

From the Editor's Desk:

The Most Difficult Issue Yet

Writing this "From the Editor's Desk" column is one of the last major steps in completing a magazine. It is the last piece of writing done in any magazine; that way I can address any last-minute issues and offer commentary on the latest SGAA news and information. Completing a magazine essentially consists of writing this, creating the Table of Contents, printing a final copy for final proofreading, and creating the electronic files that go to the printer.

As I write this, I am acutely aware that today is September 21, and this should have been written about three weeks ago. Let me just say that in 16 years of editing *The Stained Glass Quarterly*, this has been without a doubt the most difficult issue yet.

This is not because of the content of the issue; it's not because of any one thing. It's because everything that could have gone wrong with this issue has gone wrong. At one point, the electronic file for this issue went corrupt, costing me several days' effort. At another point, the photograph of the Rambusch Studios' *FDNY Memorial Wall* — a photograph that I am sure was in house six months ago — simply disappeared. Fortunately, Martin Rambusch was able to get a new copy to me very quickly, thus averting that disaster. This issue was under attack by gremlins all the way through it.

But the height of frustration... that was yesterday. I was doing layout on the Conference article (which begins on page 174). In this software, to place a picture, you first draw a picture box; then you link the external image file to that box, and then you apply a set of manipulations to that box so the picture looks like you want it to look.



Richard H. Gross, MTS

All of that was working fine until the last manipulation was applied... then the picture box and its picture disappeared. I soon found out, though, that they weren't simply disappearing. Some of them had jumped six pages forward. Some of them had jumped 20 pages back. Some of them were staying put while a *copy* of the image appeared somewhere else in the magazine. There was no rhyme or reason to it. They were everywhere.

From a computer standpoint, that makes no sense. There's not a function to make that happen. *Why would you even want that?* If there's no function to make it happen, it shouldn't be able to happen. But there it was.

It is rare that I hit a point that I'm ready to throw in the towel. But yesterday, when I realized what a mess of pictures there was scattered haphazardly here and there, I realized there was absolutely nothing I could do to fix it if I did not first leave the office and go have a cup of coffee. Away. Anywhere but in front of my computer. You have to laugh... if

for no other reason that it is silly to argue with a computer.

But, here it is; roving pictures have been hunted down and removed. Difficult issues have been resolved. The issue is now ready to go to print.

There are some excellent articles in this issue. I am particularly pleased with the participation in the call for articles about windows that memorialize the events of September 11, 2001. As this issue falls near the 10th anniversary of that tragic day in American history, I think it is only proper to take a look at how artists working in glass both in the United States and from outside the country have responded in their art and created pieces that encounter those events in a way that helps the viewer make sense in their own minds, at some level, of what happened that day, and what it means.

Also, the Syracuse 2011 Annual Summer Conference article is in this issue, beginning on page 174; plus see pages 194-195 and 220-221. This article highlights some of the excitement from the latest Conference. It is an exciting time in the history of the Stained Glass Association of America. The SGAA Stained Glass School is moving boldly forward; several new publications are in the works to appear soon. And now that the problems and setbacks encountered in this issue are overcome, it's time to get back to 100% full speed ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard H. Gross". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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