

## **Staff Report submitted by Will Coukell, Chief Operating Officer**

The biggest accomplishment this year was getting the audit done, for the very first time ever, on time. This has been something I have been trying to get done since I started at ACO and I am very proud to say, we did it, and I hope we will continue to do so. This is particularly important as we now have a signed contract with CRA promising that the audits will be on time moving forward.

Thanks to Marie and Tai who worked very hard along with me to get this done. Also, thanks to the many branches who got their information in to us in a timely manner. Your work makes things so much easier for us at audit crunch time.

We continue to try to improve our processes and have received much praise from the auditors for some of the innovations, particularly for the use of DropBox which has sped the audit process up substantially.

Other things happening this year:

Heritage Action Day was a success again this year thanks to the work of Alex MacKinnon, Program Coordinator and, of course the Policy Committee and Government and Community Relations Committee, we hope to improve things ever more moving forward and look forward to going back to an in-person event (at least in part) next year.

Membership

Tai and Marie started back in with personal visits this summer, we hope to have visits with most of the branches done by the end of the year. We are trying to group them, where possible, to also enable branch volunteers to get to know each other in hope that they will be able to reach out to each other when they need information, help or just a friendly ear.

As an alternative to in person meetings, Tai will offer online meetings. Tai will take this opportunity to get know the branches, find out their concerns, answer membership questions and teach those who need how to use Dropbox and the backend of the ACO website.

Tai has taken on assisting branches in collecting information for the audit and setting up and inviting branches to Dropbox. This means multiple emails and phone calls. If all branches know how to use Dropbox; collection of financial and other information will be easier and centralized for the auditors, bookkeeper and executives to access.

Fundraising

As you all know, we welcomed our new Fundraiser, Ali Talpur. Last years crash of the stock market, the declining global economy, and the new focus on protecting people from illness and poverty, are changing the landscape for fundraising for the foreseeable future. All charities will need to retool their fundraising strategies to some degree and we are no exception. We are trying to increase communication with donors and members so that we can maintain and deepen our connection with them. We need to tell all our constituents what we are doing to maintain ACO's resiliency, and we need to ensure that their confidence in us remains strong. There are many unknowns (such as how charitable foundations will adjust their giving in light of tremendous investment

losses) and we adjust to changing conditions on an ongoing basis. But in light of the recession and so much uncertainty, I think it's wise for us to reduce our expectations for fundraising this year and see what can be done to make the best of a very difficult situation.