

President's Message:

Toward a Brighter Future for Education

As I sit in my home office in the Northeast, gazing out of the window, looking at green grass, and wondering when I will see measurable snow, I cannot help remembering what it was like being a child and being concerned about how Santa's sleigh was going to land on our home roof without snow. My world then was too small to be concerned with flying deer and a sled maneuvering in snowless climates.

A little older now, I fondly remember those times growing up, but, now, I am focused on what the immediate and long-range future will bring for the Stained Glass Association of America. Just as weather patterns seem to be changing, so is the world of commerce and, with that, how studios approach business and the art of architectural glass.

For most studios, the days of a shop solely dedicated to the fabrication of traditional stained glass have dwindled. Most shops now have added repair and restoration to their repertoire of production. With technological advances making various techniques for the glass artisan easier to use, shops are accomplishing more and varied work in house. Ideally, shop owners want their employees to have the experience necessary to produce new and exciting work utilizing some of the newer techniques. To that end, the SGAA and the Stained Glass School will continue to offer classes at the Raytown facility.

The SGAA Stained Glass School has just purchased another kiln for glass work. A larger volume of painting as well as the slumping and fusing of glass can now be



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completed. Classes will be made available during this winter as well as throughout the year. Painting on glass leads in popularity among classes. The demand has been great for more advanced types of painting techniques, which the SGS will be offering this winter and will continue to offer as 2013 unfolds.

In an effort to be more viable in this ever-changing world, the Stained Glass School has to start providing classes that will be recognized for a certification process. The idea of the SGAA certifying studios has been a long-evolving and a sometime contentious process. The SGS needs to start a similar procedure for individuals that the SGAA and schools of higher learning will recognize. The SGAA and SGS have the written foundation of syllabi and apprentice programs to develop such a certifying program. Robert Markert and Cindy Whitworth have been doing preliminary work concerning certification program.

It may be easier for Santa to land a sleigh onto a snowless roof than to develop a certification process for those who enroll in classes at the Stained Glass School. Such a program can be realized through good work and a civilized process. The future of the Stained Glass School lies in the School's ability to certify individuals and be recognized by the SGAA and the world of academia.

Best Wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

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