

Reaching Forty

by Vernon Lee Sheeley

Professor Sheeley, a long-time AHEAD leader and organizational historian, has agreed to prepare a four part series on the history of AHEAD in honor its 40th Birthday. Sheeley's personal archives and continuing interest in this division provides a unique perspective on our 40 years. INFOCHANGE is extremely proud and fortunate to have Dr. Sheeley's history.

Happy birthday, AHEAD! This article is my fourth and last printed in the INFOCHANGE newsletter series during 1991-92 to help recognize the association's 40th anniversary as a division of AACD. The first issue highlighted "Thirty-nine and Counting," followed by "Becoming a Division--The First Year" and "Editorships" in subsequent quarterly issues to get a flavor of the association's life and times. The articles were my attempts to shed light on some of the beginnings and endings of SPATE and AHEAD history. A lengthier article titled "Beyond 40: Past President Perceptions," was prepared for publication in JHEAD to assist the association's leaders and members with decisions about future courses of action and direction.

According to calendar dates, the 40th anniversary year of AHEAD as a Division of AACD occurred on April 4, 1992, during the presidential term of JoAnna S. White (1991-92). The anniversary year began at the 1991 national convention in Reno (NV), setting for the 39th consecutive annual meeting with APGA/AACD. The 40th anniversary festivities culminated on the East Coast during the annual AACD convention at Baltimore in March 1992.

A climax of the yearlong birthday celebrations featured a birthday luncheon ceremony on Sunday, March 29--a decision announced by the AHEAD leadership at the Reno convention. The past presidents were honored during this social event and at a reception that evening. Near the close of the luncheon, the past presidents as a group were successful in blowing out all 40 candles on the birthday cakes with one mighty puff! At the invitation of President JoAnna White, 10 of the past presidents reminisced briefly.

Through the presidents, all of those members who served in other leadership roles for the association's membership in the past were honored also. The dedication and personal commitments of professionals, who cared deeply about their own professional growth and the organization's future, helped to make the association the success it is today.

During the first 40 years as a division, SPATE/AHEAD had 39 presidents. You may be interested to read the complete list of SPATE/AHEAD presidents, pivotal figures in the four decades during 1952-92. An asterisk after the name indicates those who attended the birthday luncheon.

- William H. Zeigel, Jr. (1952-53)
- David M. Trout (1953-54)
- Jack Shaw (1954-56)
- Dugald S. Arbuckle (1956-57)
- Collins W. Burnett (1957-58)
- Paul C. Kelso (1958-59)
- Merle M. Ohlsen (1959-60)
- William E. Truax, Jr. (1960-61)
- Leslie O. Carlin (1961-62)
- Mavis L. Holmes (1962-63)
- Fred C. Proff (1963-64)
- William H. Edson (1964-65)
- E. Wayne Wright (1965-66)
- Frank C. Noble (1966-67)
- Eugene D. Koplitz (1967-68)
- W. Price Ewens (1968-69)
- Josiah S. Dilley (1969-70) *
- Arthur M. Wellington (1970-71)
- Carroll L. Miller (1971-72)

- Earl C. Davis (1972-73)
- James C. Dickinson (1973-74)
- Roberta J. Starkey (1974-75)
- Joseph W. Hollis (1975-76) *
- Ruth Ann White (1976-77)
- Don W. Locke (1977-78) *
- John Starkey (1978-79)
- J. Brad Hastings (1979-80)
- Al Slawson (1980-81)
- Joel S. Dill (1981-82)
- Linda C. Mahan (1982-83)
- Edward S. Wilson (1983-84) *
- E. H. Robinson, III (1984-85) *
- Richard R. Schumacher (1985-86) *
- Richard M. Canada (1986-87)
- Richard J. Hazler (1987-88) *
- Douglas R. Gross (1988-89) *
- Nelson Goad (1989-90) *
- Jean Wilson (1990-91) *
- JoAnna S. White (1991-92) *

Among this group, two served presidential administrations with APGA: Dugald Arbuckle (1959-60) and Merle Ohlsen (1969-70). Ohlsen later served as president of another AACD division.

From Chicago in 1953 to Baltimore in 1992, small groups of SPATE/AHEAD members journeyed from one major city in the United States to another to meet with APGA/AACD during the annual conventions. Over 100 members attended the first SPATE luncheon at Chicago. Approximately 50 gathered at the luncheon in Baltimore, counting the 11 past presidents. Conventions served as communication vehicles to conduct short business meetings, present programs, renew friendships, carry on old traditions, create new projects for the association, and establish new ties with professional friends.

The association's leaders during 1991-92 realized that the map of the association's future remained cluttered with uncertainties. They met at Atlanta for an Executive Board meeting during August 9-11, 1991 to re-examine and try to ensure that the association would flourish into the future. Topics of serious study included a workable vision statement. After lengthy discussions, the AHEAD Board members adopted the following mission statement printed in the 1991 fall issue of INFOCHANGE: "The Mission of the Association for Humanistic Education and Development is to promote positive human growth and development through counseling, education and advocacy." Also the Board members suggested and reacted to possible name selections to replace AHEAD.

Another crucial item of discussion at the Executive Board meeting in Atlanta was the association's membership record. During most of the four decades from 1952-92, periodic membership problems of both SPATE and AHEAD mirrored deep weaknesses in attracting members--often a disturbing reality for smaller organizations.

During SPATE's history as a division of APGA from 1952-74, membership never reached 1,000. After the transformation to AHEAD late in 1974, modest membership increases indicated less than dramatic growth for the next 13 years. Membership reached its zenith when the end-of-year total was 3,401 in 1987. Then occurred a downswing which moved into a steady lingering and frustrating decline to 2,600 by March 1, 1992.

A lack of members and adequate financial resources were symptoms of failure to produce a set of goals or missions relevant to attracting more members. Despite the successes of AHEAD programs such as the Empty Plate, etc., losses of membership were warning signs that AHEAD's ambitious education and development goals were destined to fail unless more was done to meet the needs of members and others served. According to the treasurer, Stephen D. Regan, the fund balance of AHEAD at the beginning of the 1991-92 presidential term was approximately \$10,000 less than that recommended for an AACD division, and the budget consistently is greater than income.

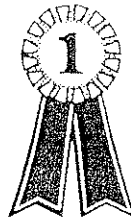
For several years during the 60s and early 70s, SPATE presidents questioned the value of continuing as a division of APGA. At the national APGA convention in New

Reaching Forty (cont.)

Orleans (1974), the APGA Senate raised the question regarding the minimum number of members necessary to retain division status. Persons holding authority positions in APGA questioned the value of SPATE continuing as a division. Suggestions were that the organization change or close the books. As during SPATE's history and after the conversion to AHEAD, each president was determined to improve the association's record and bridge the troubled membership problems. Each president searched for ways to promote the association's future.

My close-up look forward into the future of AHEAD as Judith Kovacs-Long takes office (1992-93 president), reveals that the penetration rate of the association's membership pool remains small. AHEAD exists in a larger marketplace of professional organizations within AACD that compete for the time, energy, resources, and commitments of members and potential members.

AHEAD operates with a small group of leaders each year who involve few members--an existing organizational structure for many years. Perhaps some important steps toward serious governance reform need to be taken? If changes were instituted to involve more members, perhaps the membership would be more attracted to AHEAD and search less for alternative professional paths. Without some significant membership increases soon, the association may be forced to close its books!



AHEAD Award Winners

AHEAD honored award winners and past Divisional Presidents at the annual convention luncheon held in the Impulse Room of the Sheraton Inner Harbor on March 29, 1992. A birthday party motif featuring a birthday cake with Peach Brandy frosting highlighted the festivities after Gary Landreth's keynote address.

Past AHEAD Presidents attending the celebration included: Nels Goud, Don W. Locke, Richard Schumacher, Ted Wilson, Mike Robinson, Joe Hollis, Jean Wilson, Richard Hazler, and Josiah Dilley.

The Les Carling Professional Leadership award was presented to Paul Turgi for his involvement in children's rights and efforts with the AACD Government Relations Committee which he soon will chair.

The Joe and Lucille Hollis Publications Award was presented to Dave Capuzzi and Doug Gross for their book *STUDENTS AT RISK*.

Bonnie Nus, Production Director of INFOCHANGE, was named a special award winner for her work on lay-out and design with the association's newsletter.



Former SPATE/AHEAD Presidents at AHEAD 40th Anniversary Party
(left to right) Nels Goud, Josiah Dilley, Joe Hollis,
Richard Schumacher, Ted Wilson, Jean Wilson, Don W. Locke,
Richard Hazler, and E.H. (Mike) Robinson