

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation



2020 Annual Report

Presented to the CFWF 2021 Annual Meeting
By telemeeting

Wednesday, June 2, 2021

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation

2021 Annual Meeting

3:00p.m. EDT
Wednesday, June 2, 2021
By telemeeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95729830934?pwd=QWcwNm5LdkZnZnEwRG9jbVpBNnRGUT09>

Meeting ID: 957 2983 0934 - Passcode: CFWF

Dial by your location

647 558 0588 / 778 907 2071 / 204 272 7920 / 438 809 7799 / 587 328 1099 / 647 374 4685

Meeting ID: 957 2983 0934 - Passcode: 663263

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Adoption of the minutes 2020 annual meeting
4. Business arising from the minutes
5. President's Report
6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report & Financial Statement
7. Awards Program Report
8. Professional Development Fund Report
9. IFAJ Report
10. Conference Report
11. Regional Reports
12. Board Elections
13. New Business
14. Adjournment

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation

Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting

Tuesday, June 2, 2020, at 3:00p.m. EDT

By telemeeting

Present: Trevor Bacque, chairperson; Hugh Maynard, Secretary, Alexandra Hayden, Norma Tolhurst, Allison Finnamore, Andy Walker, Anne Thompson, Annemarie Pedersen, Ashley Robinson, Clare Wooding, Clare Stanfield, Crystal Jorgenson, Crystal Leader, David Schmidt, Diane Goski, Elaine Vininsky, Elaine Shein, Eva Larouche, Gail Granger, Ian Doig, Jane Robinson, Janet Kanters, Jessika Guse, Jillian Bender, John Greig, John Morriss, John Muggeridge, Karen Davidson, Karen Briere, Karli Reimer, Kate Menold, Katelyn Laverdure, Kelly Daynard, Larry Thomas, Leeann Minogue, Lilian Schaer, Lisa Guenther, Lois Harris, Maggie Van Camp, Mary Feldskov, Megan Wright, Meghan Burke, Michelle Chunyua, Myrna Stark Leader, Owen Roberts, Piper Whelan, Rachel Telford, Reg Norby, Ron McCullough, Ronda Payne, Shanna Stevens, Shannon VanRaes, Tom Van Dusen, Tracey Feist, Trudy Kelly Forsythe, Will Verboven.

1. Welcome

Trevor Bacque called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Kelly Daynard and seconded by Clare Wooding to adopt the agenda as presented. Carried.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting

Moved by Karen Davidson and seconded by Crystal Leader to adopt the minutes of the 2019 annual meeting as presented. Carried.

4. Business Arising

Lisa Guenther asked about charitable status for the PD fund. Hugh acknowledged that it had not yet been addressed and should be brought forward for the coming year. Ron McCullough said he would be interested in making donations if there was to charitable status and emphasized its importance.

5. President's Report

Trevor Bacque noted that details are in the annual report for everyone to read. He acknowledged the challenging times we are all facing with the COVID pandemic, and noted that everyone seems to be taking things in stride. Unfortunately, the pandemic means no national conference this year, but looking forward to 2021. He thanked BC once again for being great hosts in 2019, and Qu'anglo for all the behind the scenes work to keep CFWF rolling.

6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

Hugh Maynard presented the 2019 Secretariat report and noted that generally everything has been fairly smooth, no income or expenses outside of the norm. BCFWA had a nice surplus after their conference which helped balance the budget. The professional development fund had a great return in 2019, but, of course, disappeared at the beginning of 2020. The awards program put together an ad hoc committee to review the awards, started the work of coming up with suggestions, but COVID arrived and derailed many of the activities. Main changes for this year are that the dates are now aligned with the IFAJ awards, some alterations to the photography category have also been changed to align with IFAJ. The awards ceremony will be held this year online. Membership remained steady at 335, the regional associations have done a good job at maintaining membership. He thanked those who have been directors over the course of the year.

He then reviewed the 2019 financial statement, with two items of note: in 2018 we took \$5000 out of the PD Fund to support projects, but this was not repeated in 2019, and we also paid out \$2500 to IFAJ to help support a Young Leader to attend the IFAJ congress given that there are no more from developing countries who don't have the same resources available. He also noted that it was increasingly hard to secure sponsors for the awards program in the last few years. On the expense side, the PD fund only had one application, a couple of webinars were also sponsored from regional associations.

Ron McCullough asked what could be done about the PD fund to get the fund to a high enough level the interest would self-sustain it. The task of getting charitable status will be a long one. If CFWF could set up an endowment with different universities in Canada, we could handle the needs.

Moved by Hugh Maynard and seconded by Reg Norby that the 2019 financial statements be approved. Carried.

Moved by Hugh Maynard moves and seconded by Crystal Jorgenson that Flo Johnston be appointed to review the 2020 CFWF financial accounts. Carried.

7. Awards Program Report

Alexandra Hayden presented the report on the 2019 awards program, all the details are in the AGM report. Trevor Bacque and Hugh Maynard provided some information on the work accomplished to date on revising the awards program, and the work that they plan to accomplish over the winter months.

8. Professional Development Fund Report

John Greig, chairperson of the board of trustees, summarized the PD fund report and focused on the long-term viability going forward. He echoed the long-term challenges mentioned by Hugh concerning the fund and encouraged individuals to apply for the fund. He thanked Jane Robinson and Anne Cote for their work on the board of trustees and Jane, Clare Wooding and Bill DeKay for judging. Jessika Guse mentioned that it might be an interesting idea to keep a trailing log of how much we are putting into the fund.

9. IFAJ Report

Trevor Bacque asked the participants to raise their hand if they have been to an IFAJ congress, and there was a large show of participation from all over Canada. Allison Finnermore was the IFAJ representative for a number of years, and now Trevor has taken over. The IFAJ executive met in Switzerland in February, Canada participated on the Host Liaison Committee given our hosting of the congress in 2023. The Danish Congress to be held this year was cancelled. Australia was to be the 2021 hosts, but have also cancelled due to the COVID pandemic and wildfires. The Danish Guild has the potential to hold the congress in 2021. IFAJ is becoming more and more global, an indication being the upcoming congresses will see a 4-year gap between a European host. There are a lot of great guilds out there, and nice to see them involved to a greater extent. Owen Roberts added that there is motion underway to potentially have an e-congress at the time the IFAJ regular congress was to take place so stay tuned for more details. Owen acknowledged and thanked Allison for her hard work to put Canada on the IFAJ map, and thanked Trevor for coming in to replace her.

10. Conference Reports

Myrna Stark-Leader gave a brief summary of the conference in BC for 2019. She thanked everyone for coming out and those who sponsored and appreciated everyone's patience as things changed last minute.

Due to the cancellation of the 2020 conference due to the pandemic situation, planned for Windsor, ON, there was no report.

11. Regional Reports

Trevor Bacque suggested that if there were specific questions about the regional reports to contact the regional reps. All regional reports can be found in the AGM report.

12. Board Elections

Trevor Bacque asked Owen Roberts chaired the elections and Hugh Maynard provided an explanation of the process according to the constitution: nominations from each region and 2 from Alberta and Eastern Canada because they have more than 80 members. Two members at large, one from the east and one from the west. Next board meeting the officers will be elected by the board.

Position	Name	Nominated by
BCFWA rep	Myrna Stark-Leader	Ronda Payne
AFWA reps	Trevor Bacque & Tracey Feist	Annemarie Pedersen
SFWA rep	Crystal Leader	Lisa Guenther
MFWBA rep	Crystal Jorgenson	Karli Reimer
ECFWA rep	Rachel Telford	Megan Burke
ECFWA rep	Mary Feldskov	Megan Burke
ACFWA rep	Allison Finnermore	Andy Walker
Western member-at-large	Ashley Robinson	Karli Reimer
Eastern member-at-large	Hugh Maynard	Karen Davidson

Owen Roberts closed nominations and asked for a motion to approve the slate of nominations presented.

Moved by Elaine Shein seconded by Jessika Guse to accept all nominations as presented. Carried.

13. New Business

Rachel Telford spoke about the Bayer bursary to the IFAJ congress, noting that Bayer has allowed us to keep the funds for next year and that Ian Doig, as the recipient of the award this year, will be able to attend in 2021. She thanked Bayer for their sponsorship of the bursary. She also noted that the 2020 conference cancelled in September was not a decision taken lightly and it was a disappointment to the planning committee.

Allison Finnamore spoke about the introduction of a code of conduct for CFWF which will be based on the documents that have been prepared for IFAJ.

Lilian Schaer asked Trevor Bacque for an update on the 2023 IFAJ Congress. Trevor said that they are still looking for volunteers to sit on committees and that the conference will be held in Olds, AB at the agricultural college.

14. Adjournment

Trevor Bacque declared the meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m. EDT.

Annual Reports

President's Report

Prepared by Trevor Bacque

Spring has sprung. Fields are greening, animals are growing and the air is smelling sweeter. Ah yes, it must be farming season, which means it is also writing season, as well. No doubt each CFWF member is busy reporting on a myriad of agricultural topics such as recent U.S.–Canada supply management talks to the sky-high canola prices or the burgeoning ag tech and value-added streams that continue to emerge. No matter what the topic, no matter the state of the world, agriculture, food, and the business of both, continues to happen. This is good news for us inquiring scribes, who are never at a loss for what to report upon.

This year has been memorable, for obvious pandemic-related reasons, but that hasn't changed the fact that I have read informative report after informative report from our members across the country. The pandemic has not changed readers' appetite for quality reporting, and I am very proud of our entire membership for continuing to create thought-provoking content throughout the last year.

This year at CFWF we have continued to pivot and engage our provincial and national membership, mostly through online activities. There have been innovative ways to make things a little less disconnected, and to all the provincial guilds for your efforts, I want to say a big thank you. I have heard from members that they are touched at the efforts people are going to try and be inclusive of the national membership while providing relevant skills.

As a nod to the future, CFWF's awards subcommittee has spent parts of their last year retooling the awards program. Categories have been enhanced, converted and otherwise updated to better reflect what it means to be a farm writer in 2021, and beyond. Fourteen categories, including multiple "Of The Year" honours allowing CFWF to recognize excellence like never before. We are particularly proud of the New Writer Of The Year. With so many talented young farm writers, it's important to recognize their contributions to the broader dialogue on Canadian agriculture, as well.

As my term as the CFWF president winds down, I want to say a big thank you to everyone I have met and learned from over the years, despite there being far too many to list in this simple report. I have learned more about food and farming in the last few years than I ever could have imagined. I am humbled to have been the benefactor of many helpful in-person meetings, phone calls and email threads with other members who have encouraged, edited(!) and otherwise been a positive force in my career development. Although finished as president, I remain a proud member—you can't get rid of me so easy.

With any luck, there will be a strong, safe showing of farm writers at Windsor, ON, September 25, 2021, in the fall where we may visit with one another and share a laugh or two with friends and colleagues.

Secretariat Report

Prepared by Hugh Maynard, Secretary-Treasurer

Administration

The Secretariat enjoyed a 'normal' 2020 within the context of a pandemic, with the main activities at the Secretariat being the provision of support to the board of directors, managing the finances and office functions such as membership, communications and administering the various awards programs (general awards, lifetime award, Bayer bursary and professional development fund). Many thanks to the volunteers on the board and the Qu'anglo staff who help to make things go smoothly, Norma Tolhurst and Alexandra Hayden.

Finances

The bank balance remains healthy due to the generous contribution of sponsors and some timely support from the federal government through one of the numerous COVID programs. This was especially important given that there was no conference in come in 2020 due to the cancellation of the annual conference planned for Windsor, ON. This helped maintain the CFWF surplus back up to \$33,391 which will enable the organization to contribute to professional development activities and maintain operations in the case where a conference is also not available in 2021. CFWF requires a surplus of ~\$20,000 in the bank for cash flow and operations, and the board is committed to investing amounts higher than this in programming when the additional surplus is available.

The Professional Development Fund (PD Fund) was essentially stable in 2020 which, given the volatility of the stock markets, was probably a decent outcome. The PD Fund's year-end capital was maintained at slightly over \$47,500, about the same as 2019. There were no PD disbursements as the board prepared a mentorship program to be supported by the fund.

Awards

The CFWF board committee continued the work on the revisions to the awards program started in 2019. The major changes were to group categories together to facilitate 'of the year' prizes, to remove frequency as a criterion for submissions and the addition of story, writer and new writer of the year awards. All the details for the new program, the first major revision in nearly 30 years, can be found [here](#).

Board of Directors

The CFWF Board met three times during the year via telemeeting. Membership numbers were down slightly from 2019 at 325, hopefully the new awards and a return to in-person activities will help revitalize numbers. In addition to the revisions to the awards program, the board prepared and adopted a [Code of Conduct](#) for CFWF members – many thanks to Atlantic Canada director Allison Finnamore for taking the lead on that initiative. Work was also started on a mentorship program, an initiative started by Saskatchewan director Crystal Leader and CFWF past-president Lisa Guenther. Details of the program are still being finalized with a launch in conjunction with the 2021 CFWF conference in Windsor, ON planned. If you're interested in being a mentor or becoming a mentee, sign up [here](#).

The 2020 board of directors were:

Trevor Bacque	President & IFAJ rep. (Alberta)
Rachel Telford	Vice-president (Eastern Canada)
Hugh Maynard	Secretary-Treasurer (Eastern Member-at-Large)
Ashley Robinson	Director (Western Member-at-Large)
Myrna Stark-Leader	Director (British Columbia)
Tracey Feist	Director (Alberta)
Crystal Jorgenson	Director (Manitoba)
Crystal Leader	Director (Saskatchewan)
Mary Feldskov	Director (Eastern Canada)
Allison Finnamore	Director (Atlantic Canada)

With the postponement of the 2020 CFWF conference due to the COVID19 situation, the CFWF conference schedule has been revised. The EC 2020 conference will be held in 2021, with SK now in 2022, and AC in 2022 moved to 2024 so the IFAJ Congress can still be held in AB in 2023. The remainder of the rotation follows as planned.

The Annual CFWF Conference Schedule

2021	EC	2028	SK	2035	AC
2022	SK	2029	AC	2036	AB
2023	AB (IFAJ)	2030	AB	2037	MB
2024	AC	2031	MB	2038	EC
2025	MB	2032	EC	2039	BC
2026	EC	2033	BC	2040	SK
2027	BC	2034	SK	2041	AC



Keep updated on the 2021 CFWF conference at <https://ecfwa.ca/cfwf-2021>

CFWF Financial Review 2020

Comptabilité Florence Johnson Book-keeping
99 Françoise Cuillerier
Notre-Dame-de-L'Île-Perrot, QC J7V 9E3

March 14, 2021

To: CFWF Board of Directors

I have been requested by Hugh Maynard, CFWF Secretary-Treasurer, to review the financial records of the federation for the 2020 financial year.

I have verified the figures listed on the CFWF Financial Statement by comparing:

1. Accounts Receivable and Payable against figures listed.
2. Proved the Bank Reconciliation.
3. Made a spot check of several of the larger invoices as verification of the amounts paid.
4. Verified bank statement debit and credit entries against the invoices and deposits and also to the general ledger.

Generally, the financial records were in good order and sufficient to complete the review.

When comparing the bank statements to the Financial Statement, I found both the income and expenses on the Financial Statement matched the figures listed. When comparing the overall amounts listed with previous years, most items were in line with the normal level of variance with the following items of note:

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Florence Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Florence Timms-Johnson
Bookkeeper

CFWF Financial Statement 2020 - OPERATIONS

		<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
<u>INCOME</u>			
Awards	Fees	\$ 3,410	\$ 2,702
	Sponsors	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600
	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Conference	Registrations	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Sponsors	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Other	\$ 12,237	\$ 0
Memberships		\$ 9,472	\$ 8,447
Interest		\$ 0	\$ 0
Other		\$ 3,984	\$ 12,127
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 39,203	\$ 33,376
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Administration	Admin-Coordinate	\$ 6,800	\$ 12,127
	Secretariat	\$ 1,171	\$ 1,784
	Insurance	\$ 515	\$ 0
	Other	\$ 0	\$ 0
Prof. Development	PD Fund	\$ 3,000	\$ 0
Awards	Administration	\$ 650	\$ 286
	Certificates	\$ 0	\$ 60
	Judging	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,750
	Prizes	\$ 8,400	\$ 7,625
	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 2,500	\$ 0
Conference	Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 0
Farm Journalist	Honorarium	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
	Travel	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
IFAJ	Fees	\$ 3,634	\$ 3,902
	Congress rep.	\$ 2,642	\$ 1,518
	Other	\$ 2,500	\$ 0
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 35,512	\$ 29,052
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE		\$ 3,691	\$ 4,324

CFWF Financial Statement 2019– PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

		<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Opening balance		\$ 39,172	\$ 47,357
<u>INCOME</u>			
Interest		\$ 0	\$ 0
Dividends		\$ 1,731	\$ 1,712
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 1,731	\$ 1,712
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Disbursements	PD projects	\$ 0	\$ 0
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 0	\$ 0
Sub-total		\$ 40,903	\$ 49,069
<u>ADJUSTMENTS</u>			
Investments	Gains (Losses)	\$ 6,454	\$ (1,386)
BALANCE		\$ 47,357	\$ 47,683

CFWF Balance Sheet - 2020

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
Current assets		
Chequing	\$ 15,004	\$ 27,257
Accounts receivable	\$ 19,603	\$ 9,976
Undeposited funds	\$ 20	\$ 0
Total current assets	\$ 34,627	\$ 37,233
Investment assets		
PD Fund	\$ 47,357	\$ 47,683
Total investment assets	\$ 47,357	\$ 47,683
Total Assets	\$ 81,984	\$ 84,916
 <u>LIABILITIES & EQUITY</u>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 0	\$ 0
Other Liabilities	\$ (2,057)	\$ (719)
Total current liabilities	\$ (2,057)	\$ (719)
Investment liabilities		
PD Fund	\$ (437)	\$ (3,887)
Total Investment Liabilities	\$ (437)	\$ (3,887)
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,494)	\$ (4,606)
Equity		
Opening balance	\$ 16,296	\$ 16,296
Retained earnings	\$ 64,491	\$ 68,182
Net income	\$ 3,691	\$ 4,324
Total Equity	\$ 84,478	\$ 88,802
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$ 81,984	\$ 84,196

Awards Program Report

prepared by Alexandra Hayden, Awards Program Coordinator

The 2020 CFWF awards were presented at the virtual annual conference. Gold, silver, and bronze awards were presented for each of the 14 categories with a total of 42 awards being presented. There were 166 entries in total this year, down 23 from 2019. The highest number of entries was in the Press Feature category with 43 entries and the lowest was the Electronic Media - Video category with only 2 entries. 28 judges were recruited from across Canada, the United States, the U.K., and Australia. These judges included journalists, photographers, professors, farmers and communicators from different media and publications, and a mix of agricultural and non-agricultural backgrounds.

2020 Awards Entries

• Electronic Media - Video	2
• Electronic Media - Audio	3
• News Release	3
• General Periodical	3
• Technical Feature	28
• Press Column	13
• Press Feature	43
• Press Editorial	5
• Monthly Press Reporting	16
• Weekly Press Reporting	13
• Daily Press Reporting	9
• People Photography	13
• Production Photography	11
• Landscape Photography	4

All entries for the contest are now submitted online by individuals or as group submissions (frequently editors or managers submitting larger groups of entries). The entries are then reviewed for criteria (eligible dates, proof of publication, relevancy to the category) and then coded so the judges receive blind entries for evaluation. Using a blind judging system allows for a fair and unbiased evaluation as well as for the possibility of entries from companies who are also sponsors. Another perk of CFWF membership and entering the CFWF contests is that the winners of the CFWF contests are reviewed for eligibility to the IFAJ contests and are automatically entered if they meet all the criteria (dates, content).

As always, we are extremely grateful to all our sponsors and judges for the support and time they contribute to the program. Special thanks to Alexandra Hayden, the CFWF summer student, who did all of the hard work coordinating the awards program.

You can find information on the revised awards program [here](#).

Professional Development Fund Report

prepared by Hugh Maynard, Secretary Treasurer

The CFWF Professional Development Fund was launched in 2015 with a mission to support professional development for agricultural journalists and communicators for CFWF members. The PD Fund is the legacy of a lot of hard work by volunteers and generous contributions by sponsors who, over the years enabled CFWF to generate a surplus from fund-raising activities that can now be used to support professional development activities.

The fund defines professional development as an activity that enhances the knowledge of the profession and/or contributes to the development of a person's professional attributes, abilities, and skills. This can be accomplished through participation in activities that relate to agricultural journalism or communications including areas such as research, educational programs, conferences, workshops, and exchanges.

No projects were approved in 2020 due to the pandemic so, to date, a total of \$22,510 has been disbursed to thirteen recipients, with \$14,362 being paid from the fund and \$8,148 contributed from the general CFWF surplus.

The fund has struggled with inconsistent returns since its inception: a mediocre 2018 was followed by an excellent 2019 and a mediocre 2020. The disappointing returns from the fund's investments have been offset by the capacity of the CFWF board to make a contribution towards the bursaries in order to maintain the capital base as much as possible. Given that the initial investment was modest for the goals of the PD Fund that were established at the outset, it is important that we continue to build the capital base for future years.

For 2021, the CFWF board is proposing a shift in activity with the establishment of a mentorship program. Those participating in the mentorship program will be able to apply for financial support for their activities, possibly including support to attend the CFWF conference to meet with their mentor and other mentees. More information will be available soon.

International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ)

By Trevor Bacque, CFWF representative to IFAJ

The International Federation of Agricultural Journalists held its semi-annual meeting in Basel, Switzerland, Feb. 23-27, 2020. Trevor Bacque took over from Allison Finnamore as the representative for Canada at the IFAJ executive committee.

Canada will play host to the 2023 IFAJ Congress. As such, Canada has been placed in the Host Liaison Committee, with additional members from Kenya, Croatia, Denmark, Israel and the Netherlands and Switzerland. All committee member countries are either recent hosts or upcoming hosts of an IFAJ Congress.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 and 2021 congresses were cancelled and replaced by an eCongress (August 23-25th in 2021) The 2022 congress will now be held in Denmark as the Swiss agreed to move their event back to 2024. So, the new line up for IFAJ congresses is:

2022	Denmark	Vingsted from June 27 th to July 3 rd
2023	Canada	Olds, Alberta from June 27 th to July 3 rd
2024	Switzerland	Interlaken , September 4-8 th
2025	Israel	
2026	Kenya	
2027	Croatia	

Because IFAJ only had revenue from membership fees in 2020, all in-person activity after the February executive meeting in Switzerland was cancelled including the Alltech Young Leaders and Corteva Masterclass programs. These two programs will be held online in 2021 (August & September with bi-weekly sessions). IFAJ is also offering a variety of different professional development webinars for its members, which are also recorded and posted [here](#).

The IFAJ recently unveiled a member's [portal](#) this year on its website and is now open to all members. Sign up to join and create a profile. A person may select their area of specialties and connect with a broader network of journalists, editors and communicators. Additional services will be a resource library, a photo gallery, publications directory and discussion forum. Borders continue to be a thing of the past and the IFAJ portal strives to connect farm writers like never before.

IFAJ continues to be the best way for an agricultural journalist to connect with peers from around the world. For more information on the global organization, please visit www.ifaj.org.

Regional Reports

British Columbia Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Myrna Stark-Leader, BCFWA Representative

Who would have guessed that the national conference hosted in our lovely province would be the last time we had the opportunity to be together in person as national delegates and also BC chapter members?

However, BC members (24) who live far and wide across the province, didn't let a little thing like Covid deter us.

With our zoom skills getting polished, early in the new year, we hosted our first-ever online AGM with 17 attendees. The guest speaker was IFAJ's first female president Lena Johansson who joined us from Sweden. She shared her perspective on agriculture, Covid's impacts and being a woman in the industry.

To continue to keep BC members in touch virtually, we've hosted a couple of zoom socials, most recently April 28 with 12 attending. It kicked off by sharing a made in BC product. Christine Terpsma brought a beer from her brother's Barnside Brewing out of Ladner. Sandra Tretick had a cranberry Lonetree Cider, out of Vancouver. Not surprisingly, quite a number of show and tell BC products fell into the beverage category.

Special guest, CFWF Secretary Hugh Maynard, joined the call from Quebec to provide a quick overview of the revised CFWF awards program. BC was pleased to have so many CFWF award program winners last year and looks forward to the newly revised awards program, which I had the pleasure of working on with a great committee.

The final part of the evening featured a spur-of-the-moment show and tell of something that represented each person attending. Items ranged from David Schmidt's tub of free ag event pens in Chilliwack - who knew you could collect so many - to a pastoral view of Bob Collin's farm on Vancouver Island. Even though it wasn't a competition, members were highly impressed when Hugh moved his computer to display the wall of various BC art at his Quebec home. One of the goals this year has been to keep members more abreast of the value of membership, the opportunities and the benefits. We did this by cleaning up membership lists, sharing more frequent communications, as well as hosting BCFWA executive meetings at a set date and time - 2 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month. This enables members who may be contemplating a board role to more easily plan to sit in to "test-drive" the board.

More frequent communication also helped share pd events hosted by other chapters, CFWF and IFAJ. This has been one of the great benefits of Covid. BC members have taken advantage of learning outside our own region. A big thank you to the other regions who have included fellow CFWF members in their invitations.

Thanks to the work of CFWF, BC piggy-backed and adopted a new code of conduct for the organization.

BCFWA paid membership in 2021 sit at 24, only a slight change from 23 in 2020, but down from 29 including 1 honorary, 1 life, and 6 new members in 2019. Bringing new members onboard continues to be a challenge.

Congratulations to our Tim Armstrong Memorial \$1,000 Bursary recipient, Courtney Wallace who is an Animal Science program student with Lakeland College. This year, we also awarded a second \$1,000 bursary to Lana Harach who is also in Animal Science, but with University of the Fraser Valley. Lana's award came from general BCFWA funds. The Board approved using funds which were saved due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and cancellation of CFWF's annual conference in Windsor in 2020.

The BCFWA's bank balance remains healthy and we welcomed a new president!

The BCFWA executive for 2021:

President – Ronda Payne, Girl with a Pen

Vice-president – Cathy Glover, Country Life in BC

Treasurer – David Schmidt, (Retired as of 2020)

Secretary – Barbara Johnstone-Grimmer, Fir Hill Farm

BS CFWF Director – Myrna Stark Leader, Writing and Communications

Note: Special thanks to all the CFWF senators who attended a zoom networking/catch-up social event organized by moi.

Alberta Farm Writers' Association

ALBERTA FARM WRITERS' BEGIN WORK ON LEGACY PROJECT

Increasing awareness of agricultural communications and journalism as a career field

Creating a legacy project to ensure the longevity of the Alberta Farm Writers' Association (AFWA) has been brewing for some time. While there had been much discussion about the project between members Janet Kanters and Craig Lester, it was at the AFWA Spring 2020 meeting last year where it was finally brought to fruition with the establishment of a committee to envision this legacy.

The committee decided on creating a curriculum that would help to promote a career in agricultural journalism and communications, offer an opportunity to their members to discuss their career paths, and lastly to honour the 65-year history of the AFWA.

The group has established three streams for the project: creating a 4H project on agriculture journalism and communications, working with current college and university agriculture programs to establish both journalism and communications classes and or curriculum, and offering AFWA members the opportunity to share their career history in both those career streams.

The legacy group consists of long-time AFWA members Janet Kanters, Tracey Feist and Mary MacArthur, current AFWA President Craig Lester, and members Ian Doig and Jessika Guse. The aim is to emphasize increased awareness of agricultural communications and journalism as a career field, and ensuring young communicators have the tools necessary to follow that path.

The committee is excited to move this project along and encourage AFWA members to step forward and offer their expertise to the next generation of members and agriculture journalists and communicators.

Saskatchewan Farm Writers' Association

CFWF MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Support for agricultural journalists and communicators in the early stages of their career.

Late last year, Crystal Leader, Saskatchewan director on the CFWF board, and Lisa Guenther, a past CFWF president, brought forward the idea of starting a mentorship program for the members of the federation. Mentorship programs are a common feature amongst the activities of many professional associations, but not yet CFWF.

Most mentorship programs are aimed at taking the learnings, experience and skills of those who have been working in their profession for many years, and giving a helping hand to those just starting out, or even those trying to chart a new course. Their proposal would be to focus on those interested in gaining knowledge, looking for support and possibly working in the areas of agricultural journalism and communications.

The CFWF board responded positively to the idea and formed an ad hoc committee which met in February to discuss ideas and possibilities. Also present were a number of previous IFAJ Alltech Young Leaders and there were also written comments sent in from others who could not attend.

It was agreed that the purpose, broadly speaking, of offering a mentorship program would be to provide professional development for individual's new to the sector and support the development of the industry itself. It was also agreed that it would be appropriate to support mentorship activities through the CFWF PD Fund. This was agreed to in principle at the CFWF board meeting in April 2021.

The consensus that has evolved from the committee and board discussions is that:

- The program must offer value to attract quality participation (both mentees and mentors);
- Applicants must submit a plan to signal their intentions and demonstrate a commitment to the program;
- The program should be made accessible to those new to the sector, not just youth (i.e. under 30 yrs. age); and
- It should be open to different agri-food sectors (i.e. food bloggers) but they must become a CFWF member to participate.

NEXT STEPS

To start, you can signal your interest in the program by letting us know whether you would like to find out more about becoming a mentor or a mentee – sign up [here](#).

The CFWF committee and board will continue to work out the details for offering the program and how much financial support can be invested each year. The aim will be to convene mentors and mentees during the CFWF conference to be held September 23-25, 2021 in Windsor, ON (or online if COVID restrictions prevent the event from being held).

So, keep a lookout for more news soon!

Manitoba Farm Writers and Broadcasters Association

Prepared by Ashley Robinson, President

MFWBA 2020 AGM

The MFWBA annual general meeting was held in April. Ashley, Toban and Anne were re-elected to the board. Members of the board for 2020 included: Ashley Robinson (President), Gord Gilmour (Treasurer), Toban Dyck (Membership), Karli Reimer (Communications), Gail Grainger (Director), Anne Cote (Director) and Crystal Jorgenson (Advisor).

Happy Hour

We hosted a Zoom happy hour in June last year where members joined together from their houses and decks across the province and visited.

CFWF Lifetime Achievement Award

In September, MFWBA member Trish Jordan was presented with a lifetime achievement award by Federal Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau during the 2020 CFWF virtual awards presentation. Trish has been an integral part of MFWBA and CFWF helping to plan many events and various other things for farm writers. She has always been willing to lend her help when called upon and MFWBA is beyond grateful to have her as a member. Congrats once again Trish.

Annual Christmas Party

Once again, we were forced to go virtual, this time for our annual Christmas party in December. We toasted Trish on her award, sending her flowers and congratulating her. Members visited with many wearing Christmas sweaters and hats.



Eastern Canada Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Rachel Telford, ECFWA President

The COVID-19 pandemic raised a lot of different questions for many organizations. For ECFWA, the biggest question we had was How do we provide value to our members when we can't hold in-person events?. We wanted to maintain the interest of our membership, provide connections, and address the need for professional development. With this in mind, we utilized the growing acceptance and ease of use of online platforms (relatively speaking, rural internet issues acknowledged) and invested in an ECFWA Zoom account to offer webinars and online socials. Our goal was to make sure there was at least one event every month for our members to participate in, whether an ECFWA event or one planned by CFWF.

We had socials in June, July, and January, and hosted a virtual Christmas party in December with help from our friends at Spirits Canada. Everyone who attended the party was sent a cocktail shaker so they could follow along with mixing a few festive drinks. Even though the CFWF conference was cancelled in September, the CFWA Awards were still held via Zoom.

In June 2020, members had the opportunity to listen to a cross-country discussion on the impact of COVID-19 to agriculture in each region. July we focused on farm safety and reporter safety with the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association. In August we learned about new food trends with dietician Jane Dummer and in October, we learned how to self-publish with Steven Biggs. We were honoured to have AAFC Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau join us for a fireside chat about the food policy for Canada in December.

2020 ECFWA



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Early 2021 featured a webinar on developing your personal and online brand with Alan Quarry in February, a hands-on lesson in cell phone photography in March, and a discussion on critical thinking in April.

We were pleased to invite our CFWF colleagues to many of the events we organized. And we were pleased to be invited to attend other region's events, such as the B.C. AGM that featured IFAJ President Lena Johansson and Saskatchewan's webinar on bridging the rural connectivity divide.

Going virtual over the past year allowed us to 'see' people from across Ontario and Quebec whom we likely wouldn't have if our events were held in-person. It was a very successful year, based on the attendance at each of our events. Our challenge now is to understand what more we can do to show the value ECFWA provides in order to attract new members and maintain the strong relationship we have with our existing membership.

2020-2021 ECFWA Board of Directors

President: Rachel Telford

Past president: Sharon Grose

1st vice-president: Kelsey Johnson

2nd vice-president: Suzanne Atkinson

Secretary-treasurer: Mary Feldskov

Directors: Marty Brett, Jess Campbell, Maegan MacKimmie, Matt MacIntosh, Meghan Burke, Jennifer Glenney

Atlantic Canada Farm Writers' Association

CFWF CODE OF CONDUCT

Standards of personal and professional behaviour for CFWF events

Thanks to the efforts of Allison Finnamore, CFWF director for Atlantic Canada and former IFAJ representative, CFWF now has a Code of Conduct that sets out the standards of personal and professional behaviour expected from those who take part in CFWF events and online communications. The code establishes a framework for expected and acceptable behaviour and includes sanctions that may be applied if those standards are not respected. The overall aim is to ensure a collegial, respectful and harassment-free experience for everyone, and professional and culturally aware behaviour at all times.

Access the complete code of conduct [here](#).

The Last Word



And life went on . . .

A dairy farmer feeds a calf milk from a bottle a day after Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said the federal government would offer an additional \$5 billion line of credit for farmers and agricultural producers to help them through the coronavirus crisis.

Taken by Alex Filipe for Reuters, in Carrying Place, Ontario, Canada, on March 24, 2020, and published on theatlantic.com.