

Dear Members,

Happy New Year

On behalf of the WACA Council, I wish all WACA members and their families a Happy New Year. Let us hope that 2021 brings quick relief from the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic and we can all enjoy good fortune and happiness in the months ahead.

53rd Annual General Assembly (AGA)

With the rolling out of vaccines that are now taking place to tackle the novel coronavirus, tentative plans are once again being set in motion for WACA to host the 53rd AGA in Bali, Indonesia, from 17–22 October with a pre-AGA tour of Java and a post-AGA tour of the Land of Dragons and the Lesser Sunda Islands. Itinerary details will be distributed shortly and then posted in the Event Calendar section of the WACA website: www.waca.org/events as soon as possible. A decision to proceed with, or further postpone, the AGA will be taken by the end of March.

Grand Venture Bonanza

Many WACA Member Clubs sold Bonanza tickets at local functions throughout the year and individual members bought Bonanza tickets at international events and the AGA. As there were so few events organised in 2020, however, the number of Bonanza tickets sold in this fund raising activity were drastically reduced and there is no indication that things will be very different until the second half of 2021. The WACA Council has, therefore, decided to suspend the Grand Venture Bonanza in 2021 and then have the Assembly decide at the end of the year whether to revive it or replace it with another fund raising activity.

Blue Dragon Children's Foundation

Members will be pleased to know that WACA President, *Maga Ramasamy*, received a communication from the Blue Dragon Children's Foundation in Hanoi, Vietnam, saying that the COVID-19 pandemic in the country is under control. All children in the shelter are being well looked after and the educational programme continues. WACA's supporting students Thang, Tuyen and Kiet are all aligned with the educational programme and our annual donation will be made to the Foundation shortly as planned.

Madeira Airport Charity Donation Box

The Charity Donation Box located in the check-in area of Madeira Airport where departing passengers can make an unsolicited donation, is still active and contact has been established with a non-governmental organization (NGO) Fundação D. Jacinta Ornelas Pereira which is based in Madeira and looks after the interests of needy children. The Association Airline Ambassadors and the NGO will now work in close collaboration to bring assistance to needy children as this special project progresses.

Office Restrictions Update

The city of Montreal continues to be in a "red zone" as the COVID-19 pandemic shows no sign of slowing down. All restaurants, cinemas, stadiums, gymnasiums, offices and non-essential stores remain closed and the province of Quebec has now also introduced a province wide curfew from

20:00–05:00. These measures will continue until mid-February so I continue to work from home until the situation changes.

International Institute for Peace Through Tourism

As WACA is a coalition partner of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT), WACA President, *Maga Ramasamy*, was invited to participate in an international panel discussing a way forward on Peace Through Tourism: What is next? Hosted by IIPT via a Zoom video conference on 29 December, Dr. Louis D'Amore founder/president of IIPT, Dr. Taleb Rifai former Secretary General of the World Tourism Organisation were among the distinguished panellists. Maga contributed advising the panel about WACA's endeavours educating travellers about the responsible way to travel especially now in the current worldwide pandemic. WACA's aim, Maga said, is to demonstrate to travellers to be more responsible when they travel whether travelling as an individual or in a group.

Obituary

Past WACA Treasurer and Vancouver Interline Club member, *Judith Guevara*, has sent the sad news that *Kathy Kearns* passed away on 10 January. Kathy was the WACA Representative for the Las Vegas Interline Club and then, when the Club became defunct, she became a Member-at-Large for a number of years. Many WACA members will remember meeting Kathy at numerous international events and AGAs that she attended over the years. May she rest in peace.

Membership Messages

Communicate

“Membership Messages” are sent out on a regular basis to WACA Member Clubs, Members-at-Large and other individuals closely connected to WACA. Recipients in Member Clubs are requested to forward these messages to all members of their respective Club or direct their members to the News and Press Releases section of WACA's website where the messages are posted: www.waca.org/news/Pages/index.aspx.

Contribute

If any WACA member has anything they would like to contribute to the next “Membership Message” please send the information to the attention of the WACA Administration Manager at WACA Headquarters.

KEEP WELL. STAY SAFE.

Yours in interlining,

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