

NEWS FROM THE INSTITUTE (SEPTEMBER 2003 – AUGUST 2004)

In terms of the history of the Institute, these past twelve months have not been uneventful or without significance. Some of the highlights:

September 2003

- IGS Board approved plans to: 1) merge with the International Society for General Semantics; 2) consolidate the operations of both organizations in Fort Worth, Texas; 3) search for appropriate property to purchase in Fort Worth as a new 'permanent' home.

October 2003

- The Board of Directors of the International Society for General Semantics formally approved the merger with the Institute at its annual meeting on October 11.
- IGS sponsored the Twelfth International Conference on General Semantics, "Confronting the Challenges of Conflicting World Views," held at The Orleans Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 31- November 2. Mr. Laurie Cox, responsible for inspiring dozens of students of general semantics in Australia, received the J. Talbot Winchell Award. Dr. Sanford I. Berman presented the Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture, "On the Teaching of General Semantics."
- The Institute also conducted a 5-day seminar-workshop preceding the conference.
- The commemorative CDROM from the conference that contains all the presentations is available for purchase from the Institute.

November 2003

- Gregg Hoffmann, Andrea Johnson, Katherine Liepe-Levinson and Steve Stockdale represented the Institute at the annual convention for the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) held in San Francisco November 21-23. They presented a 75-minute panel session titled, "General Semantics and Critical Literacy: Interdisciplinary Approaches That Enable Students to Become Better Problem-Solvers and Critical Thinkers."
- IGS also sponsored a booth in the NCTE exhibit hall, ably staffed by Gregg, Andrea, Kathy and Steve. Approximately 250-300 visitors stopped by the booth or picked up materials including the new IGS brochures, bookmarks, presentation handouts, complimentary copies of *ETC* and the CD from the Las Vegas conference.
- IGS closed on the purchase of property in Fort Worth to serve as its new home. The 4,500 square foot building was built in 1932 as a neighborhood Safeway store in Fort Worth's nationally-designated Fairmount Historic Neighborhood. The building will require extensive renovation and remodeling.

December 2003

- At its annual meeting, the IGS Board of Trustees welcomed two new Trustees, former ISGS Directors Gregg Hoffmann and Gregory Sawin.
- An architect was retained to draw up plans for the Fort Worth building renovations.

January 2004

- The International Society for General Semantics and the Institute of General Semantics officially merged effective January 1, 2004. Steve Stockdale assumed the duties of Executive Director on a full-time basis for the 'new' organization to be known as the Institute of General Semantics.
- The transition of administrative functions from both Concord, California (ISGS) and Brooklyn, New York (IGS) to Fort Worth was begun.
- IGS hired Jennifer Carmack as a full-time Assistant Executive Director. Her immediate challenge was to combine the membership databases and financial accounting records of the two organizations into a new, consolidated structure.

February 2004

- More than 400 renewal letters were sent out to "lapsed" members of the combined organization. Office practices and procedures were implemented in preparation for the complete handover of administrative responsibilities effective February 29.

March 2004

- The IGS Board of Trustees elected Andrea Johnson, Professor of Professional Communications at Alverno College in Milwaukee, as President and Lynn Schuldt, Project Manager with JohnsonDiversey in Racine, Wisconsin, as Treasurer.
- IGS conducted a weekend seminar in Fort Worth, "An Introduction to Time-Binding."
- The Institute sponsored an exhibit booth at local trade show in Fort Worth, the Entrepreneur's Expo.
- The Institute sponsored an exhibit booth at the 3-day Conference for College Composition and Communication (CCCC) convention in San Antonio, Texas.

April 2004

- Published by the International Society since 1943, the first issue of *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* (Volume 61, No. 1) to be published by the Institute was mailed to members. This special issue contained a section devoted to the papers presented at the Las Vegas International Conference. (Copies are available for purchase from the Institute.)
- IGS actively participated in the local non-profit community by: hosting a booth at the "Get on Board!" fair sponsored by the Non-Profit Service Center of Tarrant County; and serving as part of a focus group convened by the Center for Non-Profit Management in Dallas to discuss how to engage Boards of non-profits.
- We successfully appeared before the Fort Worth Historic and Landmarks Commission and the Zoning Committee to obtain approvals for building renovations.

May 2004

- Based on the positive reception to our booth at the CCCC convention in March, we submitted a program proposal for the 2005 CCCC convention under the title, "Responsible Thinking-and-Writing: A Zero-Tolerance Approach to Well-Written Nonsense."
- We received Fort Worth City Council approval for our requested zoning change, and received bids from contractors for the renovation work.

June 2003

- The Institute co-sponsored our summer seminar-workshop with Alverno College. Andrea Johnson, Milton Dawes and Steve Stockdale led the week-long seminar for which Alverno students received 3 credit-hours.
- IGS Board adopted a comprehensive Investment Policy that clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and authorized the consolidation of our funds to be managed by a professional investment manager.
- Mr. Robert Carneiro, Ph.D., professor of Anthropology at Columbia University and for the American Museum of National History, accepted our invitation to speak at the 2005 Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture. (Details are being finalized for the event to be held in the spring of 2005.)

July 2003

- Member John Napier completed his self-initiated project of converting the entire 37-hour cassette series of Korzybski's 1948-49 seminar to digital MP3 format. He also converted two other cassettes to MP3, Korzybski's "Historical Note on the Structural Differential" and Allen Walker Read's 1983 lecture, "Changing Attitudes Toward Korzybski's General Semantics."
- IGS sponsored an exhibit booth at the 3-day annual convention in Fort Worth for Sister Cities International, an event that drew about 1,000 visitors from around the world.

August 2003

- IGS revised and published the 3rd edition of Kenneth Johnson's *General Semantics: An Outline Survey*, a 50-page comprehensive outline of general semantics that serves as a valuable learning resource. (Available for purchase from the Institute.)
- Construction began on the long-awaited renovation work on the building to serve as the new home for the Institute with an estimated completion by next January.

Inevitably it seems, this past year witnessed the deaths of a number of important time-binders, including two current Institute Trustees—Bob Pula and Greg Sawin. Robert R. Blake, Trustee from 1958-1983 and the last appointed Honorary Trustee, died in June. Tom Nelson, long-time Trustee, teacher, and friend of the Institute since 1950 died in August. Mitsuko Saito-Fukunaga, a supporter and teacher of general semantics in Japan who studied with Irving J. Lee at Northwestern University, and a former Director of ISGS, died early in 2004.

Projecting ahead, we look forward to again participating at the NCTE convention in Indianapolis in November. Gregg, Andrea, Kathy and Steve will present their program session this year on, "De-mythifying 'Meaning'." Another very special issue of *ETC.* will be published and distributed in November. We expect to move into our new home in January; this will give us, for the first time, a consolidated base of operations to conduct our office business, maintain the Alfred Korzybski Research and Study Center, and our own well-equipped seminar center. We'll embark on an aggressive Capital Campaign in order to obtain funds for an array of important projects to further our education and outreach capabilities, fully fund our endowment, and extend the advances we've achieved in the past few years.

Once again, it should be quite a significant year for the Institute, thanks to the support of members like you.