



*The Explorers Club Washington Group*

< <http://www.explorersclubdc.org> >

## **Annual Report for 1 January 2018 – 31 December 2018**

*By Bill Runyon, MN 01 – ECWG Vice-Chair 2018*

Fiscal Year 2018 began with the 2017 report written by Vice Chair Mike Wyrick being filed by the ECWG Chair, Lonnie Schorer, with HQ. Our Board members and committees, led for the second year by Ms. Schorer, were even more active in 2018, and took the initiative—planning two years ahead—to host the 2019 Lowell Thomas Awards Dinner. The 2018 ECWG Board activities are summarized in this report.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

Election of ECWG Board Members for 2019 was held at the Annual General Membership Meeting held at the Cosmos Club just prior to our annual black-tie dinner lecture on December 1, 2018 with 120 attendees. ECWG Chair, Lonnie Schorer called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, a quorum was confirmed and the proposed slate was unanimously approved by acclamation by the quorum.

The second order of business at the annual meeting was the ECWG Bylaws revision, which was undertaken to ensure they are internally consistent and gender-neutral. The revision was done to reflect and clarify current ECWG organization, practices, and procedures, and to ensure these are substantially consistent with the By-Laws of The Explorers Club, as modified in 2015. The revision was distributed to members 30 days in advance as required by the ECWG Bylaws. The motion to accept the Bylaws revision was unanimously approved by acclamation by the quorum at the annual meeting. It was subsequently stamped with the corporate seal at December 12<sup>th</sup> Board meeting and a copy immediately filed with HQ.

Ms. Schorer announced that she would step down as she had served the two term limit, but would continue as chair of the 2019 Lowell Thomas Awards Dinner, and that John N. Maclean would also be stepping down as secretary after one term. They are thanked for their service.

Board and Officer Biographies were added this year to our improved ECWG website and can be accessed there.

## **2018 BOARD OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The 2018 Board Officers and Committee Chairs who served for 2018 were approved at the December 13, 2017 ECWG Board meeting with the new Board members present.

### **2018 ECWG Board Officers**

Chair: Lonnie Schorer, MN98

Vice Chair: Bill Runyon, MN01

Secretary: John Maclean, FN 03

Treasurer: Bruce Blanchard, MED78

Program Director: Michael Max, FN05

Membership Director: Deborah Bell, FN14

Immediate Past Chair: Jack Williams, FN03

### **2018 Standing Committee Chairs**

Program Committee: Michael Max, FN05

Membership (and Outreach) Committee: Deborah Bell, FN14

Grants Committee: Polly Penhale, FN01

Public Relations and Web Editor: Craig Cook, FN01

Ad-hoc Nominating Committee 2018: Jack Williams, FN03

### **2018 ECWG Board Members (15):**

#### ***CLASS OF 2018***

CAROLINE A. BAKER, FN 04

MARILYN E. LIVINGOOD, FN 03

SUSAN SAWTELLE, MN 01

RICHARD VONDRAK, FN 15

SARAH K. YEOMANS, FN 07

***CLASS OF 2019***

ERIC L. FIES, MN 16  
TERRY D. GARCIA, MN 13  
DONALD J. GERSON, FE 78  
MICHAEL J. MANYAK, MED 13  
POLLY A. PENHALE, FN 91

***CLASS OF 2020***

Kenneth W. “Ken” Kambis, FN 11  
Betsy Stewart, MN 05  
Lee Talbot, MED 57  
Arnella Trent, MN 10  
Michael A. Wyrick, MN 08

**2019 BOARD OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The 2019 Board Officers and Committee Chairs were approved at the December 12, 2018 Board meeting by the newly approved 2019 Board of Directors:

**2019 ECWG Board Officers**

Chair: Bill Runyon, MN01  
Vice Chair: Craig Cook, FN 01  
Secretary: Bruce Molnia, FN 80  
Treasurer: Bruce Blanchard, MED78  
Program Director: Michael Max, FN05  
Membership Director: Deborah Bell, FN14  
Immediate Past Chair: Lonnie Schorer, MN98

**2019 Standing Committee Chairs**

Program Committee: Michael Max, FN05  
Membership (and Outreach) Committee: Deborah Bell, FN14  
Grants Committee: Polly Penhale, FN01  
Public Relations and Web Editor: Craig Cook, FN01  
Ad-hoc Nominating Committee 2018: Lonnie Schorer, MN98

**2019 ECWG Board Members (15):**

On December 1, 2018, the Class of 2021 slate and replacements was approved by the ECWG Board as the Class of 2021:

***CLASS of 2021***

Jay Kaplan, MN01  
Marilyn Livingood, FN03  
Susan Sawtelle, MN01  
Sarah Yeomans, FN07

***CLASS OF 2020***

Kenneth W. “Ken” Kambis, FN 11  
Betsy Stewart, MN 05  
Lee Talbot, MED 57  
Arnella Trent MN 10  
Michael A. Wyrick MN 08

***CLASS OF 2019***

ERIC L. FIES, MN 16  
DONALD J. GERSON, FE 78  
MICHAEL J. MANYAK, MED 13  
POLLY A. PENHALE, FN 91  
\*CLIFTON FOSTER MN18

Those listed in italics resigned due to work conflicts or personal situations.

\* Elected to fill vacancy

**Board Meetings.** The ECWG Board meets at 11:30 a.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, excluding July and August. A review was done in 2018 to determine the best location for Board meetings. As a consequence, ECWG Board meetings are held at two locations, alternating between the National Geographic Society headquarters (due to its long history with The Explorers Club) and offices provided by Mr. Runyon, (which serves as an important back-up and has the optimum location and facilities) who has served as Secretary for six years, Vice Chair in 2018 and is Chair for 2019.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Membership Director, Deborah Bell, FN14

In 2018, ECWG:

- Welcomed 27 new members.  
Fellow - 3, Member - 14, Term - 1, Friend - 3, Student - 6
- Membership sent out 19 invitations to join, 8 from website inquires.  
Submitted 11 applications to TEC.

Total ECWG membership (2018 year-end): 273

6 members were reported as deceased in 2018. One member relocated outside of the ECWG area and 1 relocated into the ECWG area.

### DINNER/ LECTURE PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Program Committee Chair: Michael Max, FN05

Monthly dinner/ lecture meetings are held, except for July and August, at the Cosmos Club, with some changes to accommodate other events such as ECAD and Lowell Thomas dinners.

**Matt Rutherford**, at the Cosmos Club, Saturday evening, 20 January 2018, Presentation: Circumnavigating the Americas by sail, a year at sea (84 in attendance).

**Curt Westergard**, MN09, at the Cosmos Club, Saturday evening, 17 February 2018. Presentation: Aerial Imaging as a Means of Exploration (56 in attendance).

ECAD in NYC, no dinner or other event.

**Dr. Robert Griffith**, at the Cosmos Club, Saturday evening, 21 April 201. Presentation: Conserving Endangered Rhinos in South Africa by Dehorning (65 in attendance).

**Andrew Rowen**, at the Cosmos Club, Saturday evening, 19 May 2018.  
Presentation: What It Took to Launch and Execute Columbus's First Voyage (58 in attendance).

**Deborah Bell** (ECWG Guide): Summer picnic field excursion, Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site (In excess of 25 in attendance)

**Dr. and Mrs. S.W.J. Seager**: Hosts for Bombash for field trip at their farm, Chetwood Park, The Plains, VA: (In excess of 25 in attendance).

**Sarah Yeomans**, Saturday evening at the Cosmos Club, 20 October 2018.  
Presentation: Exploring the Past with New Technology: Climate, Epidemics, and the Fall of an Empire (77 in attendance).

**Donal Manahan**, Saturday evening at the Cosmos Club, 20 October 2018.  
Presentation: Antarctic Exploration: From the "Heroic Age" of Human Endeavor to the "Science Era" and the Future (87 in attendance)

**Tom Paradise**, Saturday evening at the Cosmos Club, 20 October 2018.  
Presentation: Thirty years in the valley of the Crescent Moon, Petra (Jordan). (123 in attendance).

An initiative from Board member Sarah Yeomans to increase camaraderie among our Group as well awareness and interest with a younger demographic of qualified prospects was to organize a monthly "happy hour" at the nearby popular restaurant Le Mirch with exploration names for drinks and appetizers. The monthly gatherings have been a big hit for its first three months (September—December 2018) with average 25—30 Explorers Club members and qualified guests.

#### **EXPLORATION & FIELD RESEARCH GRANTS COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair: Polly Penhale, FN01

The Explorers Club Washington Group's Exploration and Field Research Grants Program was established to encourage young men and women to add to the body of knowledge of the earth, its people and the universe through exploration and field research. The ECWG Student Grant Program is partially financed by those whose contributions are greater than the annual ECWG dues amount.

Applications were reviewed by the Grants Committee, and grants were awarded to the eight graduate students enrolled in a college or university in the local area (Maryland; Virginia; Washington, DC; West Virginia).

The grant awards totaled: \$16,313. It was paid from the ECWG Grants account.

The awardees and their projects are:

**Samantha Gleich (Ph.D.), University of Maryland, Center for Environmental Science, Horn Point Laboratory, “Water quality and the silification of diatom communities of the Anacostia River, Chesapeake Bay”, Virginia.**

**Lauren Jonas (M.S.), University of Maryland, Center for Environmental Science, Columbus Center, “Phosphorus and marine sponges: investigating a key element within the coral reef biogeochemical cycle”, Hawaii.**

**Adriane Michaelis (Ph.D.), University of Maryland, Anthropology, “Describing cultural ecosystems services associated with oyster aquaculture”, Eastern U.S. coastal states.**

**Sylvain Nyandwi (Ph.D.), George Washington University, Anthropology, “Resilience to forest fragmentation in sympatric chimpanzees and golden monkeys in Rwanda: relating fine-scaled measurement of disturbance to behavior and health”, Rwanda.**

**Nanette C. Raczka (Ph.D.), W VA, Biology, “Investigating how climate change will alter microbial stabilization of soil carbon in tropical forests”, Costa Rica.**

**Dorian Russell (M.S), American University, Environmental Sciences, “The influence of edge effects on mantled howler monkey (*Alouatta palliata*) food resource use and availability in a fragmented forest”, Costa Rica.**

**Elizabeth Tapanes (Ph.D.), George Washington University, “The how and why of diversification and innovation: a study of unusual pelage diversity in a lemur species”, Madagascar.**

**Josh Wayt (Ph.D.), University of Virginia, Linguistics, “The poetics of Dakota kinship: revitalizing language and reconstituting community at Lake Traverse Reservation”, South Dakota.**

## **FY 2018 FINANCIAL REPORT**

Bruce Blanchard, Treasurer

As stated in the ECWG Articles of Procedure:

ECWG was granted tax-exempt status under sec. 501-C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code in 1990, was incorporated in the State of Delaware, and received a certificate of authority to operate in the District of Columbia in 1994. It was granted tax-exempt status by the District in 1998.

The Short Form 990-EZ - Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax – for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, was filed with the Internal Revenue Service and Club headquarters by ECWG Treasurer Bruce Blanchard.

During fiscal year 2018, ending June 30, 2018, our net worth decreased by \$3,506. This is the third year that we have run at a deficit. Fortunately, we were able to make our routine transfer of at least \$7,000 from our operations account to our exploration (student grant) account. We awarded 8 grants, amounting to \$16,313 to graduate students in our area. Our grant account ended the year down \$7,902 for an end-of-year total of \$54,931. This last amount may seem large, but it reflects the current status of our grant restricted savings resulting from our FY2010 gala at the Portuguese Ambassador's residence and our FY2013 Lowell Thomas Awards Dinner (LTAD).

As of June 30, 2017, we had 210 dues payers out of a total membership of 273.

### **ECWG COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair: Craig Cook

During 2018, the committee devoted the majority of its time to two areas: 1) revising and streamlining the website and 2) working with the hosting service to upgrade our servers.

#### **Website revision**

The site which has existed unchanged for at least ten years was overhauled. Old pages, photos, drafts and postings were either archived or deleted. The site which exists on a CMS backbone running on WordPress was changed to a more user-friendly theme. <http://www.explorersclubdc.org/>



### **Server improvements**

Over the past few years server hosting was becoming slow with a few outages occurring. A new server with updated hosting software was installed and the site migrated over without incident.

### **ECWG Flag Expedition board**

In 2017, the Board decided to recognize at chapter dinner meetings, all expeditions conducted by chapter members upon their return. This has become regular practice at our dinner/ lectures. Reflecting this, an interactive map showing ECWG member Flag expeditions was added to our website with location, Flag number, description and link to the flag report appearing on mouse-over. This year, Craig Cook and Lew Toulmin carried the flag on expeditions and these were added to the map.

### **Continued projects**

The data base integration with the website was begun and will be finished within the next 6 months. A web-based form linked to our dinner meeting registration and also as a standalone item will provide information regarding member and guest's exploration areas of interest. This will now be utilized as a way of integrating members with events and event marketing and planning.

### **Improved Email lists and announcements**

To ensure all members who are on the email lists are assured of receiving notices and news, the Board reviewed the procedures. The Vice Chair took on the task and began a pilot of use of the Constant Contact email marketing program. The program has all of the previous lists entered for a total of 200 identities in our long-standing categories. The program allows professional newsletters/ notices to be sent to them. As 2018 ended, a format was under design and will soon be in use. Additionally, a list of associates/ friends and even a non-members guest list will be created as part of our plan for increasing contact of qualified members.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COMMITTEES**

### **VIDEO LIBRARY & ARCHIVES**

Video Library I/C Don Gerson

ECWG is very proud of its noteworthy and prodigious collection of lectures, which it is believed should be readily available to explorers, scientists and researchers everywhere. There are 261 recorded dinner lectures dated from 17

October 1987 through 1 December 2018, which are all available on DVD. All lectures were put on DVD format and reviewed and verified by Board Members. The Board resolved to ensure that these DVDs are available for purchase. A complete list may be found on our chapter website: <http://explorersclubdc.org>.

Video Library I/C, Don Gerson, embarked in 2018, on a new project requested by the ECWG Board of Directors to convert the DVDs to digital files, which can be downloaded directly. As of this date, 231 are now in the new digital format, but more work will need to be done before they will be available on line. So for now, and into the future, the DVDs are still available.

In December, The Board created an ad hoc Committee for Video Library & Archives to determine the methods of preservation, organization and access to the ECWG archives, which includes: Grant program awardees proposals and projects; the lecture a/v recordings; Board Minutes; and other records pertaining to the Group and its members. The ad hoc committee is headed by Bill Runyon with members Polly Penhale, Bruce Blanchard and Don Gerson.

#### **OFFICERS HANDBOOK OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

ECWG Chair, Lonnie Schorer, led an initiative to compile the ECWG Officers Handbook of Duties & Responsibilities. As she succinctly wrote in the Preface to the handbook:

*The Officers of the ECWG Board of Directors have been a great support to me during the past two years—as has the entire Board—in helping me carry out my duties as ECWG Chair on many projects. The Officers Handbook of Duties & Routines is both a record of and a tribute to their work, as well as a description for future officers and board members.*

*Duties & Routines collates a description of each position, providing a record to serve as guidance for future Board officers. Further, these building blocks may allow a greater expansion of what is arguably the most robust chapter of The Explorers Club.*

*The descriptions in Duties & Routines are the actions taken in execution of ARTICLE V—OFFICERS in our EXPLORERS CLUB WASHINGTON GROUP INC. ARTICLES OF PROCEDURE approved by the membership on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2007.*

*Duties & Routines does not amend the ARTICLES AND PROCEDURES. Any variance in these write-ups from the ARTICLES AND PROCEDURES is subordinate to them.*

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE: LOWELL THOMAS AWARDS DINNER 2019**

Chair: Lonnie Schorer

The ad hoc Lowell Thomas Awards Dinner (LTAD) led by ECWG Chair (2016—2018) Lonnie Schorer, began planning in January 2016. It was quickly realized that in Washington, DC it is necessary to plan two years ahead due to the busy venues in our Nation's Capital. Thus, Ms. Schorer made the unprecedented request for TEC agreement to schedule in advance two years to October 11—13<sup>th</sup> 2019. During 2018, the LTAD Committee 2019 researched venues and planned many other areas of the event. The work was continuous throughout the year: MOUs were written and signed with The Mayflower Hotel (for the gala awards dinner), TEC (for fiduciary and operational concerns) and with National Geographic (for the Saturday awardee lectures.) Behind-the-scene excursions were scheduled at Arlington Cemetery, Library of Congress map room, National Air & Space Museum, National Gallery of Art, Holocaust Museum, Smithsonian National Museum of History, and National Geographic. Sunday brunch will be at the venerable Cosmos Club. Kathy Sullivan is the keynote speaker at the awards dinner and Miles O'Brien the MC. There has already been some save-the-date promotion and announcements, including at the 2018 Lowell Thomas in Boston and the official save-the-date from HQ is designed and ready to go out as this report is being written. This much planning, so far in advance is unprecedented in Lowell Thomas History—but it is all intended for raising the highest-ever funds to support our Student Exploration Grants program chaired by Polly Penhale with her capable committee. To this end, fund-raising has also started. ECWG also has the purpose to bring together explorers and help chart the future of Exploration with the theme “Exploring 21<sup>st</sup> Century Frontiers.”

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Runyon  
ECWG Vice-chair 2018