



Letter from the President

Happy New Year 2015 Everyone! I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful holiday season. My only regret is I didn't see everyone from ALDA more over my end of the year break. I look forward to a safe, healthy, and happy 2015 for everyone. I also hope for a productive year for ALDA Suncoast.

I appreciate everyone's support in the last year and offer special thanks to the ALDA Board for all they have done. I hope we can achieve more in the next year. Rather than name individuals, please know that I appreciate the help of every Board member and appreciate every member. I also never forget our service providers and the interpreters that volunteer their services every month. I was so glad to see two interpreters join us at the end of year Chili's celebration.

The boat parade at the Heath's was again a huge hit and I was happy to see so many people come out. For those of you that missed it, the funniest part of the evening for me was seeing Judith Greaves get a Starbucks gift card in the white elephant exchange, again and again!

As 2014 ended, I looked back to see what I said that I wanted to achieve during the year. This is how we did:

1. Enhance the ALDA treasury – **Check!** We could have done more and I hope we do at least two fund raisers in 2015, but thanks to our efforts in the Walk 4 Hearing, we raised over \$500 for ALDA and raised money for HLA in the process. With 2015 starting, don't forget to pay your dues.
2. Promote ALDA Suncoast and encourage new membership - **Check** (sort of). I think the efforts were there. We participated in two HLA Expos, the CAI Expo, added another social media presence through MeetUp (Thanks to Cindy D!), and made several contacts and connections through ALDA National. Even though we have not seen a big jump in membership, I think we are paving the way to welcome new faces.
3. Continued expressions of gratitude to supporters (service providers and organizations) – **Check!** If you were not aware, we gave small gifts and tokens of appreciation to our interpreters and made a donation to CAI for Tess. Another huge hit was the "Thank You" book that we printed for Tess for a Christmas gift. Remind me to share with all for those that didn't see it. Finally, we are giving a donation check to Our Savior Lutheran Church as appreciation in part for our meeting space every month plus for Board meetings.
4. Elevate our connection to ALDA national – **Check!** Six of us attended the ALDA National convention in Norfolk, VA in October 2014! Also as the national vice-president, I make sure ALDA, Inc. knows what our needs are and who we are.
5. Follow meeting delivery protocols and have regular board meetings – **Check!** – The Board met four times in 2014 (not quite on a perfect quarterly schedule for several reasons). We also discussed and agreed to follow *Robert's Rules of Order* for our meetings. Procedurally this helps make sure everyone's voice is heard and we should continue to improve while still being less than too formal.
6. Continue to work as a group to plan numerous social events (Cindy H. is already the guru at this) – **Check!** Thanks to Cindy Henrion this was a piece of cake. Hopefully it continues and grows.



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7. Continue to schedule dynamic speakers for our monthly meetings – **Check!** Too many to name, but please continue to provide feedback on what you would like to see in the future. I have also made an effort to post who would be speaking on the ALDA Suncoast Website).
8. Collaborate with other hearing loss organizations – **Check!** Continued contact w/ HLA and FAD and through my participation as Chair of the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (FCCDHH) happened all year.
9. Raise ALDA Suncoast social media presence – **Check!** Facebook & MeetUp presence is ongoing.

I say how “we” did, because the success of our group depends on each member too!

As for new promises; well pretty much it’s the same as last year. Other than an honest effort to do my best for our group, I prefer to be unpolitical-like and not make promises. I will try to do my best to communicate with everyone through email, etc. outside of meetings. As I continue to find myself happily overwhelmed with participation in many advocacy boards, groups, social events, full-time and part-time work, and my most important “home-team” (my family), I rarely get everything I want done. I do try. Of course, never hesitate to contact me with any ideas or concerns.

Finally, it’s not a promise, but my desire to see our membership and treasury grow. I have two real reasons for this. One, more members means more fun and friends AND less work. There is a lot of work falling on just a few of us. I will continue to talk about the importance of pitching-in as I have in the past. Two, if our treasury grows, we can spend money on ourselves. Specifically, I would like to see us create at least a small scholarship fund to help at least one person for expenses to go to the national convention. This year it is in Scottsdale, Arizona in September (See www.alda.org and mark your calendars).

Please talk to me and our Board. Also, Cindy Shatto continues to maintain the <http://www.aldasuncoast.com> Website. Please communicate feedback (and pictures- send to Cindy Dixon and I pictures to add to our Website). We all need your help, ideas, and support moving forward.

As I said last year, I always want ALDA Suncoast to continue to be an enjoyable, open, place for people to meet and share their experiences about hearing loss and late-deafness. Please continue to help spread the word about ALDA Suncoast.

Off we go and 2015 here we come.

Your friend,

Chris Littlewood