



Academy of Certified Archivists Newsletter

Volume 26/August 1996

THE RECERTIFICATION PROCESS: A REPORT FROM THE REGENT

*by Willow Powers, C.A.
Regent for Certification Maintenance*

The deadline for sending petitions for "early bird" recertification was June 1, 1996. Petitions for recertification began to arrive in March, and since then they have been arriving in increasing numbers. The committee is particularly grateful to the many petitioners who spent time, care, and thought in filling out the form, and who made sure it was legible, clear, and informative. Unfortunately those petitioners set a high standard for their colleagues, not all of whom were able to follow the instructions. Next year the committee will rewrite the instructions and hope that this modification in the process will help.

The committee and its reviewers are going through the review procedures slowly and carefully. There are three teams of three reviewers analyzing the petitions. These reviewers are unsung, hardworking heroes in this process. It takes at least as long to review the petitions as to fill them out. In addition to checking credits claimed (many members have made math mistakes to their own detriment) and evaluating the facts on which credits are based, our goal is to create a fair process that maintains high standards. The reviewers are also looking to set precedents and to draw up some guidelines for the next year. The committee and reviewers aim to be fair, professional, and to create a system that justifies the membership's commitment and involvement in certification.

Petitioners will not hear the results of their review until after the SAA/ACA meetings in August/September. Originally, the date given for announcing the results was November. However, the committee and its reviewers hope we will be finished before then. I will announce at the ACA meetings in San Diego the date by which petitioners will be informed of the results by the Secretariat. New certificates will be issued to all successful petitioners.

Next year the process will be repeated, and once again

those who are due to recertify will be contacted, reminded, and sent petition forms. The committee will keep you informed through the newsletter as well.

During this initial year of the recertification process, we have had to disallow credits which don't fit the instructions and definitions that we have supplied. However, in cases where candidates end up with less credits than they need to recertify, they will be able to resubmit next year. This option for a one-time resubmission the following year will be open in the future to all petitioners who do not receive 100 approved credits.

Once again, my personal thanks to all of you who have taken part in this "early bird" recertification year. If anyone has a question of any kind -- on whether their packet was received, on the credit system, on next year's prospects -- please contact me: Willow Powers, Regent for Certification Maintenance; warpowers@aol.com, phone: 505-827-6344, Ext. 525.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Elizabeth W. Adkins, C.A.

As my term as president grows closer to an end, and I look forward to my new role next year as Regent for Nominations, I want to let each of you know how much I have enjoyed my involvement with ACA. I hope that what I have to say might persuade some of you to consider volunteering for task forces, committees and even positions on the board of regents.

I have been a member of the ACA board since 1992; prior to that I served on the Finance Committee and in exam development workshops, so I have had an unusually long exposure to the issues and people involved in managing ACA. There has been a lot of hard work involved, and close to blood, sweat and tears in sorting through difficult times and issues. But I have enjoyed my ACA experience beyond my wildest expectations, and can attribute a great deal of professional growth directly to my Academy experience.

- My involvement with the Exam Development Committee and the exam development process was both exhilarating and humbling. I worked with some of the best minds in the profession on developing test questions — a rigorous process that is intellectually stimulating. I believe that anyone who has helped to develop exam questions holds a deep appreciation for the quality of our exam. I also helped to edit questions on domains of the profession with which I had very little direct experience. The end result is that I am now more knowledgeable about professional standards and practices.
- When I administered the 1993 and 1994 exams, I had direct contact with many young people just entering the profession. I started to appreciate just how much certification means to them, and how hard the successful candidates have worked to attain it.
- When I first joined the board, I fully expected to run into a lot of controversy and unhappiness with certification and the ACA. We do have some disgruntled members and other critics, and certainly we have a long way to go before we can satisfactorily address all the complaints (in fact, we will never be able to satisfy everybody). But the delightful surprise has been the large number of people who

have expressed their earnest support for the Academy and its goals.

- The ACA board is an unusually congenial and hard-working group. Perhaps because our focus on certification and professional standards is so clearly defined and limited, the board has worked well together despite heartfelt differences of opinions. And my board service has given me the opportunity to befriend many individuals whom I had never met before. I now know each of the board members from the past four years very well, and can assure you that ACA has benefited from their extraordinary leadership abilities. And I have benefited from the networking linkages forged by my new friendships.

Perhaps it can be argued that the benefits of my ACA experience have paralleled the benefits attributable to any professional involvement. But since ACA is a relatively small, focused organization, I think these benefits are compounded. I am grateful for my years with the ACA leadership, and highly recommend the experience to those of you who will follow me and the rest of the board!

Celebrate success!

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BY-LAWS REVISION

At its April meeting, the board discussed procedures to be followed in the unlikely event of a tie in an ACA election. Earlier this year, the Society of American Archivists ran into this very situation, and in accordance with their by-laws, sent run-off ballots to all SAA members. The board feels that a similar solution for ACA would incur expense, might run into timing problems and could be problematic in case of a second tie. Therefore the board unanimously approved that the following revisions be made to ACA's by-laws (new wording is underlined):

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERS

Section 4. Voting Rights. Each member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. In the event of a tie in any vote taken by the members, the matter shall be settled by a vote of the members of the Board.

This revision to the by-laws will be submitted to ACA members for a vote at our annual meeting in San Diego. If you cannot attend the meeting, please send any concerns or comments to ACA president Elizabeth W. Adkins, C.A., Kraft Foods Inc., 6350 Kirk St., Morton Grove, IL 60053. Fax: (847) 646-7699. E-mail: eadkins@kraft.com.

ACA MEETING SET FOR AUG. 29

The Annual Meeting of the Academy of Certified Archivists will be held Thursday, August 29, from 12:30-1:30 at the Sheraton Harbor Island Resort in San Diego. It will be held in conjunction with the Society of American Archivists' Annual Meeting, and box lunches will be available at the door. Look for details in the SAA Program.

ELIMINATION OF BACHELOR'S DEGREE REVISITED

During its mid-year meeting in April, the board discussed some issues that were raised after the decision to phase out the Bachelor's degree as an approved prerequisite for taking the exam (as of 1999, the minimum requirement will be a Master's degree). Some members raised concerns that by phasing out individuals with a Bachelor's degree, the Academy would be precluding some desirable individuals from joining our ranks, including:

- Individuals who have taken many hours toward a graduate degree, but who have not received the degree.
- Individuals who have worked in the profession for many years, and who contribute to the profession through publishing and speaking at conferences — but whose financial circumstances may preclude them from getting a graduate degree.

The board agreed that these concerns are valid, but that the reasons for instituting the degree phase-out still stand — that is, that the Academy is in the business of supporting professional standards, and that we want to encourage the Master's degree as a minimum educational credential. Therefore the board voted to keep the current phase-out plans in place, but to provide some flexibility in the appeals process. Any individual who has demonstrated some outstanding commitment to the profession, such as through a great deal of graduate-level education or through exceptional professional involvement, may submit an application with an appeal to make an exception to ACA's normal educational standards. Such appeals will be considered and settled on a case-by-case basis.

IN MEMORIUM

ACA received notification on May 20, 1996 of the death
of one of our members :

Bernice A. Strong

NOT-SO-'SECRET' BALLOTS

by Elizabeth W. Adkins, C.A.

Due to an unfortunate oversight, mailing labels were affixed to the back side of this year's ballots; as a result, the normal anonymity of ACA's voting process was lost. Rest assured that we did not do this deliberately, and that steps will be taken so that it does not happen again.

Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to all members who agreed to run for office. ACA appreciates all the volunteers who participate in the governance of this organization.

ACA ELECTION RESULTS

Vice President/President-Elect: Charles Schultz

Regent for Exam Development: Jane Kenamore

Regent for Outreach: Lee Miller

Nominating Committee: Kristine Haglund

ACA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

By the time you receive this newsletter, you should have received the new ACA membership directory. We regret any inaccuracies or incomplete information that appears in the directory, and hope that you will help us correct such entries. Please send updated information to our Secretariat:

Steve Grandin

Capitol Hill Management Services, Inc.
48 Howard Street, Albany, NY 12207

Phone: (518) 463-8644 • Fax: (518)463-8656

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The ACA Newsletter is published three times a year: April, July, and November.

Deadlines for submissions are: March 1, June 1, and October 1.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 28, 1996 Certification Exam:

San Diego, CA

Chicago, IL

Philadelphia, PA

August 29, 1996 ACA Annual Meeting:

San Diego

Academy of Certified Archivists
48 Howard Street
Albany, New York 12207