

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

**Annual Report
October 2003 – November 2004**

Prepared for
The Eleventh Annual Regular Meeting of the Members

By
**The Board of Directors of the Algerian-American Association
of Greater Washington (AAAGW)
December 18, 2004**

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3. INTRODUCTION

The eleventh Annual Regular Meeting of the members of the AAAGW will take place on December 18th, 2004 at the BCC Center in Bethesda, MD, to assess work done from October 2003 to November 2004. 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.

The program of activities conducted during the October 2003- November 2004 period included the celebration and commemoration of traditional, historical, cultural, and social events of importance to the Algerian-American community in the Washington DC area.

During this period, the Board also reached out to other organizations and associations in the area with the intent to share activities and foster friendship and understanding between the parties.

Most importantly, the Association steadily rose to become a credible partner with its counterparts and within the community.

This report highlights some of the activities that the Board undertook during the review period and makes recommendations to improve on some of the activities as warranted.

2. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES – OCT. 2003 - NOV. 2004

2.1 ACTIVITIES OF THE BOARD

Throughout this review period, the Board of Directors (BOD) met on a regular basis to discuss the affairs of the association. While most of the meetings were held in person, others meetings were conducted via teleconference. The meetings were well attended and professionally conducted. Meeting minutes were distributed to the Board members shortly after each meeting.

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 of the Board Directors and to the efforts they made to insure AAAGW success and also to the support from previous Board members and other members of the community.

2.2 ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY

During the period of October 2003 – November 2004, the activities organized by the Board of Directors included the following:

- **Ramadan Sahra - November 1st, 2003**
- **Eid El Adha Event - February 8th, 2004**
- **Omar Carlier Conference at Georgetown**
- **Annual Hafla - May 22, 2004**
- **Ramadan Sahra - October 23, 2004**
- **Eid-el-Fitr Celebration - November 14, 2004)**

Additionally, the BOD assisted, helped organize, or participated in the following activities:

- **Algerian National Ballet - April 2004**
- **Souad Massi Concert - July 2004**
- **July 4th Activities at Algerian Embassy Residence**

AAAGW advertised the above events on its website at www.aaagw.org and encouraged its members to attend them. Some members of the Board were also present at these events.

AAAGW also helped the **Moroccan community** in its efforts to collect funds for the February earthquake victims, and worked closely with the **Amazigh Association** as part of its reach out activities. The Board opened its website to all useful information.

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.

3. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing previous AAAGW Annual reports and in discussion with previous Board Members, it is apparent that the same types of issues that plagued other Boards came up again during this review. Some of these issues include the lack of volunteerism, resignation of Board Directors, slow responses to membership drives, etc.

3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.1 Volunteers

It is the belief of this BOD, that the officers of the association must devise a plan to simplify volunteerism. 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.

3.1.2 Resignation of Board Directors

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

3.1.3 Slow Membership Renewal

During 2003 and 2004, the US economy experienced some downward trends as reported by the news media and other financial institutions. It is believed that some AAAGW members much like the population at large were impacted by lay-offs and cutbacks and had to cut down on expenses. This is one possible reason for the slow membership renewal response. Other reasons may include the fact that AAAGW generally does not make a distinction between members and non-members when inviting people to attend activities organized by the Association. Typically, most of the events are non-paying events and everyone is welcomed.

Although membership increased from 53 paying members in October 2003 to 79 in November 2004, the BOD still believes that more progress can be made in this area.

Clearly, the more funds and support the Association receives, the more it can do for the community.

This raises one major issue: for each 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 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.