



President's Annual Report 2009

More than 100 years old and still going strong, the Alliance Française de Denver, our “Grande Dame,” is not only maturing well but she is getting stronger. Unlike the economic and political chaos surrounding us, our French and Francophone resource center has maintained its growth. Our budget year of September 2008-August 2009 was moderately better than last year, but in our exacting economy this is an astonishing result.

The Board:

Our board has become stable with a membership of twelve very dedicated professionals, who have been able to support the development and growth of the Alliance. As necessitated by the findings of our retreat in 2009, we have been able to develop financial stability, organizational transparency, and updated our office manual. We have improved the decoration and comfort of the Maison Française, inside and out, so it can be more welcoming Francophone resource, cultural and educational center. Our goals for this year are to develop a board manual and an information packet to familiarize the community with our past and our present. We also hope to develop stronger ties with the Colorado educational and cultural communities, increase the amount of funds received through events, donors and grants. We encourage all our members to participate in these projects with us.

The School

Under the effective leadership of Jean Francois, our school has experienced another successful year. Our dynamic teachers are helping their students enjoy learning the French language and the Francophone culture. We have successfully implemented a new program, with the full support of the Délégation Générale de l'Alliance Française, which meets the standards of the CECR. Our students have a variety of classes for adults that will cultivate their interest in Francophone culture, civilization, politics, the arts and an assortment of other topics. We were able to offer two \$750.00 scholarships last year and the recipients will be present at the annual meeting to discuss their work with you. AFD also offered 10 free classes to six students who showed a financial need. These students used their French in the Peace Corps and as English teaching assistants in France. With the assistance of the Délégation Générale, we have established a new program for children ages 5-12 called Smart Steps to French.

Finances:

With the growth of student hours and the successful response to our events, our financial situation has continued to improved. Our loans are being repaid as planned and we hope to fully own La Maison Française within the next ten years. Should our income to expense ratio stay the

same it would make it possible for AFD to own the house, free and clear, sooner than anticipated. Our members generously donated \$4,000 in our annual fund-raising campaign, an amount we would like to see grow in 2010. Our Annual Gala raised \$11,000 of which 10% will be earmarked for scholarships for 2010, and our two wine tasting netted a profit of about \$4,900. We thank all who participated and donated for their much appreciated financial support.

Events:

We have recently received praise from the SCFD, who has been providing the AFD with grant money since 1995, complimenting the Alliance on the successful expansion of our programs, activities and revenue sources. The SCFD funds, along with our increasing collaboration with other non profits, the support of donors, volunteers and especially our dedicated staff, have allowed the Alliance to undertake more ventures. We hosted more than 60 events this past year, many of which were much larger and more complex than those of previous years. The very popular Cine Club, created with the Denver Film Society continues to draw in 100 viewers per film. Because of this response, Denver hosted its first French film Festival last June. Our continuing collaboration with Opera Colorado has been a very mutually satisfying enterprise. It has provided opera lovers with an understanding of the French language used in the performance and has acquainted many of our members with the opera.. We are a part of The Santa Fe First Friday Art Walk and have also offered six of our own art exhibitions in the gallery.

It is most gratifying to be able to report that AFD's finances have remained stable, the attendance to our events has been astounding with 50% coming from the community at large, the circulation of materials from our library has doubled in the past year alone, and the enrollment in our classes has increased, confirming that the Alliance is definitely responding to a need in the Colorado communities for a Francophone resource center.

I would like to thank our director and his excellent staff, our teachers and students, our members, our donors, and my fellow board members for their hard work and support. Without them the Alliance Francaise de Denver would not be as effective an organization as it is today.

Sincerely,

Linette Hayat
Presidente
Alliance Française de Denver