

TO: Ken  
FROM: Darla  
DATE: July 29, 2005  
SUBJECT: **Office Management Report – June & July**

**Bank Balance:**

I transferred some money from checking into savings from checking, so we have \$51,497.68 in checking and \$25,220.24 in savings – a total of \$76,717.92.

**2004 Year-End Budget Balance:**

My last report to you on year-end 2004 was not quite final. The end balance was a deficit of (\$-2,837.15), which was \$1,213.65 better than the budgeted deficit of \$-4,059.80 and a little better than I predicted in my last report to you.

A detailed summary of 2004 finances was included in the board meeting books for yesterday's board of directors meeting.

**Updates:**

- **Credit Cards** – Today I applied for approval to accept credit card payments through QuickBooks Merchant Service. We will hear if we've been accepted or declined next week. We will accept VISA and MasterCard only at first. Later, we can also apply directly with American Express, Discovery and Diners Club if we want to accept their credit cards. Everything will go through QuickBooks, but QuickBooks handles the charges only for VISA and MasterCard. There will be a separate fee system for the other three cards.

Basically, I estimate that providing this service to our members will cost us around \$3,000 a year. That is based on processing about one-fourth of dues income (\$100,000) by credit card. Through QuickBooks, we will pay a one-time setup fee of \$59.95, a monthly fee of \$9.95, a 23 cents authorization fee per transaction, and 2.34% of all money collected.

Other fees would apply if a card is rejected (\$15) or if a customer formally disputes a charge (\$20 to track the charge and investigate). Also, our percentage fees must amount to a \$20 minimum per month or QuickBooks will add on the difference to make \$20.

There is no additional software to be purchased because we recently updated to QuickBooks Pro 2005 which has the credit card processing system built in. We will "unlock" that system with the merchant ID number provided to us. We will not buy a card reader because all payments will be by telephone or mail and will be keyed in at the computer.

We may add a card reader in the future for processing payments at conventions. This would almost never be needed right now, but if we begin opening the conventions to other journalists and non-members, selling directories at the conventions, etc. a card reader might come in handy.

After we have been accepted, receive our merchant ID number, and practice on the tutorial website, we will notify our members' corporate and accounting offices that they now have the option of paying by credit card. Requests by corporate owners who now prefer to pay everything by credit card were the impetus for offering this service.

- **Associate Member Solicitation** – Next week I will begin following up the board's request to organize contacts to potential associate members.
- **New Newspaper Memberships** – As I have mentioned to you, I have contacted the *Katy Courier*, which will begin publishing next week, and am sending a letter to the publisher Steve Martin.

I am also following up on the second class postal permit status of the new member *Rumbo de San Antonio*.

The following items are the basic points covered in my Membership Services Report to the board yesterday.

- **E-mail setup for everybody** ... completed for most publishers and editors, next circulation and advertising ... then will get associates, bureaus, wire services, corporate offices, journalism departments  
By soliciting these names, e-mail addresses and fax numbers, we have received much updated information that makes us realize how quickly the TDNA directory becomes outdated and inaccurate ... still pondering the possibility of periodically providing up-to-date electronic lists of newspaper staff data for an extra fee as an optional add-on to the sale of each directory, but we are not yet to the point of being able to handle that
- **Journalism Organizations** ... have began establishing relationship with journalism organizations holding conferences (such as SPJ and Mayborn Institute), mailed press releases, putting notices on website
- **Job Bank** ... next, TDNA will use those journalism contacts to solicit resumes for website's job bank ... receipt of resumes has tapered off, apparently because applicants can contact papers with job openings listed on our website ... TDNA will also attempt to attract bi-lingual reporters to the job bank to comply with an inquiry made earlier this year
- **Website Maintenance and Revamping** ... has been the one project continually pushed aside for legislative work and more pressing day-to-day membership services ... updates are still being farmed out ... plan to focus on website in second half of this year, to turn more attention toward keeping newspaper/associate firm listings current and to pump up the job bank for the benefit of Texas newspapers as well as for establishing a stronger liaison with Texas universities

- **Linage and Circulation Reports** ... member interest and participation remain strong ... circulation report was a new service just a couple of years ago, and this year it was improved by further breaking out one item of data ... there are 20 papers participating in the circulation report, and 26 papers in the linage report
- **Ad Revenue Survey** ... does not seem to be as popular as the Ad Rate Survey that it replaced ... the old survey used to have a couple dozen participants every year – along with lots of detailed notes and some crapping about the diversity of the data being reported ... but now that we've supposedly fixed that problem, very few papers are submitting their data ... I assume because circulation managers want to see what rates everybody else is charging, but don't want to tell everybody else what they themselves are actually making ... we will continue to conduct this survey annually, and feedback is welcome as always
- **Intern program** ... is now in progress (as it is most of the year) ... sending out certificates to this summer's interns stamped with Larry Walker's signature and TDNA's logo on a gold seal
- **Campus visits** ... has not had much university participation in the last few years (some universities already have contacts at their local papers that they prefer to use as classroom speakers) ... this program, too, can be better publicized on our website and should benefit from a strengthened relationship between TDNA and Texas journalism departments
- **Sales of directories, Law & the Press In Texas and Reporter's Handbook on Media Law** ... are not as strong as they were 5 or 10 years ago ... directory information is increasingly accessed from our website, and law booklet editions are a couple of years old and papers seem to buy them from TPA (so we have been selling them to TPA)  
Likewise, the demand for **auto window PRESS decals** is not as great as in the past but we make the available every year
- **Award programs** ... nothing has changed, although I hope it will within the next year ... plan to redesign each award poster somewhat to make the instructions more helpful, encompass web editions where applicable, and to add a photo of H.M. Fentress to the intern award poster ... also, I made the board aware of offer by associate member *American Profile* to sponsor an award (would provide plaque and gift and would participate in presentation at Annual Meeting)