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**NETWORK NEWS**

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**Goldbloom Awards**



More than 100 community members and leaders were on hand on October 22 at Montreal's St-James Club as the QCGN held its annual celebration of community during the third edition of the Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Awards ceremony.

QCGN president Noel Burke said the goal of the evening was to celebrate the contributions of our community to Quebec and Canadian society - work that is exemplified by the work of exceptional role models like Victor and Sheila Goldbloom and this year's laureates of this award: Joan Ivory, Gemma Raeburn-Baynes and Aline Visser.

"The Goldblooms, whose long list of volunteer activities is astounding, and volunteers like tonight's three winners are absolutely essential to the vitality of Quebec's English-speaking community," said Burke. "Thousands of volunteers like Mrs. Ivory, Mrs. Visser and Mrs. Raeburn-Baynes dedicate thousands of hours to community groups and institutions that are the lifeblood of our community. "

The evening celebrated three extraordinary volunteers who have contributed to the vitality of our community as well as all the other unsung heroes who improve our lives and our communities, said Burke. "Volunteers provide invaluable service to our English-speaking community and to the community at large. Without them our community would not be as vital as it is. "

Honoured guests for the evening included Mrs. Sheila Goldbloom and Dr. Victor Goldbloom, the namesakes of the distinguished community service award; Mr. Graham Fraser, the Commissioner of Official Languages; Federal MPs Mauril Bélanger, Francis Scarpaleggia and Tyrone Benskin; Provincial MNA Jacques Chagnon; as well as Saulie Zajdel, who has been named by the Conservatives as an advisor on the English-speaking community of Quebec. Also on hand were members of our outstanding panel of judges including past QCGN president Linda Leith, Gretta Chambers and past laureate of the award Elsa Bolam.



The QCGN would also like to thank the generous sponsors that helped make this year's edition of the Goldbloom Awards a success. Pictures of the event are available at [www.qcgn.ca/2011-goldbloom-awards](http://www.qcgn.ca/2011-goldbloom-awards).



## President's Message

### PRIORITY SETTING

This fall, roving consultations have been taking place across the province with community stakeholders and QCGN member organizations. This process will culminate in a province-wide conference to be held at the Intercontinental Hotel on March 23-25, 2012. Community priorities identified during this forum will be used to guide federal priorities in the future allocation of support and resources for Quebec's English-speaking communities.

The aim of these consultations is two-fold. The first is to collect information from the community sector about their needs and strategic goals which will be used to influence federal policy, particularly the next *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality*.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FORUM

Building a Sustainable Future for  
Our English-speaking Communities

The second aim is to bring different groups and organizations together to network and discuss how the community can better mobilize to achieve shared goals. For more on the priority-setting process, go to [www.qcgn.ca/strategic-priorities-forum](http://www.qcgn.ca/strategic-priorities-forum).

In September, the QCGN Board appointed eight members of the Priority Setting Steering Committee who will be overseeing this priority-setting process for the English-speaking community of Quebec. The new members, who are appointed for a five-year term, will join me after I was appointed by members at the Annual General Meeting in June. The PSSC, which is a permanent committee of the QCGN board, is now composed of three QCGN Board members: Irene Tschernomor, Cheryl Gosselin and myself; Ann Marie Powell (Megantic English-speaking Community Development Corporation), Leila Marshy (Quebec Writers Federation) and Peter Quilliams (Townshippers Association, who were appointed from the QCGN membership; as well as John Gancz (Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation - CEDEC) Economic Development Province, Debbie Horrocks (Quebec English School Board Association), and Brad MacDonald (Community Leader, Gaspé) who represent the community at large.

### POLITICAL REPRESENTATIONS

In September I met with MNA Geoff Kelley to discuss the Provincial Government's relationship with the English-speaking Community. Kelley suggested a low-key approach to building relationships with Quebec including initiating ground level projects with other MNAs.

A delegation from QCGN that included Board Secretary Dan Lamoureux, Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge and I met with NDP representatives Robert Aubin and Yvon Godin to discuss the implications of Bill C-315 that would modify the Labour Code to impose French language work obligations for employees of federal undertaking in Quebec. Thomas Mulcair, the original patron of the bill, joined us midway through the meeting and explained the bill. We had the opportunity to voice our concerns and ensured we will be invited to committee if the bill makes it to that stage.

In the meantime Industry Minister Christian Paradis last week announced that the Government of Canada will launch a consultative committee to review the situation regarding language of work in Quebec's federally regulated private businesses (for example banks, airlines, shipping companies, etc). The consultative committee will seek the views of stakeholders to examine whether employees of those businesses are fully able to work in French. The QCGN responded by noting that it continues to advocate against federal legislation that would extend language of work rights only to French Quebecers employed in federally regulated businesses. We believe that these rights should be enjoyed by English and French Canadians, no matter where they are employed in Canada. For more details see press release [here](#). As the QCGN prepares for advocacy work on this subject, I invite you to contribute your opinions to me. Send your comments to Stephen Thompson, our Director of Policy, Research and Public Affairs at [stephen.thompson@qcgn.ca](mailto:stephen.thompson@qcgn.ca)

Dan, who is currently doing a work internship at the QCGN as part of his Community Public Affairs studies at Concordia University, and I also met with the Commissioner of Official Languages in early October just before he released his [annual report](#). Commissioner Graham Fraser previewed the content of his report which recommended that the government adopt legislation to ensure a more coherent implementation of Part VII of the Official Languages Act which, he argued, is being applied inconsistently by federal departments and agencies. We also discussed Canadian Heritage funding in the context of the Strategic Funding review and mutual concerns about the impact of the Conservative's federal deficit reduction plan by the Conservatives will impact our organizations and communities. Finally we briefed Mr. Fraser on the important work the QCGN is doing to incubate a provincial network for English-speaking seniors and thanked him for the research work OCOL is doing on seniors that will forward our work with seniors and other orphaned sectors.

## BOARD BUSINESS

In October, QCGN's new Board of Directors met for a first face-to-face meeting. Aside from usual board business, the directors participated in a facilitated discussion about its role in the Network and the community as well as its goals and objectives for the current mandate. The Board set three main orientations including Taking Stock, Re-invention, and Mobilization. The six main areas for action discussed included: Recognition of the value of the English-speaking community of Quebec in Quebec Society; Strengthening and Expanding the Network; Access to services for English-speaking Quebecers; Youth and Economic Development; Advancing our political presence as well as seeking greater autonomy through Increased funding for QCGN.

As part of the Board's objective to seek greater autonomy through the possible creation of a foundation, Irene Tschernomor, who sits on the Board and the Audit and Finance Committee, participated in Imagine Canada's National Summit in Ottawa from November 28 to 30. Imagine Canada is a national organization that supports and strengthens charities and non-profits so they can, in turn, support the Canadians and communities they serve.

## SHOW US YOUR ROOTS

Earlier this month the QCGN and CBC launched a video contest that encourages English-speaking high school students to discover the history and heritage of their families and communities. The My Quebec Roots Contest, which is co-sponsored by the English-Language Arts Network (ELAN), the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN), and the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is designed to highlight the stories of English-speaking Quebec.

Through this contest we want students to discover family and community traditions that were passed down from previous generations and to get to know the history of their English-speaking communities. We want our youth to be aware of, and to be proud of, their cultural heritage and identity. We hope all our regional associations and organizations working with youth will get involved in encouraging their high-school students to get involved. For more on the contest, go to [www.qcgn.ca/myquebecroots](http://www.qcgn.ca/myquebecroots).



The poster for the 'My Quebec Roots Video Contest' features a word cloud of Quebec regions and communities. The text on the poster includes:

- My Quebec Roots Video Contest**
- Are you between 13 and 18?**
- Send us a 2-3 minute video about your roots in English-speaking Quebec and you could win:
- First prize – IPAD 2 16 GB**
- Second Prize – IPOD 8 GB**
- Third Prize - \$50 CBC Shop gift certificate**
- Deadline: April 30, 2012**
- Full details @ [cbc.ca/montreal](http://cbc.ca/montreal) or [qcgn.ca](http://qcgn.ca)
- Sponsored by** (Logos for CBC, QCGN, ELAN, and QAHN)
- SHOW US YOUR ROOTS**
- ELAN** (English-Language Arts Network)
- QCGN** (Quebec Community Groups Network)
- QAHN** (Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network)
- QESBA** (Quebec English School Boards Association)



Noel Burke  
Interim President



## Director General's Message

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

As the staff support to the Nominations Committee I would like to report on its activities. The committee is presently composed of Marlene Jennings, Linda Leith, Reed Scowen and Richard Walling, who was asked by his peers to take on the role of Chair. Sara Saber-Freedman, who was named for a two-year term, resigned in mid-summer. Since the Annual General Meeting, committee members have spent hours reviewing how best they can fulfill their mandate to recruit for the leadership positions on the QCGN board. The committee has taken the time to examine best practices, evaluate medium and long-term options and gathered views from the Board. In this last sprint before the end of the year, the Nominations Committee is working closely with the Board to ensure the continued renewal of

leadership and stability. You will recall that in June Noel Burke accepted the position of Interim President until December 2011.

### HOC COMMITTEE ON ROADMAP

The House of Commons Committee on Official Languages is forging ahead with its study entitled, *Evaluation of the Roadmap: Improving Programs and Service Delivery*. The QCGN was the first community group to appear - and allow me to say that the questions from members during the two-hour experience were both expected and out of the ordinary. As a result of some of the lines of questioning, we decided it would be appropriate to follow-up with a letter to the members. I invite you to explore the new Government Affairs [link](#) on our website to listen to or read about that appearance and other testimony before parliamentary committees. We have submitted a list of those groups who have shown an interest in appearing before the committee and we hope that a large contingent of key stakeholders in our community will have that opportunity. We remain available to support you in your preparation if you are called. On November 14, QCGN was invited to provide evidence in the committee's examination on the use of the Internet, new media and social media and the respect for Canadians' language rights, and their study on Air Canada's obligations under the Official Languages Act. As a result of our visit, the QCGN has begun talks with Air Canada on how they can support the vitality of our community.

### HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICE PRIORITIES

In preparation for the end of the Roadmap plan in 2013, Health Canada asked the QCGN to undertake a study on the health and social service priorities of English-speaking Quebecers for 2013-2018. An initial discussion document entitled *The Health & Social Service Priorities of Quebec's English-Speaking Population 2013-2018* presents the perspectives of a sample of English-speaking Quebecers in different communities with respect to their experiences accessing health and social services in their language and their priorities. The document has been sent to the provincial health ministry for input and the report will be finalized in the coming months.

### FUNDING SURVEY

The QCGN is regularly invited to discuss funding of Community Sector representing Quebec's Official Language Minority Community with Federal stakeholders. In the context of the federal government deficit reduction plan, the review of the Roadmap, and the creation of the next Roadmap, it is critical that the QCGN be well informed to advocate effectively on behalf of our community and Network. I recently asked some of our Executive Directors to reply to a brief survey for the current review by Canadian Heritage (CH) which is rationalizing programs to ensure efforts are not being duplicated and resources are being put to best use. These responses were critical to making the case regarding value of money and the alignment of CH programs to the priorities of the ESCQ. But in order to make sure we are well armed when invited to discuss funding with federal stakeholders and testifying before the Senate and House of Commons Standing committees on Official Languages, we are trying to get a better read on the Network and how it is funded. To help us understand the current funding levels, analyze their impacts on the community, and to better relate funding to the needs of our members groups, the QCGN is about to undertake a wider survey of member organizations. Please follow this link [www.surveymonkey.com/s/QQP8F6R](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QQP8F6R) and take a few minutes to reply to our survey.



## SENIORS AND ORPHANED SECTORS

Because of Quebec's aging population - a recent Statistics Canada report on the 2008 census shows that, for the first time in the province's history, Quebec has more seniors (1,253,600) than young people under 15 (1,241,700) - we have chosen the creation of a network for English-speaking seniors as our first priority for working in orphaned sectors. We will then prioritize other sectors including youth. It is interesting to note that despite the large number of orphaned sectors in Quebec, the last network created through PCH funding was the English Language Arts Network (ELAN) and that was in 2005.

On September 30 and October 1, seniors and caregivers came together for a National Senior's Day conference to review what had been done so far and to determine how to move forward. Conference participants determined the senior's network to be inclusive of different regions and cultures, to have diverse leadership, and to be an authentic voice for English-speaking seniors in Quebec. On November 17, a working committee of 14 individuals willing to commit time and efforts into moving the Network forward met with a mandate to bring in representative of other communities and sectors. The working group invited Guy Rodgers, who has formed three non-profit groups including the English Language Arts Network, to discuss the challenges and opportunities of setting up a Network, and they determined the next step is community mapping to find out "who are we?, where are we?, and how are we?". A core group that includes Anne Usher, David Cassidy, Sandra Shaw, Ardyth Patterson, Irving Appleby, and Cherryl Henry-Leggo will meet again in December to work on the research agenda and other issues before meeting with the broader committee early next year.

## SAVE THE DATE - AGM ON JUNE 16

The Board of Directors has set the date of the next Annual General Meeting and Members Convention that will be held in Montreal on the weekend of June 15. Important issues to be discussed and passed at the AGM will include a proposed Membership Recruitment and Retention Policy and ensuing By-law changes as needed.



Sylvia Martin-Laforge  
Director General

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## Town Halls to Discuss Options for **Membership Policy**

By John Walker  
Chairman of Membership Sub-Committee

After consulting members at the Annual General Meeting, members of the Membership SubCommittee in conjunction with the Governance Committee have been busy coming up with options for the creation of a new Membership Recruitment and Retention Policy that aligns with the vision, mission and mandate of the QCGN as well as our governance structures.

Our analysis has explored a number of issues including levels of membership - active, associate, supporting, honorary, and individual - as well as categories of membership - regional associations, sectoral organizations, institutions, etc. Finally we have looked at membership services and potential fees, recruitment and retention strategies, and whether or not the time has come for the QCGN to rebrand itself with a name that better represents the Network and what it does.

In undertaking its work, the membership committee began with a review of the principles of QCGN membership included in the current By-Laws which, from the outset, state that members are the source of QCGN legitimacy and credibility. Committee members upheld the principles enunciated and its work reflects the will of the Network as expressed in the By-Laws. The Committee noted that although the current membership allow for institutions and networks, its current composition is exclusively regional associations and sectoral organizations. Asking members to designate themselves as either regional associations or sectoral organizations created confusion for those that consider themselves neither fish nor fowl. As we look to the future, there is no obvious or comfortable category for institutions.

Over the past decade and a half, the Quebec Community Groups Network has more than doubled its membership going from the original 13 in 1995 to 38 at the last Annual General Meeting. The membership has diversified and the Board of Directors has decided that expanding the membership is one of its main goals for the coming years.

In keeping with the goals of the Board, the SubCommittee believes that membership development should allow for the establishment of different membership categories so as to expand our membership base as widely as possible. It also suggests that membership development should be progressive and targeted, and initially focused on reaching out to networks, institutions and community groups that would enable the QCGN to enhance the representation of the Network and engage specific community leaders in the identification of key community priorities that need to be addressed on behalf of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec.

The committee distilled three main orientations for the development of a new Membership Recruitment and Retention Policy that would take into account the Board of Director's desire to expand the membership base. They are:

- **Credibility/legitimacy** - Expansion must increase the credibility and legitimacy of the QCGN with government stakeholders and the community.
- **Impact on governance** - Expansion must be done in a manner that allows the organization to be governed in an efficient and effective way.
- **Operational** - Expansion must consider the organization capacity of the QCGN (implications on resources and staff).

Other issues considered important include the need for diversified funding sources; the need to include orphaned sectors (Seniors, Youth, Women) and orphaned regions (Greater Montreal, Three Rivers, Saguenay) as well as strategic sectors not represented in our Network (Institutions, Bilingual Municipalities, Economic Development Groups, Educational Institutions). The Committee also believes it is time to address the issues of members within members (within members) as well as regional associations within regional associations. It is clear that some sectors are well represented on the board while others are not.

The committee understands that there is resistance to change, especially among the original Network members who don't necessarily see added value to the expansion of membership. It also hopes to address other issues including a lack of cohesion in Network and a lack of understanding of the vision and mission of the QCGN. Finally, the committee wants the Board and the Network to look at the risks and opportunities of re-branding the QCGN.

Following input from members at the 2011 Annual General Meeting, the Membership Subcommittee has come up with three options for consideration (see details in the Membership Options Powerpoint in the email attachment. The first option, which defines membership by categories, is essentially the status quo with some fine tuning to clarify categories. The second and third options call for greater expansion and defines membership by the desired level of engagement of member organizations, that is full members (Active and Associate), Affiliate (Supporting and Individual) as well as a category for Honorary members.

Full members would be divided into Active Members, which includes Regional Associations and Sectoral organizations, and Associate members, which includes members of members and regional association located within the same territory of a larger regional association. The Associate member level also includes institutions and other community groups as well as Regional and Sectoral groups that desire a lower level of engagement.

The policy proposal also includes a discussion on the general benefits of membership (Access to Annual General Meeting and all activities of the QCGN at member rates, the Daily Briefing, etc.) as well as a discussion of right and responsibilities. It is clear that different levels of membership have different rights and responsibilities. Full Members are more engaged and have more rights and responsibilities while Affiliate Members are less engaged and have fewer rights and responsibilities and mainly receive general benefits. Honorary members fall somewhere in between.

The Membership subcommittee recommends that the initial recruitment of existing organizations in “missing” sectors and regions such as educational groups like the Quebec English-speaking School Board Association (QESBA), the Quebec Association of Independent Schools (QAIS), and post-secondary institutions such as CEGEPs and Universities. Another sector not currently in the Network is Community Economic Development represented by the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC)). The committee also recommends that recruitment look at municipalities and institutions that have official bilingual designation.

Because we are developing a Membership Recruitment and Retention Strategy, the Membership SubCommittee also wants to have a conversation with current members to discuss what is need to retain them. This must be done while taking into account the principles of membership as well as the orientations that are guiding the creation of a new policy, that is the impact on the credibility of the Network, the impact on the governance of the organization; and, most importantly, the impact of expansion on the organizational capacity of the QCGN.

I encourage the Executive Directors and volunteer leaders of all of our organizations to participate in at least one Town hall to debate the option the Membership SubCommittee has set out for discussion. I am convinced, more than ever, that expanding the membership of the QCGN will allow us to move forward together on the important work of identifying, exploring and addressing the strategic issues affecting the development, vitality, and sustainability of English-speaking Quebec.

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## Top 10 things we learned from Governance Essentials Program

*With a view to assisting the development of a strong QCGN Board and Network, the QCGN secured access to a pair of scholarships to take part in the Governance Essential Program for Directors of Non-Profit Organizations (NFP program). In November, Cathy Brown, the Executive Director of Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA) and Dan Lamoureux, Secretary of the QCGN Board of Directors, participated in the three-day course that was attended by three dozen individuals with vast experience and different backgrounds.*

*Cathy and Dan say the program, which included a frank and informative exchange of ideas, opinions and experiences with Executive Directors and volunteer board leaders, provided them with a strong foundation on how not-for-profits should operate and tips on how to make structural changes in their organizations. Areas of learning included governance models, setting the vision and stage for good governance, strategy and stakeholder management, best practices, ethics, the duty and roles of directors, as well as influencing change.*

*Here is Cathy and Dan's top ten list of tips for best practices for boards and organizations:*

**1 - Measurement criteria:** Non-profit organizations and their Boards of Directors should have a clearly defined mission; committed and knowledgeable directors with time to give to the organization; a strategic planning focus with measurable goals and monitoring; transparent policies; as well as regular meetings and interaction with staff.

**2 - Induction:** Effective boards need orientation programs for directors and committee members to help them understand their roles and responsibilities as well as the ins and outs of the organizations they are leading. Introduce new recruits to each other and senior staff; provide an overview of programs, policies, procedures; provide a manual with By-laws and other useful background material; and brief new board members on major issues the Board and organization will be dealing with in the coming months.

**3 - Ethics:** All Boards should have a clear Code of Conduct that includes conflict of interest guidelines and confidentiality issues. This set of moral principles and values allows the Directors to operate with honesty, integrity, and due diligence.

**4 -Size is important:** The organization's structure and needs are among the factors that determine the size of boards. Board size affects how efficiently and effectively board members share and fulfill their responsibilities. If this is true, larger boards don't mean better boards. If the Board is too big, every member may not have the opportunity to participate actively and it can be difficult to manage. If the board is too small, its members may be overworked and unproductive. For an optimal exchange of ideas, the size of a Board should be nine to 12 people.

**5 - Committees:** Boards should have appropriate committees that serve the needs of the Board and the organization. Ask each Director to serve on at least one board committee or task force. Distribute assignments based on the experience, skills, interests, and available time of board member and so that no one is overloaded. To encourage smooth functioning: Prepare mandates that include responsibilities and goals, and update as needed. Assign an appropriate staff member to work with each committee.

**6 - Role of chair:** It is important to understand the role of the chair. He or she chairs meeting, sets the agenda and manages the affairs of the board and ensures the board meets its obligations and responsibilities.

**7 - Financial oversight:** The Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to funders, taxpayers and donors for all assets and the effective monitoring of the financial management of the organization. The Board, along with the Treasurer and its Finance and Audit Committees, must have controls in place to ensure financial responsibility and oversight including a regular review of policies and procedures, the organization's budget, review and approve financial report and audited statements.

**8 - Liability insurance:** Because of article 337 of the Civil Code of Quebec, directors are liable for the decisions taken by the Boards they sit on. Courts defer to the director's judgment so long as they brought an appropriate degree of prudence and diligence in reaching a reasonable decision. Courts expect directors to make a reasonable decision, not a perfect decision. However, in order to protect its volunteer leaders from lawsuits, organizations should provide insurance for its directors.

**9 - Succession planning:** Because few events in the life of an organization are as critical as the departure of its leaders, effective organizations must have succession planning strategies for their presidents, board directors, committee chairs and top management. Leadership transition should begin long before outgoing leaders depart and extend far beyond the work of the nomination committee. Leadership recruitment should be shared by the whole board and organization which should be on constant lookout for possible recruits with specific interests and skills.

**10 - The most essential thing we learned at Governance camp...** Current federal legislation governing not-for-profits has undergone a significant review. New legislation will replace the current system of federal incorporation with a simplified regime. All corporations currently governed by the Canada Corporations Act will be required to apply for a certificate of continuance or be subject to dissolution. The deadline is 2014 so all non-profits had better start planning for the change. For more information, go to this [link](#)

## Calendar of **Events**

Please make sure to send us the details of your major events for inclusion in the [QCGN calendar](#).

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