

COAA Strategic Directives

In January, 2003, COAA President Terry Haughawout appointed an ad hoc five-member committee of advisors. Their task was to define goals and principles to nurture the COAA as it moves forward. Through the exchange of emails and other communications, the advisors developed a list of strategic directives. They were shared with the COAA leadership, the officers and staff, for review, editing and constructive criticism. Their remarks were received at Holland, MI on June 20, 2003 and incorporated shortly thereafter. The resultant directives are now ready to share with the membership, for your review and feedback.

We would urge each and every COAA member to carefully read the directives below. They are, in the opinion of the advisors, officers and staff, the most strategic needs facing our organization. If there is anything that's unclear, omitted or otherwise in need of modification or change, please feel free to contact either President Terry Haughawout or the chairman of the advisors, Fred Dahlinger, preferably by email, so that the remarks can be collated and shared with others (tchowout@wcnet.net and afdj@g2a.net, respectively).

Some of the directives are, by design, a bit general, so that subsequent committees can explore different ways to fulfill the spirit of the directive. There will be exchanges between committees. The directives will become a living document. A few are already underway because they are so very important they could not wait. Some will always be present, others will be accomplished, removed from the list and replaced by others.

Meeting the strategic needs of the organization will be a never-ending task.

The strength of an organization is in the willingness of its members to serve it. There will be a need for many members to willingly serve the COAA. As you read and contemplate the directives, please consider how you might be able to volunteer and give of your time and talent. There is literally a task to suit everyone, regardless of your geographic location, past organizational experience, length of membership time, etc. We hope that we will have a problem with too many volunteers! Please consider volunteering, share in the fun and pleasure of making the COAA a dynamic, enjoyable and fun group and in securing a bright future for it.

Following receipt, analysis and inclusion of the responses and feedback, the advisors will edit the directives into a final document for acceptance by the COAA leadership and implementation. Committees will be established and the work commenced.

We look forward to your response and your participation in the process.

Carl Cavitt
Fred Dahlinger, Chairman
Ed Ditto
Mary Pollock
LeRoy Schumacher

Strategic Directives

I. Governance

A. Incorporation and By-laws

Form the COAA as a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation to promote perpetuation of the organization and foster the ability of donors to provide for its support. Prepare flexible, essential and simple by-laws defining suitable standard operating procedures (including provisions for succession in trusteeships and offices; brief officer, trustee and staff position descriptions; lines of succession and reporting, etc.).

B. Mission Statement

Review the current mission statement, make changes as necessary and implement it.

C. Officers, Trustees and Staff

Encourage the participation of members with skill sets and abilities suited to the offices, trusteeships and staff positions described within the by-laws. Support the development of collegial relationships between officers, trustees and members, with service a hallmark of activity. Arrange and conduct open meetings as provided for in the by-laws and communicate the business of the organization to all members. Develop and maintain knowledge of the organization and act strategically to serve the organization.

D. Organizational Relationships

Promote meaningful relationships with related organizations on both a national and international basis, while nurturing the unique character and mission of the COAA.

II. Finances

A. Budget

Generate a realistic, rolling bi-annual budget model that supports executing the COAA mission and continued existence of the organization. The model will be based on realistic assessments of revenue (membership fees, retail

sales, etc.), support (monetary gifts) and expenses. Support stable growth and future security of the COAA by forecasting the financial needs of the organization and budgeting for them accordingly. Devise creative means to increase COAA revenue while keeping rational control of offsetting expenses. Encourage charitable giving to the COAA to provide for its further development.

B. Audit and Reporting

Conduct an annual independent audit and file federal 990 forms.

C. Compensation and Extraordinary Expenses

Recommend a compensation budget and financing for appropriate staff. Prepare and fund a “sunshine” policy to provide greetings to the sick and recovering, and sympathies to the bereaved.

III. Membership

A. Growth

Devise and implement methods and techniques to attract new and retain existing members. Utilize greeting and mentoring activities to welcome and accompany interested people and foster their interests. Place responsibility for membership growth directly into the hands of existing members and enthruse them to recruit new members. Selectively advertise and market the COAA within budgeted funds.

B. Directory

Prepare and maintain a directory of members with appropriate information and make it available to the membership in a cost effective manner.

IV. Programming

A. Participation

Devise and implement efforts to get more people to actively support the COAA via donating their time, talent and treasury. Provide unified, readily recognizable identification for display by members at appropriate times.

B. Calendar of Events

Develop a rolling, bi-annual, year round calendar of mission-driven COAA programming that engages the COAA membership, their guests and prospective new members in fun-filled, relevant and enriching experiences. The programming may include publications, a website, rallies, meetings, marts, seminars, trips, hospitality rooms, parades, workshops and possibly other activities. The events may be held in conjunction with other organizations when appropriate and with mutually equivalent representation to the interests of both. Appropriate preparatory research will assure avoiding associated schedule conflicts and take advantage of natural opportunities or previous venue relationships. Emphasis should be placed on maximizing the public attendance at all events where the public is invited to attend.

C. Publications

Continue to produce a premiere quality journal that fulfills the COAA mission statement within the budget. Foster and support a broader contribution of material to the publications. Enrich the journal with features that respond to the requests, needs and interests of the membership. Consider and evaluate the appropriateness of non-printed publications, such as audio disks, visual documents, brochures, etc.

D. Website

Create and frequently update a COAA website that engages the visitor and provides appropriate information about the COAA and the fulfillment of its mission. Facilitate the free and unbiased exchange of information relevant to the COAA mission statement.

E. Event Leadership

Develop guidelines (financial, media, planning, etc.) for event coordinators and the venue or community where an event will be hosted to promote good communication of objectives, to minimize difficulties and to maximize the potential for fun and participation by COAA members and invited guests or the public.

F. Publicity

Create and nurture a marketable “brand” based on the Carousel Organ Association of America name and logo. Prepare a set of guidelines to maximize publicity for various types of programming. Draft a standard media release that can be adapted for media distribution of public events. Engage in the marketing and publicity of events on the programming calendar as soon after events are confirmed as possible. Each event coordinator shall establish contacts with all appropriate media, ranging from local chamber of commerce and news media up to the state tourism level, to assure as broad an audience for publicly-open events as possible.