

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation



2022 Annual Report

Presented to the CFWF 2023 Annual Meeting
By telemeeting

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation

2023 Annual Meeting

3:00p.m. EDT
Wednesday, June 7, 2023
By telemeeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81746820323?pwd=U2F6NU5wc3ZVL1ZZc1JTODBxbis0QT09>

Meeting ID: 817 4682 0323 / Passcode: CFWF - Dial by your location
647-558-0588 / 778-907-2071 / 204-272-7920 / 438-809-7799 / 587-328-1099 / 647-374 4685

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Adoption of the minutes 2022 annual meeting
4. Business arising from the minutes
5. President's Report
6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report & 2022 Financial Statement
 - a) Membership Fees
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 2022 Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 9, 2021, at 3:00p.m. EDT

By telemeeting

Present: Rachel Telford, chairperson; Hugh Maynard, secretary; Allison Finnamore, Andy Walker, Annemarie Pedersen, Ashley Robinson, Clare Stanfield, Crystal Jorgenson, Crystal Leader, David Schmidt, Elaine Shein, Elaine Vininsky, Elbert van Donkersgoed, Éva Larouche, Holly Featherstone, Ian Doig, Jane Robinson, Jane Thorpe, Janet Kanter, Jessika Guse, Karen Briere, Katelyn Laverdure, Leeann Minogue, Lilian Schaer, Lisa Guenther, Marlene Hursh, Mary Feldskov, Michelle Chunyua, Myrna Stark Leader, Neil Macmillan, Owen Roberts, Reg Norby, Ronda Payne, Sharon Grose, Trevor Bacque, Trevor Sutter, Tristyn MacLeod, Trudy Kelly Forsythe, William DeKay; Alexandra Hayden, Anna-Karina Poronovich, Katie Rotchin, Secretariat.

1. Welcome

Rachel Telford called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Trevor Bacque and seconded by Lilian Schaer to adopt the agenda as presented.
Unanimous

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting

Moved by Jane Robinson and seconded by Jessika Guse to adopt the minutes of the 2021 annual meeting as presented.
Unanimous

4. Business Arising

No items arising.

5. President's Report

Rachel Telford made note of the year past and how as an organization we had overcome many challenges, not the least of which was COVID. She talked about the amazing virtual conference that was hosted by ECFWA in September, as well as the small er events that had re-started and she said she was looking forward to seeing everyone in person in the fall at the Saskatchewan conference.

6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

Hugh Maynard presented the 2021 Secretariat report and noted that generally everything has been fairly smooth given the circumstance of the pandemic. Notable changes in the finances were that we did not receive the Bayer bursary sponsorship because we still had the funds received in 2020. However, the online conference was a financial success and contributed to a positive bottom line along with an increased amount for the YCW grant. The Professional Development Fund finally gained some ground and closed pretty much where it started in 2014 (market fluctuations). No money was withdrawn as the CFWF surplus funds

were sufficient to use for professional development activities. The accounts were reviewed by Flo Johnson, bookkeeper.

There was a decline in membership, probably attributable to the pandemic. He noted that the overhaul to the awards program was the largest change in over two decades, and he thanked Allison Finnamore for taking the lead on preparing a code of conduct for CFWF events. Work continued on developing the mentorship program. the

Moved by Hugh Maynard and seconded by Ashley Robinson to approve the 2021 financial statement.

Unanimous

Moved by Hugh Maynard and seconded by Myrna Stark-Leader that Flo Johnson be appointed to review the CFWF accounts for 2022.

Unanimous

7. Awards Program Report

Alexandra Hayden presented the awards report. We saw a big increase in number of submissions this year due to the restructuring of the awards program. Nearly 60 additional entries were received over 2020 and there was good feedback from the participants. One concern raised was the quality of some of the judges' comments. One of the solutions suggested is that judges will score all entries but will only give more extensive comments for the winning entries.

8. Professional Development Fund Report

Hugh Maynard presented the report on the Professional Development Fund which did not see a lot of action in past year because of COVID and the focus on starting up the mentorship program (which will be paid by CFWF surplus funds anyway).

9. IFAJ Report

Trevor Bacque presented the IFAJ report, he noted that the IFAJ congress in Alberta is just around the corner! Annemarie Pedersen will be going to the congress in Denmark to promote IFAJ 2023. This is an election year for the IFAJ Presidium, however only the secretary general position has two candidates running. Canada has a Young Leader attending the congress in Denmark, Beck Zimmer. The following IFAJ Congress will be in Switzerland 2024.

10. Conference Reports

Rachel Telford shared a quick overview of the "Risky Business" 2021 conference in Windsor, ON, which was very successful from both a participation and financial perspective. She thanked everyone who contributed to the event.

Marlene Hursh gave an update on the organization of the 2022 conference in Regina, SK, and reported that there has been good interest so far and that they look forward to hosting everyone at the end of September.

11. Regional Reports

Rachel Telford said that if there were specific questions about the regional reports to contact the regional representatives as all the regional reports can be found in the AGM report.

12. Board Elections

Rachel Telford 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	Rhonda Payne
AFWA reps	Craig Lester	Trevor Bacque
SFWA rep	Crystal Leader	Lisa Guenther
MFWBA rep	Ashley Robinson	Crystal Jorgenson
ECFWA rep	Rachel Telford & Mary Feldskov	Lilian Schaer
ACFWA rep	Allison Finnamore	Trudy Forsythe
Western member-at-large	Jessika Guse	Trevor Bacque
Eastern member-at-large	Hugh Maynard	Rachel Telford

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

Moved by Janet Kanter seconded by Rhonda Payne to accept all nominations as presented.
Unanimous

13. New Business

Anna-Karina and Katie Rotchin, two summer students from McGill hired through the Young Canada Works program to work on the CFWF archives, gave a presentation on the project and asked those present to contact them if they had documents or artifacts that could be added to the archives. They noted that the items would all be digitized and available online.

14. Adjournment

The agenda having been completed, Rachel Telford, as chairperson, declared the meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m. EDT.

Annual Reports

President's Report

Prepared by Rachel Telford

This past year has flown by. It's difficult to pinpoint when things returned to 'normal' but it definitely feels like we had a busy year. There certainly was no shortage of stories to tell in agriculture, and events were back in full swing.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the CFWF conference in Saskatchewan in September and that was definitely a highlight for the year. Between the bus tours, professional development sessions, and the hospitality suite, it was great to return to what felt like 'old times'. However, it definitely wasn't the same old same old. A slightly different format for the conference, coupled with new faces, the launch of the mentorship program, and the reinvigoration of our awards program gave the event a sense of the new and fresh. I think the conference showed how we as an organization can adapt and grow with the changing times, and I believe we have even more new and exciting things ahead.

Canada is proud to be hosting the 2023 congress for the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) in Alberta. I want to thank all of the members of the organizing committee for their time and efforts in pulling together this event. It is an amazing opportunity to showcase Canadian agriculture to the world.

I would also like to thank all of the regional representatives who comprised our national board of directors for the past year, and offer early congratulations to those who have been elected to serve for another year. Volunteer boards are only successful if there are people willing to give their time to make the association a success. I was happy to have served for a second year as president of such a dedicated board.

I wish everyone another successful year of telling the stories of Canadian agriculture.



Promoting the IFAJ 2023 Congress at the 2022 Delegate Assembly in Denmark.

Secretariat Report

Prepared by Hugh Maynard, Secretary-Treasurer

Administration

The Secretariat continued to function relatively normally as the pandemic eased its way into history, 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 awards programs 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 to the 2022 conference in Regina and continued support from the federal government through the summer student grant program. This has helped maintain the CFWF surplus which will enable the organization to contribute to professional development activities and maintain operations in the as we head toward hosting the IFAJ congress in 2023. 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) returned to 'normal' after a stellar 2021, losing almost \$3,000 in equity while navigating through a topsy-turvy market. There were no PD disbursements from the fund as the board supported the mentorship program out of the operational surplus.

Awards

The second year of the revised awards program was another success with a good level of entries and some excellent quality work submitted for judging. The major changes 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 have been received well by participants in the program. Finding judges is always a challenge.

Board of Directors

The CFWF Board met four times during the year via telemeeting. Membership numbers continued their downward trend that has been in evidence during the COVID years, now down around 300. Hopefully, the resumption of in-person activities will help revitalize numbers.

Succession

The board also undertook discussions related to finding a successor to operate the CFWF secretariat. Hugh Maynard, who has been secretary-treasurer for the past 30 years, will be stepping down in the coming year and handing over operations to . . . someone. The board has looked at the funding and resources necessary to keep the secretariat functioning, and therefore all the programs and activities that the organization offers. Details on the plans and process will be unveiled later in 2023.

The 2022 board of directors were:

Rachel Telford	President (Eastern Canada)
Jessika Guse	Vice-president (Western members-at-large)
Hugh Maynard	Secretary-Treasurer (Eastern Member-at-Large)
Myrna Stark-Leader	Director (British Columbia)
Craig Lester	Director (Alberta)
Crystal Leader	Director (Saskatchewan)
Ashley Robinson	Director (Manitoba)
Mary Feldskov	Director (Eastern Canada)
Allison Finnamore	Director (Atlantic Canada)

Trevor Bacque IFAJ representative

With the postponement of the 2020 CFWF conference due to the COVID19 situation, the CFWF conference schedule has been revised, also to accommodate the IFAJ Congress to be held in Olds, AB in 2023. The 2024 conference will be held in Halifax, NS, date to be determined. The remainder of the rotation is as follows:

The Annual CFWF Conference Schedule

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
2028	SK	2035	AC	2042	AB
2029	AC	2036	AB	2043	MB



Keep updated on the 2023 IFAJ Congress

<https://IFAJ2023.ca/>

A Personal Note

Hugh Maynard, Secretary-Treasurer

This will be my last annual report as CFWF Secretary-Treasurer as the time has come to slow down and enjoy some of the beauties of older age (afternoon naps, grand children, finishing all those unfinished house projects, etc.) before one becomes too old. While I will also be stepping down as Global Manager for IFAJ, I will still be hanging around the profession in the background and look forward to seeing everyone at events and meetings.

Few in the CFWF world know that I am the publisher of my local community newspaper, The Gleaner, which just prior to the pandemic we purchased as a non-profit for a dollar from the media chain that was about to close it down. I look forward to having some time to write agricultural stories and we plan to start a podcast – “The Farm Panel”, a resurrection of my weekly presence on CBC away back in the day. So much for retirement.

CFWF has been a great ride over the past 46 years (yikes!), from attending my first conference in Toronto, all the way to being part of the IFAJ congress team in 2023. The organization, and all the agricultural journalist and communicators who are its bedrock, has been a significant factor in my career and an amazing experience all around. From a side trip to the Soviet Union on the way to the 1990 IFAJ congress in Sweden, to a hotel hot tub that holds 100 people, to being a roadie for the GMOs (I’ll do anything for a free drink!), it’s a lifetime of memories.

We were just beginning to use faxes as the main means of transmitting written content when I got started with the Quebec Farmers’ Advocate, and since then we’ve zoomed through a dozen more forms of IT that have completely transformed our professional activities. To think, we used to organize workshops on how to tweet . . . we did! Now we’re into AI and not sure what it will all evolve into.

Some years ago, doing duty as a secretariat, we conducted a membership survey so we could find out what we pretty much knew anyway – agricultural journalists and communicators valued CFWF for three things: professional development, networking and socializing. CFWF has stayed true to those three pillars over the years, and I have benefitted greatly from them: I’ve learned a lot, I’ve met a lot of people with whom I’ve done interesting things and I’ve made a lot of friends.

I look forward to continuing on the same path in the coming years, albeit in a different role, and I would like to thank all those who have worked for, volunteered with and participated in CFWF activities and programs over the years, helping to keep it the great organization that it has always been.

HM

CFWF Financial Review 2022

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

May 5, 2022

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 2022 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. There was an increase in expense categories related to CFWF and IFAJ conference activities but these can be attributed to a resumption of activities post-pandemic. The revenue contribution to CFWF from the 2022 conference was also higher than previous years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Florence Johnson', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Florence Timms-Johnson
Bookkeeper

CFWF Financial Statement 2022 - OPERATIONS

		<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
<u>INCOME</u>			
Awards	Fees	\$ 4,123	\$ 3,932
	Sponsors	\$ 7,350	\$ 9,000
	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 0	\$ 0
Conference	Registrations	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Sponsors	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Other	\$ 6,680	\$ 20,267
Memberships		\$ 7,232	\$ 7,556
Interest		\$ 0	\$ 0
Other		\$ 10,454	\$ 13,010
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 35,840	\$ 53,765

EXPENSES

Administration	Admin-Coordinate	\$ 10,454	\$ 13,010
	Secretariat	\$ 2,227	\$ 3,466
Prof. Development Awards	PD Fund	\$ 250	\$ 3,998
	Administration	\$ 385	\$ 182
	Certificates	\$ 425	\$ 505
	Judging	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,500
	Prizes	\$ 6,250	\$ 6,900
Farm Journalist	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 0	\$ 2,500
	Honorarium	\$ 0	\$ 1,000
	Travel	\$ 0	\$ 1,000
IFAJ	Fees	\$ 3,364	\$ 2,845
	Congress rep.	\$ 0	\$ 2,071
	Other	\$ 257	\$ 2,470
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 29,052	\$ 41,447

TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	\$ 10,578	\$ 12,318
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CFWF Financial Statement 2022 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

		<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Opening balance		\$ 47,953	\$ 60,017
<u>INCOME</u>			
Interest & Dividends		\$ 3,395	\$ 3,073
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 3,395	\$ 3,073
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Disbursements	PD projects	\$ 0	\$ 0
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 0	\$ 0
Sub-total		\$ 51,348	\$ 51,348
<u>ADJUSTMENTS</u>			
Investments	Gains (Losses)	\$ 8,669	\$ (5,882)
BALANCE		\$ 60,017	\$ 57,208

CFWF Balance Sheet - 2022

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
Current assets		
Chequing	\$ 35,932	\$ 32,968
Accounts receivable	\$ 7,271	\$ 25,007
Undeposited funds	\$ 7,010	\$ 20
Total current assets	<u>\$ 51,928</u>	<u>\$ 62,974</u>
Investment assets		
PD Fund	\$ 60,017	\$ 57,208
Total investment assets	<u>\$ 60,017</u>	<u>\$ 57,208</u>
Total Assets	\$ 110,230	\$ 115,203
 <u>LIABILITIES & EQUITY</u>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 2,885	\$ 0
Other Liabilities	\$ (398)	\$ (4,858)
Total current liabilities	<u>\$ 2,487</u>	<u>\$ (4,858)</u>
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,487	\$ (4,858)
Equity		
Opening balance	\$ 16,296	\$ 16,296
Retained earnings	\$ 80,869	\$ 91,447
Net income	\$ 10,578	\$ 12,318
Total Equity	<u>\$ 107,743</u>	<u>\$ 120,061</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$ 110,230	\$ 115,203

Awards Program Report

prepared by Alexandra Hayden, Awards Program Coordinator

I am delighted to present the report for the past year's awards program. It was yet another remarkable year for entries as we received approximately 230 submissions, which closely matched the number of entries received in 2021. However, it is important to note that a higher than normal number of entries had to be disqualified due to publication dates falling outside the required timeframe. Nevertheless, we still received a commendable number of eligible entries.

Following is the updated list of categories and the corresponding number of entries received:

1. Farm Writer of the Year (4)
2. New Writer of the Year (5)
3. Communication Categories
 - a. Electronic Media - Video (2)
 - b. Electronic Media - Audio (7)
 - c. Communication - Short (3)
 - d. Communication - Long (4)
4. Opinion Writing (15)
5. Feature Categories
 - a. Technical Feature (47)
 - b. Current Affairs Feature (21)
 - c. People Feature (16)
6. Reporting Categories
 - a. Technical Reporting (14)
 - b. Current Affairs Reporting (19)
 - c. Business/Economics Reporting (17)
7. Photography
 - a. People Photography (8)
 - b. Production Photography (10)
 - c. Landscape Photography (8)

One of the main challenges we encountered last year was securing judges to cover all the categories. However, we are immensely grateful to those judges who graciously offered to evaluate two categories each, enabling us to ensure comprehensive coverage across all categories.

We would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to our sponsors, whose invaluable support has been crucial to the success of our awards program. A heartfelt thank you goes out to both our longstanding sponsors and those who joined us for the first time! It is worth mentioning that while we currently have one remaining sponsorship slot, we are confident in our ability to fill it for 2023.

Ian Doig, who was the recipient of the IFAJ Bayer International Bursary in 2020, was finally able to enjoy the award by attending the 2022 IFAJ Congress in Vingsted, Denmark.

Marlene and Kevin Hursh were presented with the CFWF Lifetime Achievement Award at the CFWF conference in Regina to recognize over 40 years of contribution and excellence to agricultural journalism and the industry as a team.

Founding Patron & IFAJ Bursary



Sponsors



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.

To date, a total of \$25,510 has been disbursed to 16 recipients, with \$14,362 being paid from the fund and \$11,148 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 and an excellent 2022, and so on. The less than stellar 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.

For 2022, 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.

The PD Fund switched gears a bit in 2022 and set up a mentorship program entitled "CFWF Connect". With typical PD activities having come to a halt during the pandemic, it was time for a different approach, so a committee was established to develop the criteria and application process. Details can be found at <https://cfwf.ca/cfwf-connect/>. Many thanks to Lisa Guenther and Crystal Leader who spearheaded the effort.

Three mentees were accepted into the inaugural program and matched with mentors who volunteered their time to meet and work with the mentees on handling an anticipated professional change, setting up a new venture, or preparing a career plan.

2022 Mentees	Mentors
Emma Cross	Tracey Feist
Geralyn Wichers	Laura Rance
Madeleine Baerg	Myrna Stark-Leader

Each mentee was provided with a \$1,000 bursary to carry out their plan or project, and the group met together at the CFWF annual conference in Regina, SK to discuss the different concepts and approaches to mentoring and to start the work as teams. The mentees will report on their work and share their experiences in 2023.

International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ)

By Trevor Bacque, CFWF representative to IFAJ

Well, it's almost here. The IFAJ congress will take place in three weeks' time in Olds, Alta., June 27 to July 3. The organizing committee is finalizing all the last-minute details and are eagerly awaiting the arrival of more than 220 delegates from 20-plus countries. Is this an attendance record? We are not sure, but what we are certain about is how pleased we are with this number of journalists and communicators who will be at the congress. Below are updates related to the IFAJ. Should you have any questions about anything you do not see listed below, please inquire during the AGM call.

Dues/Fees: During the most recent IFAJ executive committee call, there was an informal comment about the idea to raise IFAJ fees, which could possibly have an impact on the CFWF fees. Nothing formal was presented or set in motion on this subject, but it is something that will be monitored and reported back, should anything develop.

Resolutions: At the request of the IFAJ 2023 co-chairs (Annemarie Pedersen, Jessika Guse and Trevor Bacque), the Canadian board was asked to decide about whether or not to fund the IFAJ presidium and Global Office's registration and accommodation. The board held an in-camera meeting—without Jessika Guse and Hugh Maynard due to a conflict of interest—and unanimously passed two motions. The first motion was to fund both the presidium and Global Office in full for the 2023 congress. The second motion was that a formal discussion begin about eliminating this financial burden from future congresses, beginning in 2024 with Switzerland. The CFWF board framed the costs as: "an unfair imposition on the host country and should be removed from future congress agreements." The IFAJ presidium indicated that should the 2023 congress run a deficit, they would look at returning the complementary costs associated with their registration and accommodations. No formal discussion or subsequent decision has taken place at an IFAJ executive committee level. Expect an update for the next CFWF board meeting.

Membership update: The Membership, Benefits and Outreach Committee recommended that the Agriculture Journalist Association of India (AJAI) be approved as the next IFAJ member. The executive committee unanimously approved this recommendation. This will be formalized at the Delegate Assembly in Calgary, Alta., later this month.

Young Leaders: Canada's GERALYN WICHERS of the Manitoba Farm Writers and Broadcasters' Association, was selected as one of 10 winners of the Alltech Young Leaders in Agricultural Journalism Award for journalists under 35. Wichers, a journalist for the Manitoba Co-operator, will participate in a pre-congress "bootcamp" along with nine others from around the world, learning more about agricultural journalism and storytelling techniques. Way to go, GERALYN!

Congress hosts: Israel, which has a 12-member guild, was scheduled to host the 2025 IFAJ congress. However, after internal review and many discussions, the guild decided they could not bear the responsibility of hosting and have since bowed out. At the most recent Host Liaison Committee meeting, it was decided that the next two hosts, Kenya (2026) followed by Croatia (2027), would each move up one year in the queue. The hurdle Israel could not overcome,

largely financially driven, must be looked at with a close eye. Canada itself had difficulty securing sponsorships and without the AAFC grant from the federal government, it is a near-certainty the congress would have been scaled back to a large degree. Switzerland has expressed a similar concern about securing sponsorship/funding. The 2025 congress in Nairobi, Kenya, may face a comparable challenge. The IFAJ is working to help host countries find solutions to be able to successfully host a congress. The organization continues to have large-scale financial support from Corteva, Alltech and others. These relationships are well managed and are key to including specific programming at each congress.

Currently, this is the provisional running order of the next seven congresses:

- 2024 Switzerland, August. 14-18, 2024 – www.ifaj2024.ch (previous host in 1964, 1989, 2005)
- 2025 Kenya
- 2026 Croatia
- 2027 South Africa (previous host in 2004, 2017)
- 2028 Argentina (previous host in 2013)
- 2029 U.K. (previous host in 1960, 1972, 1981, 1987, 1997, 2014)
- 2030 Mexico

IFAJ was back in action in 2022 with the annual congress being hosted by the Danish guild. At the Delegate Assembly, a statement of principles regarding the profession of agricultural journalism and communications was adopted, a report on education and training was tabled and five new countries were admitted as members.



The Canadian crew at the 2022 IFAJ Congress in Denmark.



Regional Reports

British Columbia Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Myrna Stark-Leader, BCFWA Representative

If you've ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes in agriculture at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver, you should have been a BCFWA member! In August 2022, thanks to board member Amanda Brittain who organized, attendees toured the livestock barns and learned about the history of agriculture at the PNE. Great news: ag representation is there to stay in a 4-H aspect as well as an industry aspect.

Jumping backward, the 2022 AGM was our first in-person event after COVID, so rather than have a guest speaker, we did a round-table chat and introductions to get to know each other better, a welcome face-to-face gathering that was much appreciated by members.

On March 3, BCFWA hosted an online PD session, Words Matter, that was open to all CFWF members. It was a reminder of the impact words we choose can have on others and for others, particularly the marginalized.

In the fall, BCFWA made a strong showing at CFWF Regina with almost one-quarter of our provincial membership attending. This was President Payne's first CFWF conference outside of BC and she encouraged other members to try and fit one in. At the national meeting, two BC members became part of the inaugural six participants in the first CFWF mentorship program, Myrna Stark Leader is a mentor to Geralyn Wichers, a Manitoba ag writer and BCFWA member Madeleine Bearg is a mentee working with Laura Rance from Manitoba. Both BC members have found the program beneficial.

We held an online social in November, having built this way to gather into our ongoing activities. It works well given the vastness of BC and the location of our individual members. The board met monthly and continued newsletter activities, keeping member lists up-to-date, sourcing other potential workshops and activities of interest.

Early in 2022, two J.R. (Tim) Armstrong Bursaries were awarded to students pursuing ag or ag-related fields. Thanks to sponsors Country Life in BC, Orchard & Vine and Holstein News for helping to publicize the ad.

In 2022, BCFWA had 24 paid members plus 1 life and 1 honorary member, down from 29 in 2021 but we've come back in January of 2023 with 29 paid plus the lifetime and honorary member.

Small and mighty, the association wanted to show off BC to the world so planning began for a BC Pre-tour for IFAJ Canada 2023. Special shout out to long-time BCFWA member and Treasurer David Schmidt for taking a lead, plus much of the work, on this. We know guests are going to enjoy it.

BCFWA continues to have a healthy bank balance, but some decline and fluctuations due to markets.

At the 2022 AGM held January 2023, BCFWA welcomed two new board members, which was very exciting. Existing member Madeleine Baerg stepped forward as did brand new member Tamarra Slobogean, Senior Manager, Communications, Invasive Species Council of BC. We also wished Barbara Johnstone Grimmer a warm thank you for her work serving as BCFWA secretary. Barbara did not seek re-election due to other time commitments.

The BCFWA executive for 2023:

President	Ronda Payne, Girl with a Pen
Vice-president	Amada Brittain, Director Communications and Marketing, BC Egg
Treasurer	David Schmidt, retired writer
Secretary	Tamara Slobogean, Senior Manager, Communications, Invasive Species Council of BC (NEW, YAY!)
Member-at-Large (Communications)	Madeleine Baerg, Director of Content, Seed World Group (NEW, YAY!)
BC CFWF Director	Myrna Stark Leader, Writing and Communications



The BCFWA 2022 AGM was their first in-person event after COVID, so rather than have a guest speaker, they did a round-table chat and introductions to get to know each other better.

Saskatchewan Farm Writers' Association

By Crystal Leader, SFWA representative

SFWA hosted CFWF 2022 with around 80 members in attendance from across the country. SFWA had a representative attend IFAJ in 2022 and will be in 2023 with help from the SFWA Bursary. SFWA is gearing up for hosting a few gatherings for their membership in 2023. One during Canada's Farm Show in Regina, one in Saskatoon during Ag in Motion and fall tour will be held in the Rosetown area. SFWA membership remains steady at around 45 members.

As a special mention, Marlene and Kevin Hursh received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the CFWF Annual Conference. They have been a team for over 40 years now with many contributions to agriculture journalism and the agriculture industry. Kevin has been Vice Chair, Chair and Past Chair for SFWA as well as a member for over 25 years and Marlene has been SFWA Treasurer of SFWA 17 years this fall!



Manitoba Farm Writers and Broadcasters Association

Prepared by Ashley Robinson, President

Back to normal?

This was the first year in a long time MFWBA could host in-person events.

Christmas Party

In December MFWBA members joined together for a cooking class at the Food Studio. The group made crisp Mediterranean salad, spinach raviolis, and desert crepes.

Pre-election Panel

In February MFWBA hosted a pre-provincial election panel to discuss what should be on everyone's minds in regard to ag come this fall's provincial election. Manitoba Pork, Keystone Agricultural Producers and Manitoba Beef Producers took part.

2023 AGM

In April MFWBA members attended our AGM held at The Leaf. The Leaf is Winnipeg's new indoor gardens. Attendees were treated to a supper prepared by Gather Craft Kitchen and Bar, a guided tour of the garden biomes and then the AGM business meeting was held afterwards.

On the admin side:

- MFWBA launched a new website <https://mfwba.ca>
- The MFWBA board moved all of MFWBA files from a Dropbox account to Google Drive
- The MFWBA board started working on planning for the long-term financial health of the organization
- MFWBA provided financial support for Geralyn Wichers to attend the 2022 IFAJ Congress in Denmark



Not content to just report on how food is produced, MFWBA members decided to deep dive into figuring out how it's prepared as well.

Eastern Canada Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Matt McIntosh, ECFWA President

After two years of uncertainty and constant "pivoting" due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022 did come with a sense of normalcy as we were able to host in-person events and activities again. However, like many organizations, ECFWA has been re-evaluating our program offerings as we adjust to a post-Covid world.

Our 2022 AGM had us heading to Central Ontario, where we toured the Ontario Agri-Food Venture Centre, took a ride on the historic Roseneath Agricultural Society Merry-Go-Round, and heard from Chief Mowat of the Alderville First Nation, who spoke about Reconciliation and economic development for First Nations Communities. We also presented our annual photography awards at this meeting.

Looking way back to January 2022, ECFWA members got the chance to pick the brains of our three Lifetime Members: Jim Romahn, Owen Roberts, and Jane Robinson. With a combined 130+ years of experience in agricultural journalism and communications, these three industry veterans shared their tips and tricks on developing a career in agricultural communications. Other webinars included a discussion on the future of crop protection with ADAMA, and we joined BCFWA in their webinar on inclusive writing. Into 2023, we hosted a webinar with Brent Jolly from the Canadian Association of Journalists about Trust in Journalism.

We got to get together for a few drinks and some chat at a social at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in September. A number of our members were able to participate in the 2022 IFAJ congress in Denmark – the long-awaited event that had been postponed twice due to the pandemic – and the CFWF conference in Regina in September.

I'd like to thank all the members of the ECFWA board for their contributions in 2022, and I look forward to working with the returning and new board members in 2023 to plan interesting and informative events for our members. We are also looking forward to the 2023 IFAJ conference to be held in Calgary – we hope to see many of you there!



ECFWA members check out the merry-go-round in conjunction with a site visit during their AGM in May 2022.

Atlantic Canada Farm Writers' Association

By Allison Finnamore, ACFWA President

A revival is afoot!

The ACFWA has caught its second wind. Although dormant for much of 2022, late in the year, the ACFWA executive gathered via Zoom and began planning for 2023.

As a result, our 2023 Spring Tour is set for mid-June. At the same time, we reinvigorated our website – ACFWA.ca – and began sending out a newsletter again. We're excited about gathering in-person soon and harnessing the current enthusiasm as we prepare to host CFWF in the fall of 2024, based out of Halifax. It is also a time for the current leadership to plan on succession.

See you all in Atlantic Canada in 2024!



ACFWA on tour . . . wherever they're going, they sure are having a good time! Which is why you should plan to attend the 2024 CFWF annual conference to be hosted by ACFWA in Halifax, NS.

Ed. Note: Allison swears they brought the acfwamobile to a complete stop before taking this picture.

The Last Word



How many ACFWA members does it take to make a news scrum?