and \$8,000.00 to regional and research conferences. If we manage to get more then this could go towards a reserve.

The SF committee is aware of various sources of money coming to our fund:

1. Money paid to the fund at the sign up for a conference.
2. Conference auctions.
3. Regional conferences donating from their surplus income.
4. Money donated at the time of membership renewal.
5. Special appeals, such as the one Bud Feder made in 2014.
6. Other events.

The SF is considering additional creative ways to fund raise (“Other events”). Apart from encouraging members of our community to organize a workshop, lecture or a webinar, we may also:

- Encourage our runners to run a race or marathon for the AAGT scholarship fund.
- Encourage our members to organize a fundraising event in their towns (gig, dinner, party, etc.)
- Approach private foundations or corporations for donations.

Treasurer’s Report

Prepared by *Burt Lazarin*

The treasurer reports that the organization is in a good financial position:

- **\$15,944** in the general checking account
- **\$40,712** in the money market account
- For a total of **\$56,656**

In addition, there is currently:

- **\$6,486** in the regional development fund
- **\$4,311.** in the research fund
- **\$16,273** in the scholarship fund.

For the first time AAGT is operating with a budget. We created one in 2014 including a reserve and we continued with a budget again this year. This budget also includes for the first time money for board support which is twinned with contributions into the Regional Development Fund: for every dollar spent on board support, a matching dollar is contributed from general funds to the RDF.

Because of cumulative budget surpluses from the last three AAGT conferences, this year began with a dedicated conference account of **\$40,694**. The treasurer recommended and the board concurred that of this amount **\$2,000** should be contributed to the Research Fund, **\$10,000** to the Scholarship Fund (with **\$8,000** specifically dedicated to awards helping members attend our

2016 conference in Taormina, Italy) and **\$5,000** to the general fund. From the remaining conference account, **\$5,539** was used as site deposit for 2016.