

FALL 2005

AAGT

Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy



AAGT'S EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006

AUGUST 9 - 13, 2006

**DREAMING THE FUTURE: Expanding our consciousness
through Gestalt Therapy.**

**Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada**





I'm so sorry I couldn't make the Annual Meeting. By working with all of the pictures in this newsletter, I've certainly had my moments where I felt like I was there. THANK YOU to all who sent the pictures. I apologize that I couldn't get every picture of Amsterdam in here. Such a beautiful place...such warmth...such a special gathering. I applaud everyone who put this together & made it happen so beautifully. So, out of the meeting comes some changes—and some yuck (AAGT's special brand). We struggle so with communication, with intention, and with the process of keeping AAGT growing. What I see, read & hear is passion. That's a good thing. We don't want to be practicing the opposite of passion. I'm confident we will continue to change and grow (ouch). I came across the following: The mind creates the chasm which only the heart can cross. STEPHEN LEVINE & I thought "that's what makes AAGT AAGT." Our hearts are in it, so we continue creating together, filling the chasms. Now the holidays are upon us which signals that the planet is continuing its annual, natural processes in order to exist & flourish (just like AAGT!). I wish everyone Happy Holidays.

Our Board:

- ♦ Brian O'Neill, President
- ♦ Peter Philippon, Vice president/President-Elect
- ♦ Ann Bowman, Secretary
- ♦ Peter Cole, Treasurer
- ♦ Ansel Woldt, Archivist & Continuing Education Officer
- ♦ Marcy Stern, Publications Director
- ♦ Bruce Aaron, Membership Co-Chair
- ♦ Allan Singer, Membership Co-Chair
- ♦ Jack Aylward, Interest Groups' Coordinator
- ♦ Morgan Goodlander, Organization Members' Co-Representative
- ♦ Bud Feder, Organization Members' Co-Representative
- ♦ Marilyn Myles, Regional Contact Persons' Co-Representative
- ♦ Tine van Wijk, Regional Contact Persons' Co-Representative

Newsletter Deadlines:

December 1, 2005

March 1, 2006

June 1, 2006

September 1, 2006

submit to Marcy Stern: imawareru@comcast.net

*****IMPORTANT!*****

Presidents Message

Well!. What to say after Amsterdam?

To some, you will be hearing for the first time that the conference at Amsterdam, which was ably chaired by Tine and supported by Peter and Victor (amongst others), was a great success -- and indeed it was. There are many photos in the Newsletter to share with you some of the good times we had at our first Regional Conference and Annual Meeting outside of the USA. The entire conference was filled with great gusto and excitement, in true AAGT fashion.

All who were involved are to be congratulated! In particular one of the highlights was taking the full conference group of over sixty people out on the canals of the city with two accordion players. We ended up serenading the city with song and laughter, including some very pretty men dressed up as women who were getting ready for the Gay Pride parade the following day.

We even saw a large sign that read "Amsterdam – Vancouver" and we all quite rightly took that as a sign that we were blessed in our journey. So, on that note we continued on to the Irish Pub where the Irish Interest Group (IIG) inaugurated many new members including two Rastafarian pool players and the barman who was from Australia.

Notwithstanding the fun times, the quality of the program was great and there were a host of open dialogues as well, including panels and two pre conference marathon groups, which were both full. And at the end of it all we have crossed another milestone -- we did not, for once, owe anyone any money when we finished! Thank God (and especially Tine) for that!

However, if you are a member of the Gstalt L email discussion list you could be forgiven for thinking the only experience to come out of Amsterdam has been the discussion and decision at the Community Meeting and later at the Annual Meeting to add "International" to our name.

This has now had extensive debate both on the Gstalt-L list and with our Board of Directors. Our lengthy dialogues and discussions have highlighted quite a few difficulties we still face as an organization in dealing with decision-making, wider consultation and consensus about major issues. This is particularly so when we, for the most part, have the larger group of members attending our International Conferences approximately every two years, and far fewer attending our Annual Meetings, which happen when there is no conference attached. We have now seen a pattern where the decisions made at our Annual Meetings are being called to question and this highlights a need for more and better communication all round.

For the record, the discussion regarding the name change was stimulated by the IGTA (International Gestalt Therapy Association) approaching us about joining together into one organization. While this idea was rejected, I believe it was more in the spirit of the people at the conference that leap-frogged onto the original suggestion by IGTA – to add International to our name. For some, a name change might seem small, and for others not, yet this has highlighted now a whole raft of issues for the membership, the Board and others to discuss, which I hope will bear fruit in Vancouver. In case you haven't heard or read, the name change to IAAGT has been scrapped for the time being due to regulations in our Articles of Incorporation and guidelines in our Constitution and By-Laws. Out of this debate we have now created three committees working with the Board and for the wider AAGT community to consider – namely:

1. Committee One to work on the establishment of an AAGT email list (List-serve) to bring about wider and more immediate discussion of issues with members. This committee is being chaired by Phil Brownell.
2. Committee Two is discussing and reviewing all our modes of communicating with each other, including Annual Meetings, Community Meetings, email, Web pages, and the Newsletter. It has also raised the possibility of mediation and healing processes to attend to the hurt and discord that can happen when we set about dealing with each other through heated debate. This committee is being chaired by Brian O'Neill.
3. Committee Three is considering the guidelines in our beloved By-Laws for the decision-making processes we engage in and who's job it is to try and get clarity around such issues of how, when and who gets involved in making decisions in our organization. This committee is being chaired by Peter Philippon.

In our last teleconference call, the Board decided to go ahead with developing an AAGT List-serve, I hope that with the advent of this AAGT email list and the further work of these committees much will be added to our advancing and associating.

Speaking of advancing and associating, the conference for Vancouver is shaping up to be of the size and energy of those we had in New York and Cleveland. This is due to the able work of our Conference Co-Coordination, Bea Mackay and Warren Wier, along with the associated committees of Peer Review chaired by Peter Cole, Publicity chaired by Phil Brownell, and a lot of very creative work being done by the Program Planning Committee chaired by Victor Daniels.

There are already many proposals coming in and a wonderful range of additional events, speakers, plenaries, poster sessions, pre- (and possibly post-) conference marathon groups, and interviews -- including Erv Polster who has agreed to be our opening keynote speaker and one of the people to take part in an interview session in front of the community. This will create, I am sure, a conference to be remembered for a long time to come. Just like Amsterdam.

Brian O'Neill
President

ANNOUNCING (WITH GREAT FANFARE):

AAGT'S EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006

DREAMING THE FUTURE: Expanding our consciousness through Gestalt Therapy.

AUGUST 9 - 13, 2006.

We are thrilled to announce AAGT's 8th International Conference to be held in the sparkling and vibrant city of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

The venue for accommodation and workshops will be at the University of British Columbia, a unique and beautiful campus, home to Canada's largest university conference facility.

UBC is surrounded by ocean on three sides and a large rainforest park on the fourth. In addition to it's spectacular physical setting UBC contains many world class attractions and is only twenty minutes from both the downtown core of cosmopolitan Vancouver and the International airport. As well as a gorgeous travel destination in it's own right, Vancouver is also a jumping off point for other exciting attractions such as Whistler/Blackcomb, Vancouver Island, Southern Gulf Islands, Seattle, and cruises to Alaska.

Come early or stay late, build your own memorable and deeply satisfying holiday and conference experience in the summer of 2006.

Location

The conference will be held on the campus of the University of British Columbia, situated on 450 hectares of woodland and surrounded on three sides by the Pacific Ocean, yet only 20 minutes away from downtown and the Vancouver International Airport. The campus is home to the world-renowned Museum of Anthropology, as well as several botanical gardens and a myriad of recreational activities, including a golf course, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, hiking and cycling trails.

Vancouver is a cosmopolitan city offering a wealth of cultural, dining and recreational experiences. The city is a gateway to great vacation opportunities, both in the province of British Columbia and further afield.

Accommodation

Comfortable, reasonably priced accommodation in a variety of room types is available on campus at the Walter Gage Residence within easy walking distance of the meeting venue.

Opportunity for AAGT conference 2006! Interested in working on a committee? Best way to enhance your connections and experience of the conference is to have input while working with interesting colleagues. People interested in working on committees for the 2006 conference are encouraged to contact Co-conveners Bea Mackay: bea@drbeamackay.com and Warren Weir: wbweir@telus.net

COMMITTEES: Peer review: Process Groups: Scholarship: Interest Groups: Worker Bees, Work Study

2006 Vancouver Conference—A Sneak Preview



Gage Towers



UBC Campus



Cecil Green



Vancouver Waterfront



False Creek Boats



Call for Proposals

Dreaming the Future: Expanding our Consciousness through Gestalt Therapy

AAGT 8th International Gestalt Therapy Conference

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., CANADA

August 9-13, 2006

Conference presentations will be two hours in length, with time for participant discussion. We encourage innovative and creative presentations, student papers, and presentations based on research projects relating the conference theme to Gestalt Theory, neuroscience, transpersonal dynamics, spiritual and religious experience, clinical practice, social justice, and organizational change. Presentations may be theoretical, clinical, or experiential, and they may be demonstrations, panels, video presentations, or discussions. Presentations will be selected by the conference planning committee following blind peer review.

Continuing Education credit will be offered to attendees. The AAGT is an approved provider for Continuing Professional Education by the American Psychological Association (APA), National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), California Board of Registered Nurses, California Board of Behavioral Sciences for Licensed Marriage, Family, and Child Counselors and Licensed Social Workers.

Those wishing to submit a proposal are encouraged to download a presentation proposal form from the AAGT web site (www.aagt.org) and send it via post (not fax) to the address in the accompanying instructions. We prefer electronic submission. To begin the process of electronic submission send an email request to 2006@g-gej.org; a presentation form with instructions will be sent via email.

Presentation Proposal Form

Dreaming the Future: Expanding our Consciousness through Gestalt Therapy

AAGT 8th International Gestalt Therapy Conference
University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., CANADA
August 9-13, 2006

Please provide a cover letter with a space between it and the form which follows (for postal submissions use a separate sheet). Include in your cover letter the title of your presentation, your name, highest degree, your complete address, telephone number, FAX, and e-mail address, and (if applicable) the same for all co-presenters.

Presentation Proposal Form [Do not put identifying information in the following section]

ID #_____ (please leave blank)

You may choose to send your proposal electronically or through the postal service.

For electronic submission, copy this announcement and form, along with a cover letter, to an email message, fill in the data, and send to Philip Brownell (2006@g-gej.org). Identify that your message is an AAGT proposal submission by naming the subject as AAGT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.

For submission by postal service, make four (4) copies of this form, plus a cover letter, and send them (via mail, not FAX) to:

AAGT Peer Review
c/o Bea Mackay
201-2678 West Broadway Avenue,
Vancouver, B.C. V6K 3N2
CANADA

Include in your cover letter the title of your presentation, your name, highest degree, your complete address, telephone number, FAX, and e-mail address, and (if applicable) the same for all co-presenters.

DO NOT put any identifying information in this presentation proposal form.

If accepted, the corresponding presenter(s) will be required to submit (within two weeks) a 100 word abstract of the presentation to be published in the conference program, a 60 word biography reflecting the relevance of presenter background(s) to the presentation, a signed release permitting the taping of the presentation (in case this becomes an option to the program committee), a description of any audiovisual aids required, and a curriculum vita for each presenter (please have these ready). All these items are necessary to support the process of review and

Please type (all sections must be completed in order to be considered: expand the sections as needed and/or use additional sheets as necessary).

1. Gestalt Experience Level Suggested for Participants:

- ☐ Experienced
☐ Novice
☐ No Limitations

Format (check all that apply)

2. Didactic Category

- ☐ Based on a formal paper (have copies available)
☐ Based on a research project
☐ Based on work experiences
☐ Based on theory

3. Experiential Category

- ☐ Demonstration
☐ Panel
☐ Discussion
☐ Experimental participation
☐ Video/multi-media Presentation

4. Title (Limit to 65 characters, including spaces):

5. Description (a 200-300 word description of what you intend to do, how you intend to do it, and in what ways that relates to the conference theme; be specific):

6. A five to ten-point outline of the material to be covered, expanding on the description above; this need not be detailed:

7. An assessment test consisting of five objective questions (multiple choice, true-false, fill in, or matching). The correct answers to these questions must be included. If the presentation is entirely experiential, answer this question, "What three new awarenesses were the result of participation?" The questions must be able to be answered as a result of attendance, and the shorter and less complicated the better.

8. List one to three significant readings (articles or books) on the subject of your presentation. These need not cover the specific topic, but should serve to provide information for further study and be generally relevant. Use this format:

SCOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR VANCOUVER ARE WELCOME

In accordance with our tradition, AAGT is eager to supply scholarships to assist persons in attending the Vancouver conference in August 2006. We are now actively raising scholarship funds (for the biennial last conference, in 2004, we raised over \$9000) and welcome applications. The application form can be found below and should be sent to:

Bud Feder [bfeder@comcast.net] or 37 Brunswick Rd, Montclair, NJ 07042 USA.

The applications form can also be obtained by contacting Bud Feder directly. We raise funds through a line option in the conference registration form and through special events put on by members. In the past, these events have included workshops, song recitals, auctions etc. Anyone wishing to put on such an event, please contact Bud Feder as per the information above. For starters, Bud is offering copies of "A Living Legacy of Fritz and Laura Perls: Contemporary Case Studies" for \$5.00 plus shipping, all proceeds to the fund.

AAGT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

FOR VANCOUVER CONFERENCE, AUG 2006

Preface: AAGT is very proud of its tradition of helping persons who are financially challenged to attend our conferences. Over the years we have enabled many persons from many countries to join us and both the recipient and the organization have been immeasurably enriched.

The criteria which the scholarship committee will consider include the following: ethnic diversity, financial need, geographic diversity, student status, new practitioner status, potential conference presenter, as well as unique circumstances. We also consider your specific conference expenses based on travel distance, etc. After giving us the demographic information requested, please write in 150 words or less your interest in attending and in what ways you reflect our eligibility criteria. Email your application to:

Bud Feder, 2006 Scholarship Fund Committee Chair: bfeder@comcast.net

There is no specific deadline yet the sooner the better. After you file your application it will be acknowledged and if any additional information is needed, you will be notified. Feel free to contact the chair with any questions you have or any clarification you require.

NAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE # _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Your request in narrative form [150 words or less]:

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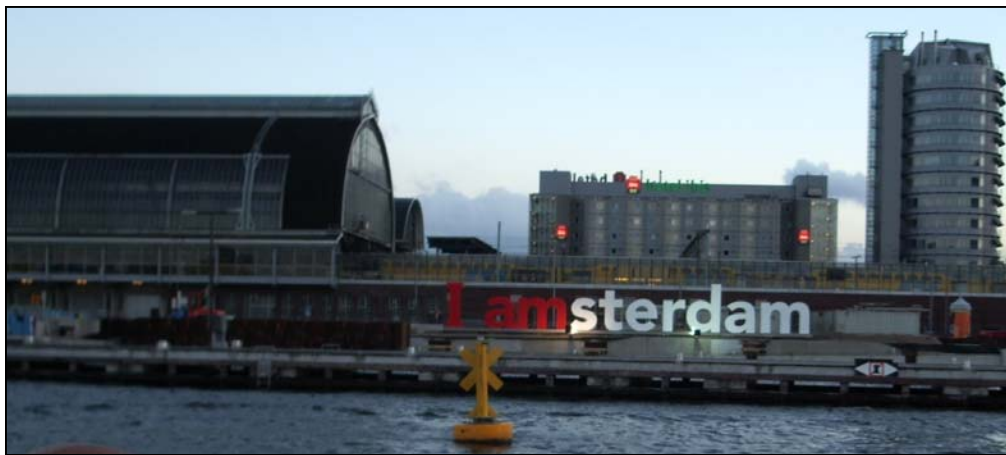
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AAGT IN AMSTERDAM: A FAIRY TALE CAME TRUE?

by *Tine van Wijk*

10 August 2005, a day after the AAGT conference ended I am sitting behind my laptop to allow myself to digest some of the highlights of this happening in Amsterdam. In between happenings I wrote by hand a piece that I would like to present to you. It begins by improvising with our new name. It inspired me to create a slogan that can come to life when it is sung by all of us. Pity I cannot let you hear the tones I found to go with it but I am certain I can do that some other day:

The (I)AAGT

Is about you

And it is about me

The (I) double A GT

Is about me

And it is about you

(I) AAGT

Is about we

All I have to do is plug into the richness of experiencing (I)AAGT people in Amsterdam, that is to say in my city, in my home town, that I love and cherish and am proud of. The city that I longed to show to you and share with people that have good taste, very good taste, which means they have my taste.

(I)AAGT people know how to laugh, how to joke, how to dance, how to organize a party, how to keep the place clean and they also know how to sit with the shit and hold the heat. They know how to give Gestalt workshops in a skill full, spiritual, artistic, intellectual and gentle way and they can sing songs in all languages guided by two accordion players on a boat that floats through the canals and make the citizens of Amsterdam wave and smile at them.

(I)AAGT men are strong yet gentle men. They know how to lead an organization and they also know they can feel if they choose to give workshops. They can have fun and make friends with each other. I) AAGT men are not easy to fight off because they are loyal to each other and stand together.

And the (I) AAGT women are even more sensitive to the needs of the people around them. They can sing like a lark, dance like a bull, be quiet when the moment requires that and they are yet able to open their mouth when there is a need. (I)AAGT women are mixing and living with men even though they are aware of the differences and the pain between them. They know that it is not certain who has been suppressing who for years. Therefore they rather communicate and struggle together along the challenging and dangerous path of Gestalt therapy than go their own separate way.

So here we are (I)AAGT men and women who can be and eat together without biting off our tongues. On the contrary we let our tongues speak the language of love, even though this love can be aggressive. As long as we are together we are closely united and even when we part we know that the threads won't break even though they are invisible to those who never heard of the (I)AAGT or I double A GT. This does not mean that we are exclusive. Anyone can come in to smell and taste what is brewing in the I) AAGT bowl and is welcome to join us if he or she likes our soup well enough to take the risk of wanting to belong to this surprising community.

28 August 2005 I continued and wrote: I am at the same place where I wrote the (I) AAGT piece above and also where I made pictures with Bruce and Marilyn with an ancient lantern pole made by my great grandfather who was a famous blacksmith. When I wrote the (I)AAGT song and let the words flow I did not have any notion of the storm that was to follow. Then I wrote about my own longing, my own need to be part of the AAGT community. In the discussion about the name change that followed a hot item was that people who were present when the AAGT was born, felt left out when it seemed to be decided in Amsterdam that AAGT would become IAAGT, mainly as a welcome to the IGTA board people who wanted to join the AAGT.

Although I was in Amsterdam, I even initiated, planned, organized and coordinated this conference in Amsterdam, I can relate to this feeling of being left out. Once the conference started power circles formed itself. In my experience I did not belong to one of them. Stupid of me, I should have said so, but I was too busy with the practical side of the event and told myself it did not bother me. Now I know it did and it still does. The real decisions seemed to be taken back screen when I was not there. So being left out is not only the theme of the AAGT members who were not in Amsterdam, but is also mine. Still in the piece above there is nothing about my feeling of being left out. Strange isn't it. It makes me wonder about the implicit meaning of what I wrote. What does it have to do with what I call the undercurrent? At first I thought this is actually a gender item. I was left out because I am a woman. But when the discussion on the Gestalt List and in the Board went on I realized that also men who invested a lot in the AAGT experienced the same kind of pain I was confronted with, the pain of not being seen. Then it began to dawn on me that what was and still is going on is above gender and touches into identity. For me the proposed I in (I) AAGT is more like the I in I am I, I AAGT can mean to me that I identify with the (I) AAGT. But of course in this case the I stands for International and when I read this morning about one hundred emails on this matter I started to understand that, I, Tine, who is from Amsterdam by birth and by ancestors who go at least back to 1600, I, Tine, I am International, because I am from Amsterdam and Amsterdam has always been and still is International. I realized that I am international because I am mixed, I know I have Dutch blood – of course – but also German and French blood and most likely Jewish and Russian blood. Some people insist that I look like a native American, an Indian. Could be I do not know. All this explains why I feel at home in the US where I can feel that everybody is International in him or herself. It is also why I did not feel at home in France where I lived with a French painter, nor in Germany where I sold American encyclopaedia's to soldiers stationed there. The French in France are French and are not open to foreigners like me. In Germany I feel even less at home. The Germans thought or think they are Ariers, some kind of top race. And although they decided that the Dutch were of the same race and could therefore be occupied and included in their Grosses Deutsches Reich, I prefer to stick to my own mixed identity which is not only Dutch. Of course my nationality is Dutch, but I am of mixed decent.

So wondering why I initiated this conference in the first place I realize that I wanted to give Europeans the opportunity to taste the way the AAGT community functions. Not from top down as I know in Dutch and European Gestalt Organizations, but by being willing to sit down and listen to everybody's view in the hope/trust to reach consensus. Of course I know this is not easy, it is a big job. I have to decide time and time again I am committed enough to stay in this heat. Also in this after conference discussion.

And when I think of the IGTA and their wish to connect with the AAGT without any discussion about by-laws and that sort of thing I become worried. It is almost like 'And then they lived happily for ever after.' If the AAGT would say Yes to their proposal, the IGTA and AAGT would be together in true matrimony. I am so sorry I do not believe in this kind of fairy tale anymore and I am even more sorry that some of us seem to be virgins that still do believe that saying Yes to each other, means Yes without restrictions. If AAGT-IGTA ever becomes a steady relationship I suppose some courting will have to be done in reality. Amsterdam is a missed chance. But there always is a new chance. Vancouver?



AMSTERDAM *by Bud Feder*

I had a wonderful experience in Amsterdam. One of the most interesting aspects of it for me was that, as an American at AAGT, I was outnumbered about four to one by people from other countries and actually a 'foreigner', a term I used to use in AAGT for nonAmericans. This was not an uncomfortable experience for me; on the contrary it was very enjoyable and fascinating to interact with so many people from other countries and so many new people. It certainly emphasized the international direction that AAGT has been moving in for the past 4 or 5 years. Although some actions at the community meetings have since stirred up a lot of unrest, dissatisfaction, hurt and anger, I am confident that, out of these reactions, some clearer guidelines regarding communication and decision-making will emerge. This is vital as we get more widespread and in that way unwieldy. On a personal note, I will soon be moving to Berkeley, CA and look forward to being active in SWAAGT. So if I don't see you in the Northeast [USA], see you in Vancouver!





THE SERPENT: Writing from Tine van Wijk's workshop
"Awakening the Sleeping Serpent"
by Peter Philippon

I serpent sway – side to side – forward – back
 Smooth, firm
 I can bit, twine.
 I hit the ends of Peter's fingers, toes
 Sometimes flow beyond,
 Sometimes flow back.
 Sometimes I tweak Peter's fingertips.
 I can be very still, then move very fast in a moment.
 I feel every vibration, it flows through me,
 In a way Peter can't sense.
 I sense the world,
 Turning to face the vibrations,
 Amplifying them and changing them.

I can do this because I don't just belong to Peter,
 In a sense he belongs to me, though he can also limit me.
 Is a servant not always a limiter of the master!

I have pleasures, hungers, pains, but no ethics.
 I can hug or kill.
 I am happy to bask in a warm comfortable spot like Peter's belly
 For a long time until Peter shakes me out.
 I don't mind that he does this, or if he doesn't.
 Then he feels that he is in charge.

Feinting in Coils
by Jon Blend

I observe the scene through a window:
 Rare sparking, fast moving dive: 'Django lives on!'
 Plunge, then all –changing, melding into blue
 Spacing slowly winding up and down
 The scribble dibble tear-welling bellyful
 Two skeins of brown hanging swaying
 Hipknitted twirling churning
 'These fruits I lay before you.'
 Held in the long surrender across pillows and time
 We linger and hiss, two serpents listening, drifting in aburn air
 Whilst comforting tones smoulder on in a violet key







AAGT Annual Meeting Minutes: Sunday, August 7, 2005

Present: Judy Graham, Sarah Fallon, Bruce Aaron, Susan Gregory, Bud Feder, Jon Blend, Sean Gaffney, Natasha Morgan, Brian O'Neill, Peter Philippon, Allan Singer, Ruth Boerger, Tine Van Wijk, Kooch Daniels, Victor Daniels, Ekaterina Kosheleva

Agenda Items (for entire meeting)

1. Scholarship Guidelines
2. Next Annual Meeting
3. 2008 Conference Location
4. Status of 2006/Vancouver Conference
5. Conference for Gestalt Institutes in Denmark
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Sirata Hotel Update
8. RCP Report
9. Election of Officers
10. Financing Board Members' Attendance at Annual Meetings
11. New Business
12. Next Board Meeting

Present Configuration of the Board

1. Susan Gregory requested that scholarship guidelines be discussed first due to her need to leave the following day. Susan gave report on scholarship activities; over \$10,000 was raised for the last conference, 19 recipients benefited. Susan discussed her criteria in making decisions, which include affirmative action, and the difficulties involved when others disagree with that criteria. A lengthy and spirited discussion ensued when Peter invited those present to offer the values they feel should form the basis for determining scholarship recipients. Values offered include:
 - a. support of practitioners interested in presenting at the conference
 - b. support for trainees' attendance
 - c. support for diversity of ethnic/racial/national composition
 - d. financial need
 - e. distance applicant must travel
 - f. % of person's annual income that would be spent to attend the conference
 - g. affirmative action – encouragement of those who would otherwise not be able to attend
 - h. anonymity of applicants
 - i. value of the "gut sense" of applicant reviewers
 - j. recognition that some situations may fall outside guidelines and need to be considered individually.

Proposal by Bud Feder that a Board committee be created to formulate guidelines for scholarship distribution. Accepted. Bud Feder will coordinate committee; Jon Blend, Ekaterina Koshelva, and Marilyn Myles volunteered for committee as well.

2. Next Annual Meeting

Next Annual meeting to be August 13 – August 15, 2006, in Vancouver, following the conference. Brian proposed that the 2007 Annual Meeting be held in Los Angeles, perhaps coordinated with the Southwest Regional Conference held annually, and that we avoid conflicting with EAGT meeting dates. Proposal accepted. Brian will contact Isabel Fredrickson re SW Regional Conference dates, also EAGT re their meeting dates.

3. Next Conference and Annual Meeting Location

Brian proposed that the 2008 Conference and Annual Meeting be held in Manchester, England, and Peter Philippon agreed to find conveners for the conference; proposal accepted. There was also consensus to consider St. Petersburg, Russia and Sydney, Australia as sites for future meetings. Brian will check with GANZ and EAGT re their meeting dates in hopes of avoiding meeting date conflicts.

4. Status of Vancouver Conference

Brian complimented Bea Mackay and Warren Weir on their exceptionally professional and competent organization of this conference. One outstanding task has been accomplished, that of filling the position of Chair of the Program Planning Committee – Victor Daniels has agreed to accept that position. Brian also presented Victor's idea to form an international "advisory board", which he envisions could be a "think tank" kind of resource for the conference planning. Several people expressed misgivings about this concept, cautioning the following: that Americans not be excluded from "international designation", that current members, and those who have not been recently active in AAGT, also have expertise and should be consulted as well, that any "advisory" group not force us into "top-down" decision-making, which is contrary to AAGT philosophy. Victor suggested an alternate name be used instead of "advisory board", such as "resource group" or "support group", terms which are more accurate. Bud proposed that anyone on the Program Committee be required to be an AAGT member. Accepted by Board.. Victor has approached conference attendees from Italy, Austria, Greece, and England re participation in such a resource group. It was noted that people attending this conference are excited about AAGT and wanting to find a way to support it without formal membership on the Program Committee. Volunteers for the Program Committee are Bud Feder, Ansel Woldt, Sharon Warwick, Robert De Vos, Eva Gold.

Meeting adjourned for the evening. Ruth Boerger requested that Denmark meeting be first on the agenda in the morning.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn Myles

Annual Meeting – Monday, August 8, 2005

Present: Tine Van Wijk, Petra Bouwman, Robert De Vos, Marilyn Myles, Allan Singer, Victor Bogomolov, Bruce Aaron, Ruth Boerger, Jon Blend, Sean Gaffney, Bud Feder, Brian O'Neill, Peter Philippon, Razi Ghaemmagham-Farahani

Agenda:

5. Denmark Conference for Institutes
 6. Treasurer's Report
 7. Sirata Hotel Update
 8. RCP Report
 9. Election of Officers
 10. Financing Board Members' Attendance of Annual Meeting
 11. New Business
 12. Next Board Meeting
- Present Configuration of Board

5. Ruth Boerger sought to clarify the purpose of the Denmark Conference for Institutes. Several present were involved and planning to attend, and clarified that the conference was established to bring together Gestalt Institutes to develop cooperative, rather than competing, relationships, and to discuss the survival of Gestalt training programs at a time when enrollments are dropping. Bud proposed that Sean Gaffney represent AAGT at the conference; proposal accepted. Brian also proposed that Bud Feder Co-Chair the Organization Members' Representative position, along with Morgan Goodlander, provided Morgan does not object. Proposal accepted, pending Bud's discussion of this with Morgan.

Board took some time to do check-in.

Treasurer's Report

6. Bruce Aaron gave retrospective financial status report: Beginning balances: - 2004, \$2,276, 1/1/05, \$10,543, 7/30/05, \$24,500. Amsterdam Conference income, \$6,915.00, Marathon income, \$2,000.00. At this point, expenses for conference are roughly equal to the income.

Bruce reports that \$8,500.00 in dues have been collected. Bud points out that some members may be current with 2004 dues, but may not be paid up for 2003.

7. Sirata Hotel Update

AAGT owes hotel \$13,000.00 in attrition from the 2004 Conference. Proposal made that the Board negotiate reduction of that balance; proposal accepted. Bud will continue the negotiation process, along with Brian, and will keep the Board informed of their progress. * since this was written, we paid the settled amount : \$7228.88.

8. RCP Report

Marilyn, RCP Representative, reports that RCP teleconferences continue to take place every 60 days. Marilyn discussed new bylaw establishing one-year term for RCP Representative, which ends November 2005 ; to date, no one has expressed interest in the position. Brian asked if Marilyn is willing to continue for a second term, and she agreed to do so. Tine expressed interest in the position; it was proposed that Marilyn and Tine work together as co-Representatives for the next year, and that Tine assume Representative position November 2006. Proposal accepted by Marilyn, Tine and Board. Marilyn has talked with Bob Smith, England, Maria Andriopoulou, Greece, and Ekaterina Kosheleva, Russia, who have all expressed interest in becoming RCP's. Tine proposed that Victor Bogomolov also become Russian RCP, representing another part of that large country, and he accepted, pending his joining AAGT. Tine proposed that Petra Bouwman become the RCP for the Netherlands, and Petra accepts this position.

9. Election of Officers

Treasurer – Peter Cole was nominated and elected unanimously as new Treasurer. Bruce Aaron was thanked for his hard work this past year.

Membership Chair - This position is open and administratively supported by Sylvie Falschlunger. Bruce Aaron was nominated. Allan Singer suggests "Welcoming Committee" for new conference attendees. Brian suggested that Allan be mentored in welcoming function by Membership Chair. It was proposed and accepted that Bruce Aaron and Allan Singer be elected as Membership Co-Chairs – they were so elected unanimously.

Discussion continued about the importance of orienting new conference attendees to the unique "culture" of our conferences. Suggestions made included a "buddy system" and first-timers orientation to the conference, particularly to explain the process groups, community meetings, etc., which are unique to AAGT. Brian stressed the importance of keeping members informed that organizational activities continue BETWEEN conferences, via interest groups, conference calls, and experiments with mailing Board meeting minutes to members. Brian will work with Ann Bowman, Secretary, to produce narrative reports of Board meetings for wider membership distribution.

10. Financing Board Members' Attendance at Annual Meetings

Brian expressed the need to recognize that it is costly for Board members to travel to Annual Meetings, in view of the fact that we are growing more international, which makes for built-in inequities. Discussion to be continued to explore ways to assist Board members, based on the principle that the presence of each is valued, and it is the Board's wish to move toward some form of equity of the financial burden of attendance.

11. New Business

A. Bud suggests adding membership categories such as "Lifetime Member", who would pay one large due (i.e. \$1,000.00), with perhaps small (\$20) annual dues. To be further researched with Membership Co-Chairs.

B. Proposal regarding organization name change, brought up in Community Meeting, to be included in minutes; proposal was as follows:

"-That the name of *Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy* be changed to the *International Association for the Advancement of Gestalt Therapy*, hereinafter in this proposal referred to as "the Association".

-That an ad hoc committee of four be established by the Association, for the purpose of enhancing and stimulating the Association's effort to develop the international composition of the Association's membership. Two members of said committee will be offered by the Board of the Association to persons who have been members for at least two years of the organization now known as IGTA; and two positions on this committee will be filled by the Association's Board or at a community meeting from the membership of the organization formerly known as AAGT. These four persons will be representative of the current diversity of the Association. The Chair of this committee will be offered to one of the two persons coming from the organization currently known as IGTA, and said Chair will be an ad hoc member of the Association's Board. The committee's duration will be at the pleasure of the Association's Board, based on the Board's and the community's assessment of the continuing need for it. Should no member of this committee emerge from the organization now known as IGTA, two additional members will be recruited from the organization now known as AAGT. In this case the chair of said committee will be drawn from the four IAAGT persons who have agreed to serve on the committee."

(See Footnote below for clarification of context)

Bud brought up the need for investigation of legal name change process, which must be done in the State of the original incorporation. Brian will enlist the help of Secretary Ann Bowman in this investigation.

Bud volunteered to coordinate and sponsor the 2007 Annual meeting in Berkeley, California, as well as the Southwest Regional Conference, if possible. Brian will contact Isabel Fredrickson regarding this possibility.

Footnote: The name change proposal was drafted by four people, including Bud, and read at the Community Meeting by Bud. One objection was raised by someone who thought the "A" for "Advancement" had been left out. Bud clarified that this was not the case, and the proposal was then approved unanimously at the Community Meeting. MM

Present Configuration of the Board:

Brian O'Neill, President

Peter Philipppson, President Elect

Peter Cole, Treasurer

Ann Bowman, Secretary

Bruce Aaron, Allan Singer, Membership Co-Chairs

Marilyn Myles, Tine Van Wijk, RCP Co-Representatives

Ansel Woldt, Archivist/Continuing Education

Marcy Stern, Newsletter

Morgan Goodlander, Bud Feder, OM Co-Chairs

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn Myles

