

ALGERIAN-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER WASHINGTON
P.O. Box 65063, Washington DC 20035-5063

Annual Report for 2007 of the Board of Directors

April 6, 2008

Prepared for
The Fourteenth Annual Regular Meeting of the Members

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Fourteenth Annual Regular Meeting of the members of the AAAGW will take place on April 6, 2008 at 10 AM at the BCC Center in Bethesda, Maryland to assess the work done by the association from January to December 2007. The meeting will also serve as a forum for the members to discuss important issues concerning the Association that came to light during the current Board of Directors' term.
2. As in the past, the program of activities conducted during 2007 included the celebration and commemoration of traditional, historical, cultural, and social events of importance to the Algerian-American community in the Washington DC area. The Board continued to reach out to other organizations and associations in the area with the intent to share activities, foster friendship and understanding between the parties, and maintain AAAGW on the local map.
3. Most importantly, the Association remained a credible partner with its counterparts and within the community. Nevertheless, there is still lot of work to carry out in order to strengthen AAAGW, expand its membership in view of the growing community, and diversify activities.
4. This report describes the activities that the Board undertook during the review period and makes recommendations to improve and strengthen AAAGW.

II. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES DURING 2007

A. Activities of the Board

5. Throughout this review period, the Board of Directors (BOD) met on a regular basis to discuss the affairs of the association and run it. While some meetings were held in person, most of the work was conducted online, easing the pressures on the Board members without lessening the effectiveness of the Board. The meetings were well attended and professionally conducted. Board members were in daily contact through electronic mail. Urgent matters that arose during our tenure were dealt with immediately. The AAAGW website remains a very useful tool in maintaining contact with the community and in bringing new information to the community, including advertisement on job opportunities.
6. Despite the heavy personal schedules of most of its members, the Board carried out its obligations steadily and was able to maintain leadership continuity throughout the period. This is testimony to the caliber and dedication of the Board Directors and to the efforts they made to insure AAAGW success, its vitality, and its strength. However, the Board would not have been able to conduct its missions without the constant support from members of the community.

B. Activities for the Community

7. During 2007, the activities organized by the Board of Directors included the following:

- **February 25, 2007: 2007 Board Election**
- **March 17, 2007: Women’s Day Celebration**
- **May 12 , 2007: Annual Hafla**
- **October 14 , 2007: Eid El-Fitr Celebration.**
- **December 22, 2007: Eid Al-Adha Celebration**

C. Outreach of the Board

3. The BOD also endeavored to remain vigilant and ensured its support and presence to members of the Algerian American community who were confronted by unfortunate events. To that end, AAAGW established two separate funds in 2007 to assist the compatriots in critical need. This was the case of Hocine Achbezaf who went through a family crisis in January 2007. The Akroun Fund was set up in December 2007 to benefit for the compatriot who was a victim of a homicide in Atlanta. Through these funds, AAAGW collected:

- Hocine Fund: \$2270
- Atroun: \$925

4. These fund-raising were conducted with professionalism and reflected the excellent coordination and confidence between the Board members and the community.

5. The Board continued its policy of making the website available to all useful information, including advertising offered to our small business community and as a favor to our members who would be seeking some services. The Board also tried to increase its membership by conducting frequent updates of the membership list and reminding colleagues and compatriots at various events to renew their membership or join AAAGW.

III. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8. The Association is gradually gaining the confidence of its members and is fast becoming a credible partner for all other institutions around. It is important to continue this work and ensure continuity and credibility. Below are some issues that we continued to face and the suggestions we want to put forth.

9. A \$400 amount has been removed from the balance sheet as the material (speakers, coffee pots, costumes, etc...) were fully depreciated and have now zero value.

A. Facilities to use for events

10. The Board recommends that AAAGW activities be alternated between facilities in Virginia and Maryland. The Board recommends the use of the following venues for AAAGW events:

- **Providence Recreation Center**

7525 Marc Drive
Falls Church, VA 22042
703 698 1351

- **Potomac Community Center**

11315 Falls Rd
Potomac, MD 20854
(240) 777-6960

- **Durant Memorial Center**

1605 Cameron St.
Alexandria, VA

(703) 519.3494

- **Alexandria Beatley Central Library**

5005 Duke St.
Alexandria, VA 22304
(703)519-5900

- **Bowl America, Inc**

1101 Clopper Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301)330-5200

11. Some of these centers provided discounted rental rates to non-profit organizations, or may be reserved for no fees as for the case of the Alexandria Beatley Central Library used for the Women’s Day celebration. This recommendation is simply made to make it easier for the next BOD to organize future events. The BOD may elect to select other venues for its activities.

B. Volunteers

12. It is the belief of this BOD that the officers of the association must devise a plan to simplify volunteer work. The BOD recommends that a list of volunteers be established with a pool of volunteers from all three geographic areas (Virginia, Maryland, and Washington,

DC) that comprised the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The list should include the individuals' names, their phone numbers, and their e-mail addresses. The Board member (s) in charge of a particular event would then have a list of people in their area to call upon to assist with mailings, setting up the facilities during events, etc. In other words, the Board members would take the initiative of calling people from an established list instead of waiting for people to call the Board.

C. Turnover of Board Directors

13. Due to circumstances that are beyond anyone's control and the nature of the transient community in the Washington area, it should be expected that some Board members who are initially elected to the BOD will be unable to fulfill their duties throughout the mandate. It is therefore incumbent upon AAAGW members to:

- Elect a large number of Directors (10 or more) if possible; and
- For the BOD to actively seek replacement as soon as a position becomes vacant.

D. Membership

14. Although membership stands at 73 paying members during 2007, the BOD still believes that more progress can be made in this area. ¹Clearly, the more funds and support the Association receives, the more it can do for the community. This raises one major issue: for each free event, we gathered on average about 150-200 people; thus, broadly speaking each paying member is subsidizing about 3 people. Considering the low membership fees, members are getting great value for their money. In order to increase membership, the BOD recommends that in addition to the reminder mailings that are sent to the members, the Board should continue to set up a membership table at every event and encourage people to renew their membership or sign up for the first time if they have not members.

E. Crisis and Support Group

15. As our community grows and goes through the ups and downs of everyday life, our role as leaders is to be more active and organized. In these days and age of electronic information, we must be prepared to show more and more leadership and solidarity instantaneously, be there for the family who is hit by an unfortunate event, disseminate the information to the community and the relevant officials, and organize the chain of solidarity. This works on an empirical basis. What is important now is that we formalize such a crisis and support group (CSG) under the aegis of AAAGW. Several people, known in the past to be active and helpful in the Algerian-American community are interested in being part of the CSG.

¹ Most of the membership cover families.

16. The role of the CSG would be to disseminate the information to the community upon learning of an unforeseen event (death, accident, etc.), organize the immediate chain of solidarity, visit the family members, and help them deal with the administrative and other related issues. This is what the Board members have been doing, however, we would like to extend it to include key volunteers and organize a more formal process.

F. Youth Involvement

17. A more concerted effort needs to be made to entice Algerian American youth to more actively participate in AAAGW events. It is suggested to appoint a youth to serve on the BOD and/or appoint a task force to explore ideas that would attract more youth to be active members in the AAAGW. The BOD organized a special event for youth on father's day.