



## Executive Message

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The SEG is consciously making efforts to become more of an international organization. Should we be worried that they will try to muscle in on “our turf”? Again, no one felt there was cause for concern. The SEG and CSEG are on very good terms – our own Larry Lines is SEG President-Elect, and many other CSEG members are currently involved in other capacities within the SEG. So we see the relationship between the CSEG and our parent society the SEG as continuing to be positive and beneficial to both sides and their respective memberships.

We also discussed how the CSEG will work with our newly formed Foundation. We are aware of other societies with similar Trusts or Foundations where the visions of the parent society and the trust have diverged, and an acrimonious relationship has developed. In order to avoid this, the Executive will create some guidelines to ensure harmonious and productive relations between these two arms of the CSEG as the Foundation grows with time.

## Volunteers

The CSEG relies heavily on volunteers to deliver the various programs to members, so it's very important to always make sure that our volunteer situation is healthy. One interesting discussion was around whether the CSEG should hire more staff. The pro is that then we are not so dependent on volunteers, the con is that more staff comes with higher fixed costs, and runs the risk of a more bureaucratic society, for want of a better term.

Related to volunteer issues is the question of whether running candidates against one another is a healthy thing. This is a question I and many others close to the CSEG have wrestled with. When we run two excellent candidates, does the one who loses also lose the desire to volunteer any further with the CSEG? There is some evidence that this is the case. On the other hand, there are so many reasons that contested elections are an excellent idea. It is such a good idea that it is one of the main pillars of Western society. So there was some discussion around this, with no resolution. One excellent suggestion put forward by Neil Rutherford was that election candidates, by standing for election, would be committing to a 2-year stint: if they won the election they would serve on the Executive, if they lost they would serve on a committee of their choice. Sounds like a winning solution to me.

## Financial / membership

This was a fairly brief discussion as the CSEG is currently in excellent financial health. We discussed the need to maintain a healthy restricted operating fund, to protect the CSEG in case of future lean years, while staying onside with Revenue Canada. Again we discussed the Foundation and when in the fiscal year transfers, if any, should be made. We briefly touched on the cost of membership and events; the general consensus was that as long as the society is break even or better, there should not be significant price increases for anything. And lastly, we touched on member retention, and ways to enhance that.

All these discussions were very fruitful, and I look forward to seeing them result in actual plans that are executed for the benefit of the members.

On a personal level I have certainly enjoyed my time on the Executive, particularly working with my predecessor Jim Stenhouse, my successor Doug Bogstie, and his successor François Aubin, the CSEG staff Jim and Sheryl, and the many other wonderful people who help out with the CSEG. We have a great society, and I look forward to my continued involvement.

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*Oliver Kuhn  
Past President*