From the President
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Volunteer Valentines

Even though it is the tail end of the holiday season as I write this, displays in the supermarket (and the deadline for this column) remind me that February is just around the corner. Here then, are the Valentines that I would send to ATA folks, since they form the heart of the Association.

A quick note of appreciation would go out to every single ATA member, past and present, for making the Association the umbrella organization in this country for interpreters, translators, terminologists, academics, trainers, and those who find the translating and interpreting profession so interesting that they just want to be a part of it.

A doily heart would go to each of our chapter leaders and volunteers, who, while striving to make their corner of the world a bit better, are also reaching the next generation of colleagues and providing opportunities to grow into leadership roles. If you’re not already a member of your local organization, I can only say you’re missing out. You may find amazing local talent and personal connections there (and if you don’t, here is your chance to increase your visibility and make it happen).

I would send a passel of velvet hearts with glitter to the folks working to make divisions “where it’s at” in the Association, from lining up compelling speakers for the conference to planning lively gatherings, moderating online lists, and conjuring newsletters and blogs. If you haven’t checked out these “homes within a home,” I strongly suggest you sign up today — there is no cost to members and the value returned is high.

To our committee chairs and members, I would overnight heart-shaped boxes of chocolates (soft centers and cordial cherries) with big red ribbons. These are the folks who roll up their sleeves and delve into the nitty-gritty details that help mature the Association in a considered manner. The talent, dedication, and effort put forth by these folks always leaves me in awe. There is certainly no shortage of work to be done, so if you’re tempted or even mildly interested, I urge you to reach out and lend a hand.

A vase of long-stemmed red roses would go to ATA Executive Director Walter Bacak and our crack Headquarters staff. These folks are the ones who make it happen when we ask, “can it be done?” all while juggling phones and e-mail with member requests, websites, social media channels, blogs and publications, as well as all of the pieces that make for a seamless conference experience.

And finally, singing telegrams would be sent to ATA Board members (and former Board members who laid the foundation) who wrestle with big issues together, and who endure my cajoling and reminders to stay on topic and not bite off more than we can chew. For every project brought to fruition, there are a dozen they would like to take on, and not enough hours in a day.

And of course, I would send kisses and hugs to all those family members and friends who endure the absence and support the efforts of all these folks. Because I can’t quite manage this particular task in person, I’ll have to call on you all to pass on these Valentines to them.

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