

# THE Association Manager

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter for Organization Leaders



WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT, <http://www.wamllc.net>

Issue IV, February 2004

## ASK WAM:

### Leader's Forum

Questions by association leaders, Responses by WAM, LLC staff

If you have a question for the next newsletter, e-mail it to [info@wamllc.net](mailto:info@wamllc.net).

**Question:** Dear WAM, I have been on the board of my association for more than three years, and there appears to be no end in sight. I am burnt out with my officer position, and would like to become just a regular member of my association! What do you suggest I do?

**Answer:** *This is a great question, and poses a situation that is extremely common in small to mid-sized non profit associations. It is important that you have a nominating committee that can seek out and recommend potential board members to the current board of directors. Be sure to promote the upcoming election, and seek volunteers, well in advance. This can be done with e-mails or mailings. However, it is likely that there are deeper issues here. Many professional sports teams have farm systems, in which they train and develop the skills of less-experienced players in hopes that they will eventually work their way up to the professional team. Similar to this analogy, a non-profit association's "farm system" is its committees. Some associations even require that its members serve on a committee prior to joining the board of directors. Nurturing future leadership is extremely important. By developing relationships with the members, WAM and its Boards of Directors can ensure effective leaders and continuity of services, year-after-year.*

**Question:** Dear WAM staff, the majority of our membership exists in the Greater Milwaukee area. However, we are a statewide association, and have had some difficulties recruiting and retaining members in areas outside of Southeastern Wisconsin.

**Answer:** *Out of the five associations that WAM manages, four are statewide; so we can certainly relate to these types of issues! The solution really begins with identifying the*

*problem, and then implementing steps to remedy it. Some associations we have worked with require a specific number of board members to be from these other areas. For example, you can adjust your bylaws to require that one board member be from the Madison-metro area, and another member be from the Fox Valley-metro area. Also, try to schedule some of your events and meetings during times and at certain places that may be considered more accessible. For example, a member in the Fox Valley-metro might be more likely to attend an event in Sheboygan County than Downtown Milwaukee. As a result, you should get more people to attend from the Fox Valley area, and Greater Milwaukee members should have no problem driving an extra 20-30 minutes to attend the event. By identifying the problem and implementing solutions, current and potential members in these other areas will recognize that they, too, can participate in the association's services.*

## Association Evolution

*The Natural Development of a Non-Profit Association*

**Why was your association formed?** If yours is like most associations, it formed because a group of individuals or companies had many similar public, private, social or financial interests.

Unless your association had strong-financial backing from the very beginning, your association most likely began without any professional staff or administrative support. In other words, it was strictly volunteer driven.

The goal of the volunteers is to grow the non profit organization and achieve its strategic objectives, year-after-year. An association is a business, and it must always be cared for and operated with the best of its financial interests in mind. The goal is typically to retain some sort of professional staff that can execute the strategic plans and other specific directives of the Board of Directors. This is where an

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**Association Revolution**  
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association can go one of two ways (keep in mind that you can always try both forms of professional services and ultimately use the one that works best for your association):

**Option 1: Hire a Staff-person or Staff.** Just like a professional business, an association is best operated in an office environment where the committees and board can meet. You may hire an Executive Director and other staff that will provide services to your membership. Office rent, office overhead, equipment and operating expenses, employee salary and benefits, management of employees, and payroll taxes will undoubtedly cast a heavy financial burden on your association that can cost in excess of \$60,000 to pay for a single staff person!

**Option 2: Hire an Association Management Company.** Wisconsin Association Management (WAM) is an association management company (AMC), and it provides full service management and a headquarters for its non profit associations on a contractual basis. Associations that hire an AMC come from one of two situations; 1) no staff or 2) in-house staff. They make the switch to an AMC because they realize the incredible efficiencies that can be achieved by operating an association under the same roof as other associations that do not pose a conflict of interest. Some of these efficiencies include: no rent, no payroll taxes, no salaries, and no management burdens. Many of the associations are shocked to discover that they currently employ one staff person or none-at-all, only to find out that WAM provides even better service with its four highly qualified staff people with over 20 years of association management experience! This results in higher costs savings and greater operating efficiencies to your association, and a fantastic level of comprehensive services that can be provided by WAM to your members.

**Please note:** To schedule an informational meeting or discussion with WAM, please call our office at (414) 271-9456 or e-mail [info@wamllc.net](mailto:info@wamllc.net). Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, your call will be held strictly confidential.



*The Wisconsin Association Management, LLC Staff  
Top Row: Doug Stangohr; Christopher Ruditys  
Bottom Row: Heather Westgor, Brian Parrish*

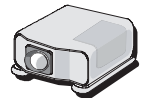
## WCREW's Membership Grew 83% in 2003

While the results are still coming in, Wisconsin Commercial Real Estate Women's membership increased by more than 83% during the 2003 fiscal year.

Working with WCREW's highly motivated membership committee, the WAM, LLC staff orchestrated several targeted membership recruitment drives over the past 9 months.

In a recent WCREW newsletter, 2003 President, Michele Horst, praised WAM, LLC for its "continued support in reaching our membership goals."

### Need a Projector for your Next Event?



WAM's easy-operation state-of-the-art projector can be rented for your next event. At \$150 per day, your association can rent the projector at a fraction of the cost of other venues that rent projectors. Please call (414) 271-9456 for more info.

## New And/Or Expanded Wisconsin Meeting Facilities

### Madison

- ❑ *Airport expanding* - Madison's Dane County Regional Airport is in the midst of an expansion that will double the size of its terminal, add surface parking, and make other infrastructure improvements.

### Milwaukee

- ❑ *Milwaukee auditorium reopens* - The historic Milwaukee Theatre reopened in November after a \$42 million renovation transformed the 1909 facility into a modern venue for a variety of events. The auditorium offers 4,100 seats and 38,000 square feet of function space. There is also a grand half-dome rotunda lobby.
- ❑ *Milwaukee Art Museum has new wing* - Adorning Milwaukee's lakefront is the Milwaukee Art Museum's \$100 million expansion by world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava. The unique wing-like structure features a 300-seat auditorium, a lake-view restaurant, and new gallery space.

### Wisconsin Dells

- ❑ *New convention center under way* - The Kalahari Resort & Convention Center has begun construction on a project that will more than double the size of its convention center. Expected to be completed this summer, the expansion will take the complex from 45,000 to 125,000 square feet of meeting and exhibit space, and feature a 21,000 square foot ballroom and 42 total meeting rooms.

Source: *Midwestern Update*, American Society of Association Executives

## Suggested Internet Links

Physical links to these websites can be found at <http://www.wamllc.net/links.htm>.

- Who are my legislators? <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/waml/>
- State of Wisconsin. <http://www.wisconsin.gov>
- Wisconsin State Journal. <http://www.madison.com/wisconsinstatejournal/>
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. <http://www.jsonline.com>
- Wisconsin Ethics Board. <http://ethics.state.wi.us/>
- American Society of Association Executives. <http://www.asaenet.org>



## Excerpt from President Bush's State of the Union Address, January 20, 2004

During his State of the Union Address, President Bush said, "On the critical issue of health care, our goal is to ensure that Americans can choose and afford private health care coverage that best fits their individual needs. To make insurance more affordable, Congress must act to address rapidly rising health care costs. Small businesses should be able to band together and negotiate for lower insurance rates, so they can cover more workers with health insurance. I urge you to pass Association Health Plans."

This pending legislation would allow associations to offer health benefits to their members and their members' employees across state lines. *The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)* is working diligently with a coalition to ensure that legislation for Association Health Plans (AHPs) is passed this legislative session.

According to the Senate majority leader, there are **"12 million employers and 80 million workers, strongly support H.R. 660/S. 545, the Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2003**, bipartisan legislation to strengthen and expand Association Health Plans (AHPs). This legislation will provide workers employed in small businesses and the self-employed gain access to Fortune 500-style health benefits now enjoyed by workers in corporate and labor union health plans."

Stay tuned for more information on this important legislation in the next issue of *The Association Manager*.

For past issues of *The Association Manager*, please visit . . . <http://www.wamllc.net/newsletter.html>.



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*Providing Innovative Management  
Solutions for Associations*

*"The reward of a thing well done is to have done it."*

**Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1860**

## WAM Announces Another New Client



The Interim Board of Directors for the Community Associations Institute Chapter of Wisconsin (CAI-WICIO) has unanimously selected Wisconsin Association Management, LLC as its management company. CAI is a national association dedicated to fostering vibrant, responsive, competent community associations. Our mission is to assist community associations in promoting harmony, community, and responsible leadership.

*The Association Manager* is published bi-monthly by Wisconsin Association Management, LLC to educate association leaders about running an effective non profit association. For more information about the comprehensive set of administrative services we provide to our non profit associations, please visit us on the web at <http://www.wamllc.net>.

*Providing Innovative Management Solutions for these Associations:*

