

OrigamiUSA
Annual General Meeting
June 23, 2007

Board Members Present:

Tony Cheng, V'Ann Cornelius, Marc Kirschenbaum, Robert Lang, Jan Polish, June Sakamoto, Maria Velazquez, Wendy Zeichner, Margaret Van Sicklen, Janet Yelle

Board Member Absent: N/A

Also Present:

Attending Members of OrigamiUSA

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tony Cheng (President) opened the meeting at 5:41 p.m. and welcomed the attending Members of OrigamiUSA. Tony announced that there were over forty visitors from Japan present at the Convention this year and highlighted their associations. He noted OrigamiUSA holds the largest origami convention in the world. He also highlighted the key part volunteers play in making things possible. He asked the members to continue to volunteer as teachers, to assist the office, to join committees and to express their ideas and feedback freely. Tony then called on Jean Baden-Gillette to commence the Election of Directors.

Election of Directors

Jean Baden-Gillette described the election process and thanked those individuals who voted by proxy; it was noted that those who cast votes support the Board and the organization.

Distribution of ballots took place and were collected by Michael Naughton. The vote was officially closed. The results were reported at the end of the meeting

Introduction of Board Members

Tony introduced the OrigamiUSA Board members.

Introduction of Administrator

The new Administrator, Rachel Langley was introduced by Tony.

Directors' Reports

Financial Report/Convention:

Robert Lang spoke about the past issue of the inappropriate use of the OrigamiUSA debit card by Jan Polish to guarantee a hotel room. He addressed various concerns that had been presented over the past 3 months and relayed to the members that the Board had addressed the issue; had held 3 hours of meetings to discuss it in detail; had received input from OrigamiUSA's accountant and lawyer on the topic; and had decided that, because of ambiguities in the existing policy and a lack of intent to gain personal benefit, no action against Jan was necessary. However, the Board agreed to and approved a modification to the debit card policy to eliminate the possibility of future such ambiguities. After portions of the Board deliberations were distributed to the OUSA mailing list, leading to very negative public discussions in that forum and elsewhere, Jan Polish felt it best to step down as Treasurer to reduce the controversy. Robert was then elected as interim Treasurer of OrigamiUSA. It was unanimously decided that Jan would complete the closing of the 2006 financials.

Jan Polish addressed the financial results for 2006. There was an increase in assets of \$105,000 for 2006. This was as a result of several factors, including a \$9,000 bequest from the estate of Peg Tregelis as well

Development - Jan reported that as a result of several development projects, profit for 2006 was \$75,000. This is up from \$46,000 in 2005.

Source – Jan reported that The Source has experienced a loss in profit and was down by \$10,000 in 2006.

Financial figures will be printed in a coming issue of The Paper.

Convention - Jan reported on this year's convention and noted that there were approximately 650 paid attendees; 258 classes (a record); 146 teachers; 9 countries and 38 states represented.

Robert reported that the OrigamiUSA organization made one time donations to the following:

- Green Fuse Films
- The Origami Database
- Digitizing of the Florence Temko Exhibition

Robert discussed the major factors resulting in variances from the financial plan: (1) higher-than budgeted convention revenues, (2) higher-than-budgeted Development funds. He also noted that the profit from the SOURCE was lower than budgeted, and that steps would be taken to better understand the SOURCE financials in the coming year. Overall, however, 2007 was a very strong year, financially.

Presentation of Special Award to V'Ann Cornelius

V'Ann Cornelius was presented with a special plaque by Jan Polish and Robert Lang in acknowledgment of her efforts in furthering the recognition of Origami as an art form. V'Ann was greeted by a standing ovation and she thanked all members for their own contributions in furthering origami as an art.

Continuation of Directors' Reports

The Paper / Introduction of Editor:

Wendy Zeichner reported that two "double-issue" issues of The Paper were produced this year. Issue #96 is currently with the designers and will focus on local area groups. She also asked that if anyone was interested in being involved with The Paper, particularly editors, to please contact her.

Membership:

Tom Hull articulated his concerns over the continual decline in membership. He also apologized for not following up on his promise to create a survey to capture information on why individuals are not members of OrigamiUSA and why existing members do not renew their membership. His hope is to fulfill this promise within the next year.

He also stated that this may be the time to re-evaluate the mission of OrigamiUSA and evaluate how OrigamiUSA can best serve the origami world in the here and now. Tom asked that members email him with any thoughts on how to move the organization forward.

PCOC:

V'Ann Cornelius reported that PCOC '07 will be held in Vancouver from November 9th to 11th at the Fairmount Hotel. She announced both Joseph Wu and Robert Lang will be an active part of PCOC this year. V'Ann also mentioned there will be a formal exhibit of origami on display at this year's PCOC. Further details as they become available will appear on the OrigamiUSA website.

Local Groups:

Janet Yelle thanked Lori Gregory for her assistance with the local group questionnaire that went out to all area groups. Results to appear in the next upcoming issue of The Paper.

The Source:

Maria Velazquez acknowledged Phyliss Meth, the manager of The Source, in the audience and then introduced Mark Kennedy.

Mark Kennedy thanked Phyliss Meth for all her hard work throughout the years and presented her with a Special Award for her twenty years of service to the OrigamiUSA organization and the running of The Source.

Maria encouraged individuals to advise OrigamiUSA of any papers or books that they think would be of interest to others.

Lending Library/Library:

Tony thanked the Library Committee members and reported current holdings in the Reference Library include over fifteen hundred and sixty titles.

Tony reported there are 116 books available in the Lending Library which is run by deg farrelly. Tony stated that requests have increased overall in the past three years.

Publications / OrigamiUSA Website:

Marc Kirschenbaum reported publications had another great year producing yet again another great collection. He reported it would not be possible without the Publications Committee members which he announced. He asked for members of OrigamiUSA to continue to submit their work and diagrams for the Annual '08 edition.

Marc also reported that there is an effort being put forth to revitalize older publications through online archiving.

He additionally reported that the OrigamiUSA web server after many years will be transitioning from John & V'Ann Cornelius's home to a new location. He thanked them for their generosity in hosting the server all these years.

Copyright/4OSME:

Robert Lang reported that in 2007 he was continuing his efforts in addressing copyright issues that effect Origami artists as well finding ways to support the right of these artists.

4OSME made a \$9,000 profit and had 191 attendees.

Exhibition / OBC:

June Sakamoto announced that the American Museum of Natural History 2007 Holiday tree theme will be Mythical Beings. Delrosa Marshall and Sok Song will be the organizers for this year's Holiday Tree coordination as well as the Annual Gift.

Origami by Children competition is unique and raises people's awareness of the level of folding that can be achieved by children. June stated this year's exhibit looked incredible and she looks forward to even more incredible submissions next year.

World Origami Days:

Tony spoke about World Origami Days and that this year it would be held in conjunction with Japan's observance of this day. World Origami Days will commence on October 24, 2007, Lillian Oppenheimer's birthday and continue straight through to November 11th, 2007 which is Japan's observance of Origami Day. Tony stressed the importance of sharing the art of origami during those weeks for the furthering of the art and the survival of origami and its history.

Presentation of Awards by Rachel Katz:

Ranana Benjamin Award:

Mark Kennedy was the recipient of the Ranana Benjamin Award honoring his efforts as a "one man ambassador" of origami and for his generous spirit of sharing.

Florence Temko Award:

In recognition of her efforts of incorporating origami into her theatrical dance pieces, Koniko Yamamoto was presented with the Florence Temko Award.

Tony then stepped up and acknowledged the following retiring Board Members for their years of service:

- Ravi Apte – The plaque was accepted by his daughter on his behalf.
- Maria Velazquez accepted her plaque after eight years of service.
- V'Ann Corenlius accepted her plaque after eleven years of service with OrigamiUSA. In addition, Arnold Tubis and Boaz Shuval presented V'Ann with a gift of recognition from the San Diego and Los Angeles Local Area groups for her assistance over the years.

Election Results:

- See Addendum

Question & Answer:

Question: Kathryn Wagner asked what percentage of the membership is represented on the OrigamiUSA Yahoo Group List.

Answer: Robert Lang responded approximately 400 OrigamiUSA members are on the list. Approximately 25% of the membership.

Question: Ed Bright asked if it would be possible for the Finance Committee to provide a Year End Financial Report with columns representing both 2005 and 2006 for comparison.

Answer: Robert Lang confirmed this is possible and he would work to post something on the OrigamiUSA website reflecting this information in requested format.

Door prizes were distributed.

The Annual General Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by:
Rachel Langley, Administrator

OrigamiUSA
Annual General Meeting - Addendum
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ELECTION RESULTS

Michael Naughton announced that there were 18 votes that were in question as to their validity. These votes in question were crucial as they would decide who would take the 4th available seat on the board. Michael and Jean Baden-Gillette opted to announce the top three Local seats as well as the two Remote seats but would hold off on announcement of the 4th seat. They would work with the Home Office in verifying the validity of the votes in question.

Below are the finalized results of the voting as reported by Michael Naughton in an email subsequent to the Annual Meeting, reproduced here for convenience.

93 proxies were received by mail, of which one was blank and three were postmarked after the deadline, leaving 289 valid proxies received.

94 votes were received at the annual meeting in New York City, of which 77 were valid, 12 were invalid because the voter was not a member on May 4, 2007, 1 was invalid because the voter was a minor, and 4 were invalid because they were multiple votes on a family membership (each membership, including family memberships, is only allowed one vote).

In addition, two of the 77 valid votes were from voters who had previously sent in proxies, so the proxies were ignored and the votes at the annual meeting were counted, meaning a net total of 75 additional valid votes.

The 364 valid votes were tallied as follows:

For the "Local" seats:

Ros Joyce received 273 votes
Margaret Van Sicklen received 252 votes
Toby Schwartz received 238 votes
Tony Cheng received 213 votes
Shrikant Iyer received 208 votes
Jan Polish received 189 votes

For the "Remote" seats:

Robert Lang received 327 votes
Ruthann Bessman received 315 votes

The final list of eligible voters contained 1371 names, so 364 votes represents about 26.6% of the membership, which is the highest percentage in recent years.
