

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP

This has been a year of new initiatives, ongoing development, and non-stop activity, all of which require a good holding environment. This report is intended both to acknowledge the people who create that environment, and to highlight the various accomplishments and challenges of the year, details of which follow in the individual reports.

Your elected Officers and Members-at-Large, who comprise the elected Board, are charged with holding a vision of EGPS as a whole. These elected Board members, together with the appointed Chairs of Committees and Task Forces, comprise the Joint Board, which meets monthly to coordinate our various activities, consult with and support one another, and make decisions about our overall direction, schedule, and organizational functioning.

Most of our activities are managed by Committees or Task Forces. These are usually co-chaired, so that responsibilities are shared, and most also depend on members who do a lot of the work and participate in decision-making and vision-setting. We have asked that the Committee and Task Force Chairs include in the reports that follow the names of their committee and task force members both to give a sense of how many people actively participate in the functioning of our organization and to thank all of them publicly. The contributions of each one are significant, and we are grateful for their dedication.

The Executive Committee, consisting of Margaret Postlewaite, PhD, CGP, Immediate Past-President; Barbara Feld, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, Secretary; Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP, Treasurer, and myself, meet weekly by conference call with Jan Vadell, our Administrator. We track the challenges, crises, solutions, and achievements that continue to unfold on a weekly–sometimes daily–basis. With each Committee and Task Force assigned one of the Executive Committee as a liaison, it is usually a straightforward matter to provide or seek consultation, to check on the status of a project or a decision, or to coordinate logistics between the monthly Board meetings. I am in awe of the amount of organizational work each one of these people have taken on, how much support they have offered to me and to all of us, and how they have managed to maintain their perspective, good humor, wisdom, and graciousness throughout a very busy year. I am particularly indebted to Margaret, who never for a moment faltered in her enthusiastic support for everything EGPS is, even as she moved towards the moment of ending her many years of elected roles within EGPS. She is quite simply extraordinary. I am delighted that she will remain on the Board, as co-chair with Bert Weinblatt, PhD, CGP, LFAGPA, of the **Past-Presidents' Committee**, which serves as a link to all the wisdom embodied in that group of wise folk.

This busy year began with our biannual **Fund Raiser**, chaired by Marie Rothschild, LCSW, BCD, CGP, and Jim Ellis, PhD, CGP. In an elegant setting in the tower of Riverside Church, we honored three members of EGPS who have given so much to our field: Richard Beck, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA, Harold Bernard, PhD, ABPP, CGP, DFAGPA, and Judith Schaer, LCSW, MSW, CGP, FAGPA. While the next Fund Raiser won't take place until June, 2009, Jim and Marie are already brainstorming new ideas for another gala evening.

The major event of every year is our **Annual Conference** in November. The 2007 Conference, chaired by Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD, and Sherry Breslau, PhD, CGP, focused on "Mind, Body, & Spirit: Creatively Nurturing Groups and Their Leaders," and concluded with an energizing presentation by Playback Theatre. The Conference also saw the debut of our Membership Committee's new **Ambassador Program**, which invited two agencies working with underserved populations to send two staff members to the Conference as our guests, to serve as ambassadors from their agencies to EGPS and from EGPS back to their agencies. The 2008 Conference, chaired by Sherry and her new co-chair Patti Cox, PhD, CGP, with the theme "Mutual Desires, Mutual Growth: How Therapists Evolve with Their Groups" promises to be an equally rich opportunity for learning and refreshing ourselves as therapists. What's common to the Conference just past and the one coming up are the innovative themes; the top-notch plenaries, workshops, and opportunities for collegial socializing; and the superb management of it all by the Conference Committee, such that most of us don't have any idea of how complex it all is.

After last year's Conference, Phyllis Cohen, PhD, PsyD, CGP, LFAGPA, who had served as a plenary discussant, asked if there wasn't something we could do about the poor amplification, which had been a challenge to the plenary leader, the demo group members, and the audience. Phyllis generously offered to lead a campaign to raise funds to purchase an amplification that we could use in any setting, for all our events throughout the year, and she and her husband, Walter Goldstein, made a significant gift to start us off. I am delighted that all the Past Presidents we've contacted and all the members of our Joint Board have contributed to our new "**Fund for Special Projects**," together with many of our members. As of this writing, we have raised more than two-thirds of our goal. Please consider adding your contribution—of whatever amount is right for you—so that EGPS events can be heard clearly throughout the years to come!

I frequently remind the Board that the **Professional Discussion Groups** don't have to be money-makers—they were originally intended as a sort of salon series, with small groups of members getting together to discuss topics of interest—but Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA, and her committee have continued to think of topics and speakers of such interest that the events were hugely successful again this year. They've obviously got their finger on the pulse of what's hot. Similarly, Greg MacColl, MSW, CGP, has served as contact person for the **Long Island Discussion Group**—but that simple statement doesn't begin to describe the personal touch he's brought to his commitment. Greg has made hundreds of phone calls, summarized their monthly meetings in e-mail postings, and kept the link with our Long Island subgroup alive and well.

The **Spring Event** this year, at which this report is being delivered, has been created by Lynn Pearl, PhD, CGP, and Jim Ellis, PhD, CGP, who have managed all the myriad details of the evening with perfect calm and attention to detail. We should be in for a treat, with Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA, speaking on sexual attraction! We're in a new site for this event, with new co-sponsorship, and we thank Joan Wittig for our new connection with Pratt Institute—an example of the sort of outreach that keeps us connected to our community.

This year, the **Membership Committee** was asked to expand its scope to include more of our organizational functions related to membership. What used to be the Collegiality Committee is now a subcommittee of Membership, and Membership is also looking at ways to incorporate functions related to Diversity and Mentoring, either as subcommittees or as activities of the committee. At the same time, co-chairs Douglas Ruest, LCSW, and Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT, and their committee continue to manage the logistics of membership, including processing applications, clarifying membership categories, and supporting the activities of other committees related to outreach to potential new members, such as the Ambassador Program, described above, during the Annual Conference. And they have managed to all these responsibilities with clear thinking and enthusiasm.

The **Referral Service and Group Listing Committee** has expanded to three co-chairs: long-time chair Stephanie Kravec, LCSW, SAP, CSAT, joined by Kathie Ault, APRN, BC, CGP, and Mary Sussillo, LCSW, BCD. They are hard at work developing our referral resources—both marketing group therapy and EGPS members to potential sources of referrals, on the one hand, and compiling information about the groups we have available, on the other. Look for their new flyer, and ask for copies if you have a good place to disseminate them.

Communication among members is important in an organization of group therapists. The **Newsletter Committee** has expanded in several ways, under the dedicated editorship of Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA, with two new committee members, four new pages for some issues, and a significant increase in advertisements that help to make the newsletter self-sustaining and also bring news of our members' activities and other interesting opportunities. Jonah Schwartz, LCSW, and Shuki Cohen, PhD, are co-chairing our **Website Development Task Force**. They are in the midst of conceptualizing a new, "state-of-the-art" website for EGPS, which will serve both members and the public. In the meantime, Margaret Postlewaite uncomplainingly keeps our current website up-to-date with information about all our activities. On a related cyber-note, we hope to have a member listserv up and running in the course of the next year, which will allow all of us to be in better touch with one another. Better contact should also be facilitated with the printing of a new **Membership Directory**, which is high up on the "to-do" list.

Communication across our organizational boundary is also important. The **Community Outreach Task Force**, created last year during Margaret Postlewaite's presidency, completed a number of trainings as well as an extremely well-thought-out report to the Board reviewing its original mandate, detailing what it had discovered in the course of its work, and recommending revisions in its procedures that should ensure its continued growth. I suspect that Margaret is delighted that her vision has developed into a group, co-chaired by Patti Cox, PhD, CGP, and Jonah Schwartz, LCSW, that works so effectively to promote good group training in agencies and institutions throughout the greater NY area. Another form of outreach might be to therapists who don't know much about group. The Board has recently endorsed the idea of developing an event that could be made available, free of charge, and a work group will be convened with representatives from the Community Outreach Task Force, the Referral Service, the Training Program, and the Membership Committee, to think about where this "**Why Group Therapy?**" event might live in our organization, what shape it might take, and how it should best be managed. We look forward to hearing their recommendations.

In response to a request by EGPS member and Past-President Bernard Frankel, PhD, ABPP, LCSW, LFIGPA, I sent an e-mail to members asking that those interested in matters of **Social Justice and Public Policy** contact me. I was able to put a dozen or so members in touch with one another to explore the question of whether or how EGPS should establish a way to address these issues, and I eagerly await their recommendations.

Finally, two of our major activities are facing significant changes in personnel. Both Leon Schein, MSW, EdD, CGP, the Director of our award-winning **One-Year Training Program**, and Martin Livingston, PhD, CGP, the Editor of our renowned **Journal, GROUP**, have decided to step down after many years of service. The fact that they each feel the time is right to take this step is a tribute to the work they have done to solidify the reputation and longevity of the Training Program and the Journal. I am grateful to Leon, to Marty, and to their colleagues on the Training Program and the Journal for developing two public faces for EGPS of which we can be proud.

Working with a gifted faculty of instructors, supervisors, and experiential group leaders, Leon and the four Deans of the Training Program, Phyllis Wright, MSW, Alan Shanel, MS, LCSW, BCD, CGP, Anne McEaney, PhD, CGP, and Ellen Rubin, PsyD, CGP, have established a training in group psychotherapy second to none. This year's large class, the first class to benefit from the J. Dustin Nichols Memorial Scholarship Fund, will graduate shortly; and marketing for the Program's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year is well under way. I have appointed Leon chair of a committee to search for the best candidate to succeed him as Director and to ensure a smooth transition. For many of us, Leon has been a quiet role model of thoughtful leadership, and we will miss him in this role.

Similarly, Marty has edited the Journal through a very difficult period of uncertainty, now past us. Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD, who worked last year with Chera Finnis, PsyD, CGP, to lead the Board in re-establishing our subscription base after our former publisher failed us, has agreed to serve as Managing Editor. Michelle has been working closely with Marty and our new publisher, Mental Health Resources, and the Journal has regained its secure footing and is on its way to even greater success. I have asked Barbara Feld to chair a committee to search for a new editor, whom Marty will mentor through a transition period. In the meantime, Marty is doing his usual excellent job of soliciting articles, mentoring writers, and compiling wonderful collections of writing on group therapy, before we release him to other pursuits.

I must also thank all those who placed themselves in candidacy for our recent **elections**. It has been many years since we have had competition for the role of president-elect. Both that contest, and the contest for members-at-large, was a very difficult choice, with nothing but the best from which to choose. Those elected will lead us forward with thoughtfulness and creativity, and EGPS will grow under their leadership. We are lucky in their election, and we are lucky that we will continue to benefit from the voices and contributions of those who were not elected... I would not want EGPS to lose any of them.

As has become traditional in EGPS Annual Reports since 2003, it must be said—shouted from the rooftops would be more satisfying—that we rely minute to minute and year to year on our incomparable **Administrator**, Jan Vadell. Jan came to us with close to twenty-five years' experience at AGPA, and we are the richer for it.

We are doing so much more than we ever did before, and it's because we have a structure that permits lots of good people to do lots of good work. Jan is the foundation of that structure. This year, the Board carefully considered our circumstances and decided that it was time—past time—that Jan's compensation be increased. She has worked tirelessly for us without a raise since she came to us in early 2003. I am absolutely delighted that we can finally afford to offer her a little more. Unfortunately, we will never be able to afford to pay her what she's worth—because she's worth her weight in gold!

### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

Barbara Feld, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA

The Secretary continues to be responsible for the permanent records from the Board meetings and distributes the minutes to Board members and Committee Chairs by e-mail for review. This allows corrections to be made and serves as a reminder to Committee Chairs and the elected Board of their responsibilities between meetings. The Secretary also has responsibility for taking notes of the Executive Committee's weekly conference calls and forwarding them to the Executive Committee members. This allows the EC to have a clear idea of the decisions made during the conference call. The Secretary is Liaison to the Spring Event Committee, Annual Conference, and the Newsletter Committee. This function has been working well for these Committees and there is an interchange and consultation between the Committees and the Liaison. A review of the EGPS bylaws has begun and hopefully will be completed during this coming year.

### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP

Although we will not know our final figures for the year until after our fiscal year ends in June 2008, EGPS appears again to be financially stable. Our Fall Conference earned money for the second year in a row. The Professional Discussion Group (PDG) continues to attract large audiences and good revenues. The Journal has steadily improved its financial health, recovering and expanding its individual and institutional subscriber base.

This year, the Training Program was able to attract a larger class and offer a second year supervision program. Consequently, we expect to see higher revenues from the Training Program this year. Our financial picture was helped by our biannual fundraiser held in June 2007, which raised over \$8,000. Our 2007 Spring Event was also a money maker, and we expect to raise money at this year's Spring Event, as well.

Through the generosity of our members and others, we have been able to raise money for scholarships and special projects. The J. Dustin Nichols Scholarship Fund currently has a balance of approximately \$7,440. Additionally, a Fund for Special Projects was established this year to purchase a portable sound system for EGPS and currently has raised approximately \$10,600.

Our financial health has enabled us to give our administrator a raise and institute a policy of annual cost-of-living increases. And since we have been able maintain larger balances, we have been able to explore ways of earning interest on our balances. Consequently, we are in the process of setting up a 7 day revolving CD that will contain a minimum of \$10,000. Unfortunately, interest rates are low (about 2% for the CD) and so we expect that our return will be modest. We are also planning to set up separate accounts for the J. Dustin Nichols Scholarship Fund and the Fund for Special Projects. This will make our accounting easier as we separate our special funds from our regular operating funds.

We will enter the 2008-9 fiscal year with a reserve to support our many activities. A financial summary for fiscal year 2007-2008 will be reported in the Fall Newsletter. We will continue our policy of publishing a comparison of this year with the previous one. As always, we invite your questions and comments.

### **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

2007 Co-Chairs: Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD and Sherry Breslau, PhD

2008 Co-Chairs: Sherry Breslau, PhD, CGP and Patti L. Cox, PhD, CGP

“Mind, Body, & Spirit: Creatively Nurturing Groups and Their Leaders” was the theme of the 2007 Annual Conference. It was filled with workshops and plenaries that attracted a broad range of clinical disciplines, including creative and performing arts therapies. Friday’s Plenary, “Group Therapy and Spirituality: Expressing the Human Spirit”, was chaired by Richard Beck, LCSW with Howard Kahn, PhD, as Plenary speaker. Phyllis Cohen, PhD, and Fred Wright, PhD, served as Plenary discussants. The Saturday Plenary, “Storytelling with Playback Theatre: A Spontaneous, Active, Creative Large Group Experience”, was chaired by Mary Nicholas, LCSW, PhD. Craig Haen, MA, RDT, LCAT, CGP and Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT served as discussants. Unfortunately, the sound system was not adequate and the audience did have trouble hearing the presentation. Adequate sound equipment continues to be a challenge for our demonstration groups as most locations do not have equipment for 8 or 9 people in a group who need microphones that work simultaneously.

The Saturday plenary was especially well received with participants reporting they liked ending with a Conference Plenary that was inclusive and upbeat and one that strengthened members’ sense of community. Our Large Group Experience, led this year by Kimberley Turner, PhD, and Michael Stiers, PhD, CGP with Bernard Frankel, PhD as Consultant, was held during lunch hours. The Conference in its entirety was extremely lively and rewarding, and received a great deal of praise by participants. The second year in the Riverside Church venue proved again to be an extremely workable and functional site for the Conference.

Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD and Sherry Breslau, PhD were 2007 Conference Co-Chairs, and Patti L. Cox, PhD was in the role of Co-Chair Designate. The Program Sub-Committee consisted of Co-Chairs Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, and Dan Raviv, PhD, and the members included: Janet Baumann, MSW, Barbara Cohn, PhD, Lois Kennedy, PsyD, and Joshua Rosenthal, MS. Shuki Cohen, PhD and Doug Ruest, LCSW Chaired the Site Sub-Committee; Evelyn Rowe-Cosentino, MA, ADTR and Amy Kossoy, BA Chaired the Hospitality Sub-Committee and Lena Friedman, MPS, ATR-BC and Marie Rothschild, LCSW Chaired the Marketing Sub-Committee. Without all of these people with their expertise, care and good humor our Conference would not have been the success that it was.

The theme of the 2008 Annual Conference, Co-Chaired by Sherry Breslau and Patti L. Cox, will be “Mutual Desires, Mutual Growth: How Therapists Evolve With Their Groups”, and will again be held at Riverside Church on Nov. 21st and Nov. 22nd. While we are very happy at Riverside Church for our Annual Conference, (and our past Fund Raiser) the church significantly increased their meeting room rental fees for this coming year and we will need to explore our options for future meetings.

We anticipate that this year’s theme will stimulate a wealth of dynamic, intellectual, theoretical, and personal interchanges among group therapists as we challenge ourselves to learn more about how therapists evolve with their groups.

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH TASK FORCE**

Patti L. Cox, PhD, CGP and Jonah Schwartz, LCSW

The Community Outreach Task Force is charged with facilitating the provision of group work trainings by EGPS members in clinics, social service agencies, schools and hospitals. The current membership consists of Patti Cox, PhD, CGP and Jonah Schwartz, LCSW, Co-Chairs; Greg MacColl, LCSW, Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, Edward Elder, MDiv; Susan Frankel, LCSW, and Roberta Slavin, PhD.

In January of this year, Co-Chairs Cox and Schwartz presented to the EGPS Board a written report, prepared by the entire Task Force, which makes several suggestions intended to aid in the fulfillment of its mission. These proposed changes are under consideration. The Task Force also provided a large-scale series of workshops at a New York City hospital. Finally, the Task Force has begun to do outreach to various organizations within the city with the intention of generating more training opportunities, rather than waiting for those requests to come to EGPS. By being pro-active, the Community Outreach Task Force hopes to spread the good word about EGPS in particular, and about the benefits of group therapy in general.

## **EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Marty Livingston, Ph.D., CGP, FAGPA, Editor  
Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD, Managing Editor

As you may remember from last year, the process of recovering from the failure of our previous publisher has been arduous and lengthy. Our new publisher is Inquiring Mind Books (Mental Health Resources). Michelle Collins-Greene, Ph.D. has been appointed Managing Editor. Her efforts have been invaluable in forging out a relationship with our new publisher and together we have struggled to get the Journal back on a regular publication schedule as well as to stimulate a return of our former subscriber base. Our efforts have been quite successful and the Journal is now on solid ground.

Several guest-edited special issues are planned. Among the guest editors are Manny Shapiro, Alice Byrne, Lois Kennedy, and Jerry Leff, whose issue on gender issues should be out by the time you read this, Harold Bernard who has edited an unusual issue in which well known group therapists share some personal experiences of their professional journey, and Shoshana Ben-Noam who's second issue on Trauma will be our third issue of the current year. Individual submissions are still encouraged on any topic related to group psychotherapy or the treatment of couples as well as proposals for special issues.

On a more melancholy note, Marty Livingston has decided after seven years of very gratifying, although fraught with many challenges, experiences as editor, to step down in order to pursue some personal objectives. Among other things, he is working on a novel. A Journal Editor Search Task Force, headed by Barbara Feld, is busy finding a new Editor. He, or she, should be determined by July 1 and take charge as of 2009. Marty will of course stay involved through his or her early tenure.

Marty would like to take this time to express appreciation of all the work and contributions of associate editor, Lee Kassan, the excellent job done by Barbara Cohn as Book Review Editor for many years, and the active Editorial Board who have graciously contributed their time in a prompt and very helpful manner. Their ranks include Anne Alonso, who, right up to the end, was one of the best and most cooperative. Others we would like to acknowledge are Harold Bernard, Barbara Cohn, Nina Fieldsteel, Bernie Frankel, Howard Kibel, Jerome Kosseff, Scott Rutan, Manny Shapiro, Nina Thomas, Isaiah Zimmerman, Louisa Livingston, Barbara Feld, Lee Kassan, Mary Nicolas, Michelle Collins-Greene, and Irene Harwood. We hope that they will all continue in their roles with the new Editor as we look for increased success for our Journal under its new leadership.

## **FUND RAISER 2007**

Marie Rothschild, MSW, CGP and Jim Ellis, Ph.D., CGP

The 2007 Fund Raiser on June 10 2007, at the Riverside Church, was a big success. We honored three long standing EGPS members: Richard Beck, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, Harold Bernard, PhD, CGP, FAGPA and Judith Schaer, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA for their many contributions to EGPS and the group therapy community at-large. We had a wonderful turnout to celebrate our honorees and EGPS. Again we had a congratulatory journal to commemorate the evening. We will also be had a Chinese Auction and Silent Auction to add to the festivities of the evening which will also included a jazz trio.

The Committee members included: Kathie Ault, APRN, BC, John Carr, LCSW, Patti Cox, PhD, Lena Friedman, MPS, ATR-BC, LCAT, Amy Kossoy, BA, Jonah Schwartz, LCSW, and Jan Vadell.

## **JOURNAL EDITOR SEARCH TASK FORCE**

Barbara Feld, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA

The Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society is searching for a new Editor for our Journal, *GROUP*. We are hoping to fill the position by the summer of 2008 in order to build in a period of transition with the current editor. We are looking for a person who has a creative vision for the future of the journal, editorial experience, a history of publication, the ability to solicit submissions, good communication and organizational skills, and knowledge of our field. We have had a number of applications so far and have reached out to a number of

other potential editors, but for various reasons these people were not able or interested in applying for the position. We have asked for letters of interest from these applicants and will interview them shortly. The search will continue with our decision date having been set at the beginning of the summer.

The Search Task Force consists of: Barbara Feld, LCSW, CGP, Chair, EGPS Secretary and Executive Committee Liaison to the Journal; Marty Livingston, PhD, CGP, Editor of GROUP; Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD, CGP, Managing Editor of GROUP; Barbara Cohn, PhD, ABPP, FAGPA, Book and Media Editor of GROUP; Harold Bernard, Ph.D., CGP, DFAGPA, Editorial Board of GROUP, Past President of EGPS and AGPA.

### **LONG ISLAND DISCUSSION GROUP**

Greg MacColl, LCSW, CGP, Liaison to the Board of Directors

It has been an exciting year, which still has two more monthly events on its way. We started the year with a break in tradition as we viewed and discussed a film related to group therapy. This new time slot during the afternoon hours brought a large turnout. We are planning another film viewing for the fall. Another first was our having a non-clinician share his similarities and differences in working in the business world with group dynamics. This went well and we will have part two in the fall year (2008) with a presentation by an executive newswomen on her issues related to group interventions.

As in the past, our membership has strongly supported our discussions with making their homes available for our monthly meetings. Our group could not happen without this commitment. Making one's home open to members is a blessing, without which there would be no discussion meetings. Also, members have consistently volunteered to facilitate discussions of topics on the cutting edge of group work!

There are many to thank. In particular, Felicia Cohn has been instrumental in editing submission by our members that are used for our promotional flyers. Without her help and guidance, this year would not have been so popular. Sheila Rindler helped put together a list of our members and the town they practice in. Several new members have added to the excitement of this past year, adding to our seasoned membership, which has been faithful during the ups and downs of our work together. Our "specialness" is the coming together month after month to renew friendships and discuss our mutual love for group therapy. We care about one another's practice as we do for each others personal lives. It has been my pleasure to serve as the contact person for our group as we represent our ties to the EGPS membership. I feel very grateful for how the Executive Committee allowed me to continue in this role during the past year.

Our last session in June is also a break from tradition as we meet at a new time, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM for a retreat: "Caring for the Group Therapist" with alternative approaches such as meditation, chanting, Nia.

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Douglas H. Ruest, LCSW and Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT

Under the guidance of Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP, Executive Committee Liaison to the Membership Committee, the Committee recruited several new members this year, bringing the total number of members on the committee to seven. Part of this expansion was the result of the integration of the Collegiality/Hosting Committee into the Membership Committee. Ed Elder, MDiv and Claudia Arlo, MSW, CGP continue to welcome new members into EGPS as the Collegiality Sub-Committee. The Committee has discussed several times the need to find a way to get student members involved in the organization, perhaps through committee work of some kind. Otherwise, these student members don't seem to continue their membership. We are considering the best way to bring student members more into the community. Recruiting student members as volunteers at the Annual Conference seems a possible solution.

This year Doug, Ed, and Amy Kossoy, BA, launched the Ambassador Program at the Annual Conference. Two agencies, The Jewish Board for Family and Children Services and The Addictions Institute of New York, were invited to send two clinicians each to the Conference, who might not otherwise have attended. All four

people who attended reported having a positive experience, and two joined EGPS. The Committee has begun to consider agencies for next year.

In considering ways to recruit more members, the Committee contacted AGPA to discuss trading membership lists. AGPA is open to this possibility, and the Executive Committee will follow up. Another idea the Committee is talking about is whether to make some sort of arrangement with other groups such as the Westchester Group Psychotherapy Society that would include reduced membership fees, or something of the sort. The Committee will bring this to the Board for discussion.

The Committee's most recent project has been to draft new language clarifying membership categories. We are working on language to create a category for New Professionals for the first three years out of school; and two levels of student membership, one for graduate students and one for professionals in training programs or institutes. We are also working on language to create a membership category for institutions. We have investigated how other organizations handle this category, and are now considering how best to work this for EGPS. We will bring all new categories to the Board for discussion and approval before the bylaw revisions are submitted to the membership for vote.

Another project under consideration is the possibility of setting up a mentorship program, which would involve experienced EGPS members providing some sort of consultation to new members at no cost. Many details need still to be worked out, but we hope this will be an incentive to join EGPS.

We wish to acknowledge the work of our Committee members: Claudia Arlo, MSW, CGP; Ed Elder, MDiv; Lena Friedman, MPS, ATR-BC ; Amy Kossoy, BA; Phyllis Lee Krauser, LCSW; Manny Shapiro, PhD, CGP and Dan Summer, ATR-BD, LCAT and we wish to thank Jan Vadell, without whom we would accomplish nothing.

#### **NEWSLETTER**

Shoshana Ben-Noam, Psy.D, CGP, FAGPA - Editor

The EGPS Newsletter was published twice in the last year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring. This forum offered group therapists' expertise regarding theory and technique, members' news, highlights from the Board and various Committees, as well as information about upcoming events. The articles published were authored by EGPS members, colleagues from other AGPA Affiliate Societies as well as experts from different countries. The advertisements' section has expanded in the last year. Edward Elder, MDiv and John Carr, LCSW, the Newsletter's Committee members, contributed to the Newsletter's increased advertising revenue, thereby adding to the organization's revenue. The current issue of the Newsletter was expanded by four pages to accommodate the increased advertising while keeping a determined ratio of advertising to informative content. It was also determined that EGPS members will pay a discounted fee for placing ads in the Newsletter as benefit of membership.

#### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Margaret M. Postlewaite, PhD, CGP

The Nominating Committee for this year was comprised of the following members: Sherry Breslau, PhD, CGP; Leon Schein, EdD, CGP; Peter Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP; and Margaret Postlewaite, PhD, CGP, Chair.

The Committee identified very strong candidates to run for all offices, such that EGPS members had a difficult time making their selections. This was the first time in several years that all positions had more than one candidate running for office, and this election had the largest turnout [in many years]. The Committee felt that the willingness and openness of candidates to participate in an election with more than one candidate for office spoke to the strength and vibrancy of the organization. We are very grateful to all who participated as candidates and to all who submitted their ballots.

The Committee also decided that it was important to develop campaign guidelines for future elections. The Committee's recommendations will be presented to the EGPS Board for their consideration and implementation.

## **PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE**

Bert Weinblatt, PhD, FAGPA, CGP and Margaret M. Postlewaite, PhD, CGP

The Past Presidents Committee contacted all the previous EGPS Past Presidents to solicit their ideas and suggestions for how this wealth of wisdom and experience might best be tapped by the EGPS President and Board of Directors. Their responses have been noted, and several of their suggestions already implemented.

In a separate appeal, all EGPS Past Presidents contacted by the EGPS President agreed to contribute to the newly established EGPS Fund for Special Projects. Although this financial leadership is only one way the Past Presidents can support the efforts of EGPS, their unanimous response felt very meaningful to all those on the EGPS Board. We would like to acknowledge the generous support for this undertaking by the Past-Presidents of EGPS: Bernard Frankel, PhD., BCD, LFAGPA, Shirley Schechter Levene, MS, CGP, LFAGPA, Herbert Rabin, PhD, CGP, LFAGPA, Bert Weinblatt, PhD, CGP, LFAGPA, Bruce Bernstein, PhD, ABPP, FAGPA, Harold Bernard, PhD, ABPP, CGP DFAGPA, Phyllis Wright, CSW, Janet Baumann, CSW, BCD, CGP, Felicia Einhorn, LCSW, BCD, CGP, Jeffrey Kleinberg, PhD, CGP, FAGPA, Richard Beck, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA, Margaret Postlewaite, PhD., CGP and current President, Peter Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP.

## **PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION GROUP**

Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

The Professional Discussion Group Committee had a diverse and exciting year. We began this fall '07 with a wonderful workshop by Carol Dallinga, LCSW, CGP on Using Group Skills to Build One's Private Practice. In the spring, '08 we had four terrific workshops that were very well attended. In February, Dr. Susan Shimmerlick presented on Communication and Couple Therapy. In March, we had a ground breaking Professional Discussion Group with a stage play reading, written by the psychologist, Dr. Rivka Greenberg entitled, "Eavesdropping on Dreams" which explored the transmission of holocaust trauma over three generations. This was done with professional actors. We also had Dr. Robert Prince, Dr. Susanna Newmann and Dr. Rivka Greenberg discuss the play and the traumatic issues. We had a diverse audience that had the opportunity to be introduced to EGPS. In April, Dr Lucy Holmes gave an engaging presentation on Women and Aggression.

Finally, we ended this year's series with a modern group analyst, Dr. Arnold Bernstein, who spoke on The Group as a Second Chance Family. This also was well attended and included in the audience the Center for Group Studies weekend training program students and faculty. This is the second year that we have coordinated an event to coincide with the Center for Group Studies training weekend. We are very please to have a wonderful working relationship with them and thank their President, Gail Brown, MA, CGP for her efforts and support of this endeavor.

The PDG Committee, which includes Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT, Claudia Arlo, MSW, CGP, and former Committee member, Nancy Goldner, PhD, did a wonderful job in helping create an interesting well attended series

## **REFERRAL SERVICE AND GROUP LISTING**

Stephanie Kravec, LCSW, SAP, CSAT, Kathie Ault, APRN, BC, CGP and Mary Sussillo, LCSW, BCD

The Referral Service has expanded into a Committee of three Co-Chairs designed to accommodate the ever-increasing goals of the service. Kathie Ault, APRN, BC has graciously agreed to assume the responsibility for the group lists and specialty lists. Mary Sussillo, LCSW came onboard as our newest Co-Chair member and will work on developing and expanding the referral network with the goal of generating more group referrals. Stephanie Kravec, LCSW continues to be responsible for matching referrals with members.

The Referral Service is responsible for maintaining the Group list, Specialty list and Insurance Panel Provider List. Although the lists have not been emailed we do maintain them for reference. We are in the process of verifying all license and malpractice information prior to the information going to the membership because the EGPS office must have this information on file for everyone who can receive a referral.

The Specialty list gives members an opportunity to list up to four practice specialties. This list also includes those members maintaining offices outside Manhattan and their locations. Our goal is 100% member representation on this list.

An Insurance Panel provider list is maintained by Stephanie Kravec to assist with placing new group members who have insurance concerns. Members are asked to keep participation on all the lists current.

Our goal this year is to market our Referral Services to the community and to encourage professionals to join EGPS for the wide range of benefits. In addition, we will continue to make every effort to make the best possible match between therapist and patient.

We are encouraging all EGPS members to take advantage of this as a way to enhance your groups. Please contact Kathie Ault, APRN, BC who has assumed responsibility of maintaining the e-mail lists. Submissions are accepted only by email. Please send to [Katault@aol.com](mailto:Katault@aol.com)

### **SPRING EVENT**

Jim Ellis, Ph.D., CGP and Lynn Pearl, Ph.D., CGP

For the first time this year, the EGPS Spring Event is being co-sponsored with the Creative Arts Department at the Pratt Institute on 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT, Director of the Graduate Program in Dance/Movement Therapy at Pratt and Co-Chair of the EGPS Membership Committee, has been instrumental in facilitating the co-sponsoring of this year's Spring Event with Pratt.

The evening begins at 6:30pm with the EGPS Annual Membership Business Meeting. Following the business meeting, we will have a 90 minute presentation from Stewart Aledort, MD, on the "Sexual Attraction and Excitement in Groups: Through the Developmental Lens." This presentation will include a demonstration group of eight people with Dr. Aledort as group leader. After Dr. Aledort's presentation, there will be time for group discussion. A reception will follow in the lounge after the presentation. Dr. Aledort provided two articles that are being distributed to those who registered in advance.

While Lynn and Jim were a committee of two, there are a host of people who are key in the production of this event, notably, Jan Vadell, EGPS Administrator, Joan Wittig, Leon Schein, and Amy Kossoy.

### **TRAINING PROGRAM**

Leon Schein, EdD, LCSW, CGP

As we move towards the end of our nineteenth successful year, both in the number of students (14) and in maintaining the financial integrity of the Training Program, we have already begun advertising for our historic twentieth class under the auspices of our two creative, energetic and resourceful Co-Deans of Admission, Ellen Rubin, PsyD, and Anne McEneaney, PhD, CGP.

The Dean of Faculty, Alan Shanel, LCSW, CGP, and the Dean of Professional Development, Phyllis Wright, LCSW, have participated this year in consolidating the activities of the program and ensuring its quality.

This year's graduation will be conducted on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2008 at St Vincent's Hospital. The graduates include: Lisa Borneman, LCSW, Dionisios Bougas, BSC, Syma A. Dar, MD, Rabbi Jo David, MA, Gloria T. Gaev, LMSW, Rob Handelman, PsyD, Rev Barbara Hoffmann, LCSWR, Heidi B. Landis, RDT, LCAT, Catherine A. Marsh, MA, LCAT, ATR-BC, Debbie Radzinsky Buchuk, MSc, Nilova (Tina) Saha, LMSW, Virginia A. Seewaldt, PhD, Donna Siegel, LMSW, Sarah Wilkinson, LCSW-R.

We will also be acknowledging the graduates of the One Year Program who have completed a second year of supervision: Susan Blum, LMSW; David Campbell, PhD; Siobhan Dolan, RN-C. Neal Spivack has served as supervisor.

Our graduation speaker will be Ken Porter, MD, CGP, FAGPA, a founder of the Training Program in 1989. Ken is highly regarded in our field for his work in group psychotherapy and spirituality.

The success of this year, as measured by student comments, is in no small part due to our Faculty: Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, CGP, Lena Furgeri, EdD, LCSW, CGP, Robin Good, PhD, CGP, Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA, Shelly Menolascino, MD, Paul Schienberg, PhD, CGP. Supervisors: Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP, and Mildred Forrell, LCSW, LPsyA, CGP and Experiential Group Leaders: Chera Finnis, PsyD, CGP and Leah Slivko, LCSW, PSYCHA.

The Training Program has developed extensive materials for the EGPS website, including a description of course offerings, which Margaret Postlewaite PhD, CGP generously added to the present site. Additionally, this year the Program transferred the entire bibliography of articles to CD format.

After many years as Chair, Co-Director and Director, Leon is stepping down as Chair/Director of the Program. The program is undertaking a search for a Director. The Search Task Force is also pursuing the selection of a Dean of Curriculum. The future success of the Training Program will continue to require creativity, focus, and new ideas.

Due to construction of a new hospital, the program will relocate from St Vincent's Hospital to Beth Israel Medical Center beginning with the new class in September.

### **TRAINING PROGRAM DIRECTOR SEARCH TASK FORCE**

Leon Schein, EdD, LCSW, CGP, Chair

Peter Taylor, PhD, CGP, President of EGPS has appointed the Deans of the EGPS Training Program, Ellen Rubin, PsyD, Anne McEaney, PhD, CGP, Alan Shanel, LCSW, CGP, Phyllis Wright, LCSW, Margaret Postlewaite, PhD, CGP, Past President of EGPS and Leon Schein, EdD, LCSW, CGP as members of the Committee. Leon, the present Director, will serve as non-voting Chair.

The Committee developed a strategy to open the selection process to all members of the EGPS community. The present Deans, for personal and professional reasons, decided to remove themselves from consideration. Communication has also been developed for the AGPA listserv. If a member of AGPA is interested in the position and not associated with EGPS, he/she will be asked to become a member.

Thus far, there have been several inquiries and several members of EGPS have been approached with no expressed interest in the position.

### **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE**

Shuki Cohen, PhD and Jonah Schwartz, LCSW

This past fall, EGPS President Peter Taylor, PhD announced the formation of a task force to undertake a reorganization of the EGPS website. The Task Force, which consists of Shuki Cohen, PhD and Jonah Schwartz, LCSW, has been consulting with the EGPS Board and Executive Committee, and then formulating their ideas and bringing them to a professional web designer. The Task Force's goal is to help create a website that serves as a powerful platform for educating the general public about EGPS and all of the programs and events that it sponsors. The redesigned website will also enhance the experience of current EGPS members by providing easier access to directories, referral resources and other information about the organization. Unfortunately, the designer with whom the Task Force had been working had to leave the project due to personal commitments. We have initiated a search for another webmaster. If any member of the EGPS community knows of individuals who might be interested, they are invited to contact the Task Force through the EGPS administrator, Jan Vadell.