

President's Message:

Thank You

Dear Members,

All that I can say to you and the entire SGAA is “*THANK YOU!*”

About six years ago, I decided to become active within the SGAA. At that time, I was totally unaware of the value that service would bring, but I knew from college that successful people always serve on boards. Needless to say, my involvement and serving on this board has provided me with immeasurable rewards.

In June, I turned over the Presidency, but I will remain actively involved. The SGAA has matured me. It has leapfrogged me onto boards of other international associations.

It has provided me with experience and knowledge you cannot buy. But, most of all, it has given me dozens upon dozens of wonderful friends.

Today, across the nation, I have liaisons, homes with open doors, business contacts and simply great friends. We will continue to miss Karen Hendrix dearly.

Karen, a recent President, had the most awesome personality. Karen was always a pleasure to be around. Even as “the new guy,” she took me in and made me feel comfortable. If you haven’t read the article about Karen’s legacy in the last issue, I encourage you to; it is a piece about stained glass but – more importantly — it is about personal inspiration. Karen is in our prayers and our work daily.

Karen served on the Board for many, many years and added to every aspect of value in this organization, which I received. Karen would be proud of the fact that we are in the grant process to build a permanent headquarters, which will include the school, historic archives, public space, our offices and more.

In Oklahoma City, we celebrated our 100th conference. Our *professional* association is 106 years young. We are the only professional associa-



Gunar Gruenke

tion for stained glass studios, artists, craftspeople and suppliers in the world.

As I leave the Office of President of the Stained Glass Association of America, I can only hope that you all feel that my efforts have been useful and have added value to our organization. We have worked hard together to be fair and to observe the building blocks that our forefathers laid. A review of my first *President's Letter* has made me both happy and sad. I am happy to see that the building of a permanent home is on the near horizon. I am sad that membership remains stagnant. The economy sure plays

a role in membership, but we fell very, very, very short of my goal of 2,000 affiliate members by 2009. I guess ambition is good, but being a realist could prove less embarrassing.

As the SGAA grows, please write articles for *The Stained Glass Quarterly*. I can't encourage you enough to submit images for the *FYI: Stained Glass Gallery*. This is FREE advertising.

The opportunities for those coming onto the Board are real. You are all potential future Presidents of the Stained Glass Association of America. The benefits are immeasurable.

It has been a pleasure serving.


B. Gunar Gruenke
president@sgaaonline.com

(PS. Please be sure to congratulate Richard Gross on his hard work and dedication when you see him at the Conference. He has recently received his Master of Theological Studies degree from Ave Maria University, Naples, Florida. Congratulations, Richard.)