

Toronto Focal Forum

2023-24 Annual General Meeting

President's Report – Leif Petersen

A full season of live meetings! How good is that?! Our membership declined after returning to live meetings - we're currently sitting at 19 full members plus 2 associate members. That includes 1 new member, David Kempton, later in the season. Welcome Dave, we look forward to starting a full season with you in September.

We are very thankful to the members who have continued the Forum's tradition of meeting live to view prints. Between health challenges and extended vacations, we haven't had a full complement at each meeting; for those who haven't been able to join us, be assured that we think and speak of you often and look forward to having you back with us. We all wish Carm the best and know that Judy is giving him the best care. Marvin and Mort, welcome back from the sunny south.

We continued holding our meetings at the Seoul House and, although we were moved to a smaller room than in the past, it was certainly adequate for the 8-11 members who have attended. On average, we view 10 prints per meeting, which usually includes 2 or 3 extra prints from a couple of the members. The meetings are a little more informal than we've had in the past in that they are all 'no seal' evenings and the moderator takes part in the print evaluations. We have all thoroughly enjoyed this format, with the smaller group.

On June 17th, Bonnie, and I hosted a BBQ on our patio for TFF members and guests. It was a beautiful day, lots of fun and conversation and good food. Thanks to those who contributed to the meal. We're planning to do it again this year...more to come on that.

On January 6th, the Executive Board held a lunch meeting, perhaps appropriately, at the Village Idiot Pub and then crossed the street to the AGO to take in the Arnold Newman photo exhibition. We all went away with an great appreciation for his impressive body of work as well as admiration for how he thought outside the usual box of photographic composition rules and how he applied his personal style to his art.

With a bit of work and lots of help, we were able to bring 'Snapshots' back to life and managed to publish 6 issues since January. As reported previously though, the newsletter will now be published once per month.

Steve Gilligan has initiated an exciting project for next season. He will be calling on all members for their input in creating a photo book to celebrate our 85th year, which begins in September.

Thank you, Steve, for taking this on. We know it will be first class and something we will all take great pride in owning and showing off.

I appreciate very much the dedication of the members who volunteer for the Executive Board positions. Their contribution to the Forum has kept us moving forward and looking for new ways to do that as we adjust to a lower membership and meeting attendance. Marie, Craig, Nick and Allan continued in their roles on the Board and we were able to draw on Dass (Past President) and Steve Gilligan (iVP...interim VP) for their participation and wisdom during Board meetings.

The new Executive Board, which will be elected this evening, will meet at the end of the season to set dates, fees and priorities for next year. I extend my personal thank you to all of our current Board members for volunteering to continue to serve the Focal Forum members. I am still hoping that, and am optimistic that, someone will step up to take on the role of Vice President next season and be prepared to step in as President in 2 years.

This is my 2nd season as President and, although I've enjoyed this role very much, I'm pleased to be passing the 'gavel' on to Nick Janushewski. Thanks to everyone for making my 2-year term so enjoyable.

Congratulations to all members on another successful season with the Toronto Focal Forum...85 years is coming up very quickly!!