



SCWA Board of Directors

2018 Annual Report to Membership

October 28, 2018

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1. President's Message.

The SCWA is a literary arts non-profit organization offering a supportive environment for people to become better writers. This simple mission is at the forefront of the work of your Board of Directors.

2018 has been a year of transition for the Board of Directors and the Association. As many of you are aware, the SCWA struggled in 2014 and 2015 after incurring some significant financial losses. The leadership of Tibby Plants and Jim McFarlane sustained the organization and positioned it to grow once again. While many others assisted, it is because of the dedication of these two dedicated writers, in particular, that we are still operating today. We have proudly bestowed upon them the title of President Emeritus and are grateful for everything they have done, and continue to do, for the writers of South Carolina.

Before last year's conference had even wound down we began, with the tremendous support of new board member Roger Jones, to recruit additional board members to strengthen the organization. We have added six new members to the board in the past year and have focused on improving how we currently operate and how we will grow.

We have conducted surveys, revised our procedures and bylaws, improved financial controls, restructured director responsibilities and focused on some critical few objectives, all designed to deliver value to our members.

We're not there yet – we still have much work ahead. But we've made tremendous progress and we are gaining momentum. We've used 2018 to not only deliver on our priority objectives but also work out some kinks and position us to determine our future. We'll soon be spending time to examine our vision and develop strategies to achieve it. We'll be considering where we want to go with our TPR journal; how we might form alliances with other professional writing organizations or with academia; we'll look at providing more regional workshops and re-examine our conference model; we'll look at partnerships and try to attract additional board members and published authors as members.

We have much to consider, however, it will all be done with the purpose of accomplishing our mission and delivering value to you – our members.

It's been a pleasure serving as your SCWA president this past year. We'll have someone new at the helm next year but I will remain part of the organization and look forward to its future.
Carol-Ann Rudy

2. Financial Report.

A priority objective during 2018 was to establish and hold the organization accountable to a balanced budget. The fiscal year 2017 incurred an unanticipated financial loss of approximately \$5000 in delivering the TPR and the 2017 conference.

2017 Financial Summary (Refer to attached 2017 report).

During the first calendar quarter of 2018 the board established a budget that would allow for the delivery of priority services while holding constant the membership fee of \$52.

The treasurer position was restructured with the removal of dual board responsibilities to make it more manageable. A CPA, Lynn Winkler, was engaged to perform the accounting functions under the direction of a new treasurer to the board. The board will continue with an outsourced accounting arrangement indefinitely.

The 2018 budget was developed to have a positive net income. We are currently on track to achieve that objective.

2018 Summary Budget

Category	Revenue	Expenses	Net
TPR	\$900	\$3223	(\$2,325)
Conference	23,000	18,000	5,000
Operations	10,880	4,857	6,023
Total	\$34,780	\$26,080	\$8,698

New accounting systems (Quickbooks) were implemented to track transactions and produce reports for monthly board review and action. Additional financial controls such as signing authorities were implemented to ensure expenditures are managed.

Additional funding through government grants was achieved with the sourcing of three grants totaling \$3,077. This will be an additional focus for 2019.

3. Report On Operations.

Early in 2018 the board established a Steering Committee charged with the responsibility of reviewing SCWA operations and to make recommendations to the board on opportunities to improve the organization. A survey of board members was conducted and a number of recommendations were made and implemented.

The recommended changes included focusing on three operational priorities during 2018. The following identifies those priorities and the actions taken.

- Membership and Chapter support.

Under the direction of new board member, Ann Williams, a membership survey was conducted to understand members' perspectives on SCWA. The survey told us many things, among which was that members are looking for support to enhance their writing skills; networking opportunities to link with other writers and to feel part of the writing community; understanding of the publishing business and support to be published; and members want to understand the value of their SCWA membership to ensure they are getting a real benefit for their annual fee. This feedback has helped shape our priorities and will guide us in our future plans.

We currently have 255 members and hope to grow this significantly in coming years.

Under the direction of the Chapter Liaison Evelyn Eickmeyer-Quinones the board restructured the chapters into four State regions to allow for enhanced support. A Chapter Leader's Retreat was organized together with two regional workshops. Additional guidelines for Chapter Leaders were developed to use in running chapters and critique groups and support to them in addressing issues. The organization of new chapters, particularly in the Southern quadrant, became a priority. There are currently 14 chapters operating across the state.

- TPR (The Petigru Review). Under the direction of TPR Editor Adrienne Mathues, Associate Editor Jayne Bowers and Board Advisor Dr. Kasie Whitener, the board embarked on a new digital publication platform for the TPR. The new direction will accomplish many objectives including advancing SCWA's participation in the digital world of publications. This will position SCWA to consider a variety of options for publishing members' works and the possibility of affiliating ourselves with other organizations who strive to do the same. It will also enable us to reduce publication costs while maintaining a print-on-demand capability for TPR. We have much more to consider as SCWA looks at its strategic options.
- 2018 Conference: Under the direction of VP/Conference Chair Amber Wheeler-Bacon and Associate Chair Roger Jones the SCWA developed a well-structured and organized conference for 2018. It is the third conference of the new era of SCWA, offering smaller, more focused and better managed events. Emphasis this year has been on the craft of writing with a faculty widely recognized for their expertise not

only as accomplished writers but also for helping writers develop their skills. It has set the stage for future conferences that will be offered to meet the writing needs of members. Member feedback will be critical in offering high-value, affordably priced conferences to South Carolina writers.

In addition to those three priorities the board also worked hard on the following:

- Board Membership and Structure.

During 2018 your Board of Directors has undergone significant change with the addition of the following six new members:

Ann Williams – Membership Chair. Ann is an independently published author (*PALMETTOS And MIMOSAS*) and a finalist for the Eric Hoffer Award and the Montaigne Medal award. She is passionate about the literary arts and dedicated to delivering value for SCWA members. Ann has been relentless in reminding us why we exist – to serve you.

Steve Gordy – Secretary. Steve has had a number of stories published in journals in the Carolinas and Georgia. He has a background in the study and teaching of history as well as a professional career in the nuclear power and chemical industries. Steve formerly served on the SCWW board and is currently serving on the SCWA Executive Committee as Secretary. Steve's experience, expertise and his desire to help fellow writers have proven invaluable in helping SCWA function professionally.

Dr. Kasie Whitener – Board Advisor. Kasie is a writer, small business owner, professor of entrepreneurship at the University of South Carolina, a previous professor of English and hosts two radio shows on the subjects of writing and entrepreneurship. Kasie's company hosts Wordpress blogs for clients and she assisted the SCWA by outlining the TPR submission process. Her technical expertise on the digital platforms and her familiarity with online publishing is a significant advantage to the SCWA. She has also been a workshop presenter at a number of conferences and brings that experience to the SCWA events as well as providing expertise to help SCWA in new strategic directions.

Mary Sturgill – Publicity Chair. Mary recently joined the board as Director responsible for Publicity, Social Media and Communications. Mary is a writer, former English teacher and award-winning TV Anchor and journalist who will help shape how SCWA communicates with its members and the community. She has two self-published books on Amazon. As a motivational speaker, she is currently writing her third book in which she uses the tools she learned as a journalist to help us get out of our own way so we can be successful. As the founder of SheShed Productions, Mary helps her clients tell their stories through video for their website and social media platforms.

Patrick McMillan, Ph.D. – Director. Patrick has extensive experience with public communication, education, environmental management and fiscal development of non-profits. Patrick is a six-time Emmy Award winner as host, producer, director and co-editor of the PBS television show *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*. He is a professor at Clemson University, the director of the South Carolina Botanical Gardens and the author of numerous distinguished publications. Patrick has recently joined the SCWA board as a Director and will help SCWA develop and execute its vision and strategy.

Mike Lee – Treasurer/Board Facilitator. Mike is a writer with broad business experience and has served on corporate, community and non-profit boards. As Treasurer and Board Facilitator he is a member of the Executive Committee, assisting the board in improving its operations and developing its growth.

- Operating Enhancements and Accomplishments.

During 2018 the Board of Directors implemented a number of operating changes to improve how it functions and how it delivers value to its members. In addition to those listed above are:

- Developed legal documents for chapters to use in contracting for services.
- Restructured board portfolios/roles to rebalance workloads – Chapter Liaison/Secretary and TPR Editor/Treasurer.
- Established cost controls, a signing authority policy, a board meeting schedule and structured board meetings.
- Revised its bylaws to enable an enhanced board structure, succession planning and functioning, a copy of which can be seen on the website.
- Revised a number of policies and procedures, including the nomination and election of board members and board member definitions of responsibilities. Changes are also available on the website.

4. Planning For The Future.

As mentioned, in 2019 SCWA the board will undertake a visioning and strategic planning exercise. We will look internally at the opinions of board members and SCWA membership to examine where we want to go. We will conduct external benchmarking with other writer associations and volunteer boards to look for opportunities to understand our options for growth, affiliations and funding to determine how to better serve you.

We will look to grow our membership and become an association in which all writers in South Carolina find value and to which they wish to belong.

This is our challenge and we need your help. We need to further diversify and strengthen our board with additional board members who have a passion for writing and helping

other writers. We need more resources to help on committees. We need some technical help as well in the area of finance, web design and legal.

Please consider joining our board either as a board member, committee member or advisor and help us grow. Also, please let us know your opinions about the association and where you'd like to see happen. We value everyone's input.

We are proud of our history and are creating something new and exciting for our future. Come join us and be part of our story.

The SCWA Board of Directors
October 2018