

# Illinois Prairie Weavers Guild

## Second Vice-President Responsibilities

### In General

The Second Vice-President is an officer of the Guild, and, as such, is one of the elected positions of the Guild. Only a member in good standing for at least one year may serve as Second Vice-President. Each term is for one year, and a person may serve for two consecutive terms.

The primary job of the Second Vice-President is to line up the monthly programs and any desired workshops for the following year. Being asked to serve as Second Vice-President of the Guild is an invitation to step into active Guild leadership, as it is hoped and expected that the Second Vice-President will serve a year as Second Vice-President, then a year as First Vice-President. In most cases, the First Vice-President is then asked to serve as President of the Guild.

As an Officer of the Guild, the Second Vice-President is responsible for doing this job on behalf of the entire Guild, and is also a member of the Executive Committee and of the Board (see job descriptions) and expected to attend and actively participate in those meetings.

### Specific Duties and Collected Wisdom

Finding, arranging, scheduling and contracting for the full slate of programs for the coming year is your job, and it is a big one, but manageable! This job is a bit of a juggling act, much like putting together the pieces of a puzzle. The following tips, wisdom and recommendations have been compiled by several previous 2VPs, and they provide a lot of guidance.

### **First steps (June - August)**

#### **Get started**

- ~ Take possession of the records from the prior Second Vice-President as soon as possible after you have been elected to serve. Organize them for yourself and make sure you have any supplies you need. Meet with the outgoing Second Vice-President for some one-on-one succession training.
- ~ Attend the July organizational Board meeting with the entire Board to plan the coming year.
- ~ Read your job description, the job descriptions for First Vice-President, President, Board and the Executive Committee, the Constitution and the Standing Rules.

## Do preliminary calendar work

~ Our usual meeting schedule is for the second Tuesday of every month, beginning with September, and ending with June (ten meetings). Look at the coming year's calendar and determine those dates.

~ We currently meet at Congregation Etz Chaim, a Jewish synagogue. Find a Jewish calendar for the coming year ([www.hebcal.com](http://www.hebcal.com), for example). Set up a meeting with the executive director of the congregation to examine the congregation's calendar against the Guild's usual dates to determine if any of the dates need to be changed because our meeting space there will not be available.

~ The congregation is closed on Thursdays. This will come into play if a workshop longer than 1.5 days is planned. If the workshop can begin on Monday, then resume Tuesday afternoon and into Wednesday, fine. If not, then we can move our meeting to Monday morning, with the workshop beginning after the meeting.

~ September is usually a very well attended meeting, with members happy to come back together to visit with one another. This makes it a good meeting for a strong "meaty" program to start off the year, but also a good meeting for something lesser, since everyone mostly wants to visit. A few options are:

~ "What I wove this summer" - have the program be a large "Show & Tell" of all of our weaving over the summer

~ "This Summer's Weaving Conference" - Convergence is held in even years, and Midwest is held in odd years. We often have groups of members attending, especially Midwest. Consider asking who will be attending, and asking if that person or group would be willing to do a program telling the Guild about the conference. A really good presentation would include a showing of photographs of the facility, the exhibits, the fashion show winners, and a sharing by those who went about the classes they took.

~ October includes Spinning and Weaving Week, and Handweavers Guild of America (HGA) is the oversight body for this event. They have a number of ideas and suggestions. Team up early in your tenure with the PR person to look into this.

~ December is the month we have our holiday party and the presentation of the Guild's Annual Challenge as the program, so you do not need to line up a program for this month. This gathering has often taken place in a home of one of our members.

~ January and February, and sometimes March can be devilish months from a weather perspective. It is wise to plan programs for these months that will not require long-distance car travel or air travel that can be easily cancelled by a winter storm. We have a procedure for canceling our meetings in the event of a snow storm or other emergency.

~ June is the month strongly preferred by “The Free Spirits” (members Bev A, Chris M and Nettie B) for doing their presentation of the work resulting from their informal study group.

## **Second steps (August-September)**

### **Gather ideas and names of artists**

~ Find out who is teaching, and their subjects, at The Fine Line, Sievers School of Fiber Arts, Convergence, Midwest Conference, Chicago School of Weaving. What subjects are “hot”? Which teachers travel to teach? Check out contributions to Handwoven magazine. Send out an email to Guild members seeking their ideas and suggestions for teachers and/or topics.

~ Talk with one-on-one with Guild members. Ask those who took classes what subjects and teachers were most enjoyable. People who might be shy in public often have very, very good ideas.

~ Many of our Guild members are quite accomplished and capable of presenting an enlightening program of some topic. Keep your eye on those who bring a lot of show & tell, and think about asking them to tell their story or to do a trunk show.

~ Ask for ideas and input at meetings. Consider a questionnaire.

~ Establish contact with regional weaving guilds. Ask outgoing and current Board members for names of good contacts, those who would be helpful and willing to partner on sharing teachers. Find out who they have had, or who they are thinking about having, for programs and workshops. We are sometimes able to team up with other guilds in order to bring in a more expensive teacher (what they charge and/or their travel costs) by sharing those costs. (Many of our members are also members of these other guilds.)

~ Woodstock Weaving Guild (WWG) meets the first Wednesday of the month, which sometimes works well for a speaker presenting to them, then coming to our guild, so we can share the travel expenses of bringing someone in from out of town.

~ Weavers Guild of the North Shore (WGNS) meets the first Thursday of the month (and also has a group that meets evenings), so the same opportunity presents itself.

~ Wisconsin Handweavers, Inc. (WHI) meets in Milwaukee on the second Saturday of the month, with some exceptions.

~ Add Duneland Weavers in NW Indiana

~ Establish how many of our study groups (formal or not) are willing to do a program

in the coming year. The more study groups we have that are willing to do a program, the fewer programs you have to go out and hire for us! Our study groups have gone up and down in number over the years, which is just the ebb and flow of guild life. Study groups sometimes have a strong preference for which month they want to do their program. It is best if you have as much flexibility as possible, in order to schedule first the out-of-town teachers with busy schedules, especially if we are trying to share costs with another guild, while trying to avoid bad weather months. But sometimes you will run into some reluctance for a change of month for study groups. You are best advised to approach this as a mutually-beneficial negotiation, not something you dictate.

~ Find volunteers who are willing to host an out-of-town speaker in their home. Most teachers prefer a non-smoking, pet-free home with private bathroom facilities for them.

## **Workshop Wisdom**

Workshops are special events in the life of the Guild, allowing for true hands-on learning of techniques by teachers skilled in a particular area. They are a trademark benefit of belonging to a guild, so we strive to offer one or more of them each year. Because of teacher pay schedules and travel expenses, the most cost-effective workshop is usually presented by someone who offers us a program for the guild at our monthly meeting, and the workshop follows or is scheduled around the meeting. Members who wish to participate in a workshop sign up and pay for them in advance, the workshop fees ideally covering the costs of the workshop.

It is common to have an "Escape Clause" in a Contract, especially for workshops, permitting the cancelling of a workshop if we do not have enough people signed up for the workshop by a certain date. It is important that you keep track of this and be vigilant about having people pay their workshop fee when they sign up, keep good records, and be sure that a workshop will be a "go" or not within the time deadline.

There is a delicate balancing act to lining up workshops:

~ The better or more famous a teacher, the more they charge; the more that is charged, the fewer number of members may be able to participate.

~ The better or more famous a teacher, the faster their teaching schedules fill up. They may be booked up to or more than a year in advance. Approach these teachers, and get signed contracts from them, as early as possible.

~ The most in-depth workshop is desired by many, but some members are unable or unwilling to commit to 2 or 3-day workshops.

~ Two "meaty" workshops a year seems to "work", usually one in autumn and one in spring.

~ Half-day workshops are easy and easily-filled; after the meeting, everyone takes a lunch break and then the workshop is held that afternoon.

~ One-and-a-half-day workshops allow for more teaching and learning, and can start on the afternoon of the guild meeting, and meet the next day as well (or the day before, perhaps).

~ Two-and-a-half-day workshops must be started on Monday if they are to be held at the synagogue, which is closed on Thursdays.

~ We have many members who are experienced weavers, who tend to prefer specialty, novelty, or envelope-pushing new topics, and also many newer weavers, who tend to need more basic weaving topics.

### **Money and budget notes**

The budget passed in June contains the budget for the next year's programs (those being run by the First Vice-President); it has not determined your budget, and does not give you guidance for spending money on next year's programs.

This creates a challenge for you. You will be working on lining up the programs for next year, the budget for which will not be determined until the end of this current program year. The primary items of that as-yet-undetermined-budget are (1) the members' dues, and (2) the cost of your programs. In fact, your proposed line-up of programs becomes the backbone of the budget process that won't begin until spring. So:

- ~ Ask the Board for guidance on what you can reasonably spend.
- ~ Be "buddies" with the President and First Vice-President, who have most recently gone through this process and can mentor you through this. Consult with the Treasurer along the way.
- ~ Look for the best programming you can find for the least amount of money.
- ~ Give good attention to the hidden financial details of the programs and workshops into which you are looking.

The Guild pays for:

- ~ Our regular monthly meeting space
- ~ All expenses of the monthly program (speaker, travel, accommodations, meals...)
- ~ Including any hostess fees (December meeting and overnight speakers)

Workshops pay for themselves, in theory and ideally.\*

~ If a speaker presents a program and a workshop, the Guild pays for those costs that would be the costs of the program if that were all the teacher were doing; the workshop pays for those costs that are attributable only to the workshop.

~ The speaker will charge, usually, one price for a program, and one price for workshops, by the length, such as half-day, one-day, etc. Speakers are also

reimbursed travel expenses, which have become substantial. You must be sure to figure in mileage or air fare or other travel costs.

~ Most teachers have a minimum/maximum number of participants in mind, based on their experience, for each different workshop they may offer. We also need to know what our minimum number of participants can be and still be able to afford the workshop.

~ Total all of the expenses of the workshop and divide it by those minimum and maximum numbers of participants. Then begin to establish if we will have enough interest among the members to make the workshop happen affordably.

~ We open our workshops to non-members once members have signed up and we still have room for more. Set a date on which participation will be opened to non-members. Ask the PR person to spread the word to other guilds, and ask the members to do the same. We charge non-members a higher fee.

~ Many speakers charge a separate “materials fee”. Find out in advance what this will be and decide how to handle it. You can fold it into the fee for the workshop, or handle it separately. Either way, you must communicate clearly about it to the participants so they are not surprised by the additional fee or caught off guard at the workshop without the money.

\* In reality, this is how it works: during the year, workshop participants pay fees to the Guild, and, when the workshop is over, the Guild pays the presenter whatever has been agreed upon in the contract. Ideally, the fees collected by the participants covers the full cost of the workshop. Sometimes we collect more fees than the cost. If it is unfairly significant, then participants should maybe get a partial refund of the overage. Sometimes we pay the presenter more than we collected in fees, thus dipping, perhaps, into unbudgeted funds. We simply do our best to avoid this.

### **Third steps (September-December)**

Create a log or spreadsheet you can use to keep track of all events, expenses and details, to keep your eye on the “big picture” as well as to ensure you are accounting for all aspects. An Excel spreadsheet has been developed over the past few years that can help with this. Former Second Vice-Presidents are available for assistance.

Contact potential speakers about programs and workshops. Find out if they are interested and what topics they might present. Learn about their availability, cost structure, logistical and any personal needs (how would they get to town, whether they need to stay overnight, equipment needs). Establish the best way to communicate. Ask them to mail you, or download printed materials you can bring to Guild meetings.

Come to Guild meetings with ideas and ask the Board for guidance and the members for feedback and interest levels for topics and speakers. Get as true a reading as

possible of members who really will sign up for possible workshops. Consider ways to display information and to get members to indicate their preferences.

### **Fourth Steps (January-March)**

Make decisions for programs and workshops for the coming year. Let study groups know their month. Finalize logistics and details as best as possible this early.

Work closely with the Treasurer, providing your suggested budget. This will include approximated money needed for programs, including meeting space, plus line items for hostesses who provide meals and/or accommodations for out-of-town speakers.

Obtain signed contracts for each program as you go along, determining topic, schedule, payment, expenses, and speaker's needs. (Get help from previous Second Vice-Presidents or the Document Chair as needed.)

### **Spring Steps (April-May)**

Finalize the schedule once the budget is working and approved.

Make arrangements for the meeting rooms that will be required for all the monthly meetings, programs and workshops. Meet with the executive director of the synagogue in the spring to get our dates clearly and accurately on their calendar; give that person your contact information.

Provide schedule and program information for the Yearbook, web site, Newsletters and publicity brochure. Ask the PR person to share it with other area weaving guilds.

Start filling workshops and promoting programs within the Guild, especially those in the fall.

Make a report in May of highlights of the year to be included in the President's written report for the year.

### **Summer Steps (June - July)**

Update your resources. Review this job description for any updates you can recommend (to the Document Chair). Add to your checklists. Delete old or unnecessary information. Make and update a list of contacts for your successor.

Assist the new Board. You are promoted to First Vice-President. Meet with and train the new Second Vice-President, turning over your materials. Retain copies of the contracts.

Attend the July Board meeting.

## **Throughout the Year**

Assist the First Vice-President as needed.

Collect money from members signing up for workshops or special program costs; keep accurate records; turn money over to the Treasurer promptly.

Submit any miscellaneous expenses to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

### Estimated Time Commitment

~ 4-6 hours monthly

~ Plus time at Guild and Board meetings

(2022)