

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2020

Last year I started my report with “This year has brought many changes to PAL.” So what does one say about THIS year? Changes? Absolutely! Most of the changes are about our entire world, not just about PAL. But we move forward, and we adapt.

So, aside from a global pandemic, what's new, you might ask? Well, last year at this time we were getting used to new recording software and a new computer network in the office. We got a good, solid 7 months with Obi, the new software, before the lockdown hit, and I'm happy to report that it's much more versatile than our old software. We did encounter a few wrinkles, but have worked most of those out and Obi is serving us well. And our 1-year-old computer network makes it easy to work remotely, away from the office. Who knew when we upgraded last August that this aspect would become so vital!

As much as I'd like to avoid the topic, I really do need to give you a COVID-19 update: Because he lives nearby, Mark has been able to be in the office with increasing regularity since May. For the most part I've been working from home, and in August started coming in once a week. It will be a while before we're ready to welcome back our volunteers, but in the meantime we're both continuing to record, so please contact us by phone or email if there's anything you'd like to have read. And in the meantime we are considering alternative ways for our volunteers to get back at it, possibly remotely, and hopefully one day soon we will be able to return to our full capacity. Stay tuned.

On a sad note, this evening we are saying goodbye to two of our board members, Anita Carroll and Marie-Catherine Rombaut. M-C, our Treasurer and French reader isn't with us this evening because she and her husband have recently moved to France. Anita is the person who made it possible for us to hold our AGM in that beautiful space at ACCES Employment the last three years. She will continue to consult with us on such things as grant applications. Much gratitude to both of you for your years of faithful service and your valuable contributions, especially at our board meetings.

Back to a happier topic. Tonight we honour Heather Goode and Wanda Fitzgerald for 10 years of volunteer service, Heather as a reader and Wanda as a board member. We have emailed them Indigo gift cards, and appreciation certificates are in the mail. Thank you so much for your dedication and your continued support.

Last year I *ended* my report with “Many thanks...for another great year, and we look forward to what the next will bring.” Little did we know! There’s no telling what this coming year will bring, but even in this strange, new online culture, PAL remains relevant and we have proven we can change with the times. Thanks for being here this evening; your participation keeps us reading!