

'Tis the season of ghosts and goblins and I hope you are all experiencing Fall Term courses as a real treat. The feedback we have received so far has been very favourable. It has been a very busy term for all of us and we hope this letter will catch you up with what has been happening with SCANS

As you may already know, Alison Cullingham, our Office Manager, will be leaving us in early November. We want to publicly acknowledge Alison's devotion to our organization in the seven and a half years she has been with us, and to thank her for her many contributions toward making SCANS the successful organization that it is. Alison will be greatly missed by the Board of Directors, the Curriculum Committee, and by our members. She has been a wonderful support to us all. Thank you Alison.

After interviewing a number of candidates, the Board has hired Sue Hawkes as our new Office Manager. Sue has had many years of experience as a project manager, office manager and bookkeeper. She will commence employment with us beginning November 6 and will be working on a part time basis. Her office hours will be posted on the SCANS website.

As is usual in the Fall Term, enrolment in all Chapters was very high. Fortunately, appropriate venues were available to accommodate members who registered for courses in all of our chapters except in HRM. In that area, some of you were unable to secure a place in the class or classes that you had requested. The Faculty Coordinators work very hard to ensure an interesting and diverse line-up of course offerings are available, and that there are always new courses added into the mix. Nonetheless, it is sometimes hard to predict how many members will sign up for any particular course, and sometimes the instructors themselves may impose restrictions on the class size. Please be assured that we always ask the instructors of courses for which there are wait lists if they will repeat the course in a subsequent term, and they usually agree.

We also depend on the availability of venues other than those in the Conservatory. This year, St. Andrews Community Centre is under renovation, and that has placed heavy demand on other large venues, such as the Captain William Spry Centre, by many organizations including SCANS. We ask for your understanding regarding this issue and want you to know that we constantly endeavour to seek out new and suitable venues. We would certainly appreciate hearing from you if you know of any venues which might be suitable for larger classes that have ample parking and are close to a bus stop.

With regards to venues in which we partner with the libraries, because they provide the room at no cost, we offer half of the seats for library patrons. As a result, if you are unable to get into a class as a SCANS member and you are a library patron, you can attend a course at no cost. We mark which courses are co-sponsored by the libraries in our brochure; it recently came to our attention that we neglected to point this out in our fall brochure. We offer our sincere apologies for this error.

In other news, we have recently upgraded the internet service at the Maritime Conservatory to improve access for both the office manager and for the instructors using Room 15. The latter room has also been brightened after a thorough cleaning and paint job courtesy of several members of the Curriculum Committee and Board of Directors, to whom we offer our sincere thanks. As well, we hope that you are more comfortable in the chairs we were able to secure for Room 15. A new projector has been purchased for the Truro Chapter and from all accounts, it is a very welcome upgrade.

The SCANS website continues to be updated; we recently added a “volunteer” subpage that can be accessed via a heading across the top of the home page. By navigating through it, you will find out who the incumbents are in each position, where there are vacancies, and what the responsibilities are in each position. You will also see a “Click Here to Volunteer Now” form that you can complete and submit. As a volunteer organization, we are always looking for new members to share the workload. It is always more fun for everyone to work in a team environment and also helps prevent burn-out in our very dedicated volunteers. I do want to thank our new and returning recruits in class manager and tech support positions this fall, and hope you are enjoying the experience as much as we are benefiting from your support.

We wanted to let you know that we are attempting to do some succession planning with regards to volunteering for SCANS. As such, we hope that retiring board and curriculum committee members will be replaced by members who have already been mentored by the outgoing volunteer. With that in mind, our Board Treasurer, Virginia Lee, is seeking someone with experience and knowledge about financial matters to join the Finance Committee. As well, in HRM, Mimi Little invites anyone who might be interested in the Curriculum Coordinator position that she currently shares with Joan Hicks to contact us. I know from personal experience that no position is quite so daunting once you have an opportunity to meet the many wonderful people working on our various committees. At this time, we also need a volunteer to chair the Hospitality Committee which includes the amazingly efficient and experienced team of Keith and Janet Knight and Miriam Langley.

Finally, as we move on from Halloween treats to Holiday gifts, we want to remind you that a gift of a SCANS membership is appreciated by everyone. Of course, it is always welcome anytime as a birthday or any special occasion gift. Please contact the office by phone (902-444-7588) or e-mail (SCANSinfo@gmail.com) if you are interested in such a purchase.

As always, if you have any comments, questions or concerns please contact loisblockscans@gmail.com.

Best regards,

Lois

On behalf of the SCANS Board of Directors