

Rebuttal of the Statement of Reasons For Frank Piechoski's Recall

I urge you to vote NO on my recall.

This is a struggle for the soul of AFAN.

Shall this organization be, as the Bylaws state, one "To encourage, promote and develop networking to foster decentralized, non-hierarchical communication and cooperation among astrologers," or one where a few individuals attempt to exercise control over the rest of the Network?

I have been an AFAN Networker for more than 25 years – I'm a Lifetime Member. I was elected to and served on the AFAN Steering Committee three times previous to this term, starting with my initial election in 1998. I served on the AFAN Steering Committee before, during and after UAC 2002 and UAC 2008. I have touted AFAN as a great organization for astrologers at workshops, conferences and online for many years.

My natal chart ties in closely with the AFAN charts, and we are experiencing the Pluto in mid-Capricorn transit rather strikingly.

I also served on the NCGR Board through UAC 2012, and was a key organizer of the very successful NCGR 2013 Conference in my hometown, Philadelphia. I organized the Philadelphia Chapter of NCGR and served as its first president until I was elected to AFAN Steering Committee.

I will not be bullied. I was asked to resign or face this recall vote, and I refused to resign – because I care too much about AFAN and its founding principles. Many spurious and vague accusations, inaccuracies, irrelevancies, and misrepresentations have been made in the recall document and I will attempt to address them.

None of the assertions made in the recall document rise to the level of removal from the AFAN Steering Committee. I have not been obstructionist in my actions. I have gone along with consensus in some cases where I felt it was better for AFAN to move forward with an issue rather than drag out a process. I have voted rather than delay a vote to avoid obstructing business from going forward.

What harm has come to the Network because of my actions? None.

The great harm is this action by some on the Steering Committee and the Presiding Officer to trying to disenfranchise me – who won an election by vote of the Networkers – simply because they disagree with my opinions and manner of communication. This hinders AFAN's focus on more important matters.

This is an attempt to suppress opposition within the AFAN Steering Committee. It is an attack on free and open speech, the non-hierarchical nature of AFAN, and expression of opinions contrary to those who seek to subvert the purpose of AFAN to their own ends.

Former Steering Committee members have recently resigned quietly, because they were unhappy with the manner in which AFAN business has been carried on in a non-transparent, top-down, coercive manner.

I responded to the request to resign with a Horary chart for the time and place the request was sent. The question was "Will Frank Resign?" As delineated, the answer was no. Obviously, some were flummoxed by the actual use of astrology when dealing with issues involving an astrological organization. This was regarded as *sarcastic*.

The minutes and email messages I collected are available to anyone who requests them. I am only speaking of messages pertinent to the issues at hand from this term.

There is a history of attempting meetings without quorum, agreements without votes, and a general disregard for the aims, spirit, history, and Bylaws of AFAN. Many scheduled meetings either didn't reach quorum or had to be abandoned for loss of quorum during the call.

At my very first official Steering Committee meeting during this current term, there was a discussion on what did or didn't constitute quorum. An attempt was made to hold a meeting with only seven members present, because there were currently only 11 members on the Steering Committee. I pointed out that this was against the Bylaws – quorum is 8 Steering Committee members. Thankfully, another member joined and we were able to continue with the meeting.

Yes, I expressed an interest in being an AFAN representative to UAC – and was recommended by the retiring UAC representative, Eric Pride. I have much experience with conferences as noted previously. As to my message to Ms. Nalbandian, here is the entirety of the message, sans the editorial comments:

"Please realize that if I serve on the UAC Board as an AFAN representative that I'm there to work. For UAC. I'm a hard worker, no matter what others may think. I'm able to do what is right. I think I'm able to work well with you and the other UAC reps. Put me on entertainment if you think you can't trust me. I work well with Michael and Gloria. I'm sure John M. will say otherwise, but I'm a team player. It's become even more political. And I'm not crazy about it. I realize you want people who will work with you - and I will. I think you are a great organizer - but so am I. I leave no stone unturned. Please consider me for the UAC Board due to my experience and qualifications. I'm able to suspend my personal issues to do what is right. Thanks, Frank"

I hold no rancor nor place no blame toward Ms. Nalbandian. During a Steering Committee call concerning her appointment as UAC Coordinator, I relayed some

information about an event that occurred during the previous UAC she coordinated - Orlando in 2002. I did this because I didn't believe anyone else on the current Steering Committee was familiar with that history.

The decision for a Eric Pride's replacement was made during a meeting that I told the rest of the Steering Committee in advance that I could not attend due to my trip to the UK to lecture at the Astrological Association Conference. They chose that meeting date anyway and chose the current Democratic Procedures Chair.

The entire text of the "Something is rotten in the state of AFAN" email message is available to anyone who wants it. I was expressing my concerns to Advisors, previous Steering Committee members, and other long-standing supporters of AFAN. AFAN's structure is such that the real power lies with the Networkers - not the Steering Committee or any officer of AFAN.

As far as the other assertions go, they are baseless and anonymous. I questioned the process for selecting the current Presiding Officer, yes - but only because I was surprised when after the election in which the AFAN Networkers voted me in that the Presiding Officer had changed without me knowing about it. I was not aware of the process that had occurred. On my previous time on the Steering Committee, Presiding Officers were usually only selected after their terms or when terms were ending.

Bylaws clearly state, "A member directory shall be prepared and published in the Spring of even-numbered years." The Bylaws were violated. I offered my assistance to get the document assembled and disseminated on time, but was ignored. I was volunteering to take on work that others might have been too busy or uninterested in doing. The AFAN Membership List has not been published as of 28 September 2016.

My later attempt at obtaining the membership list, as is the right of any AFAN Networker at any time, was rebuffed and the UAC Board was notified and they created a codicil to the UAC operating agreement that disallowed distribution of membership lists before veteran speaker voting - due to the possibility they would be used for electioneering during the UAC speaker selection process. This is an example of AFAN's internal Bylaws being violated as dictated by another group.

My intent was not to use the list for electioneering for a speaker slot, but to see how the other members would react to a Networker making a simple request that is plainly within his or her rights under the AFAN Bylaws. The request was not fulfilled, and the issue was taken to the UAC Board rather than handled within AFAN.

The assertion that I didn't perform my duties is absolute balderdash. I have noted or responded to Media Watch items as they have come up. But I am NOT the primary Media Watch Chair, as decided during the takeover meeting. My primary chair is E-Lists. As requested, I have added new members to the list and sent notifications. However, I haven't received any requests for quite a while from Membership. I also served as co-chair of the Scholarships committee, and all needed work was completed

in a timely manner. I additionally voluntarily assisted in editing the legal chapter for OPA publication on a rather short deadline.

I am now suspended from the AFAN Steering Committee at a time when I could contribute to the current “shifting of the zodiac/13th sign” kerfuffle that is making the rounds again. Over the years I have responded to those issues several times and was effective in getting published on some of the offending news outlets.

Personal conversations that have nothing to do with the business of AFAN have no place in this process. They are beyond the scope of this issue. However, I will respond with the facts (and screenshots) if anyone wishes to have them. I gave a personal compliment on Facebook. It was deleted and we had a brief conversation about why. I was told not to worry about it at the time. There seemed to be no rancor involved until recent actions by the Presiding Officer and some members of the Steering Committee.

The current structure of AFAN allows the Presiding Officer and Democratic Procedures chair an overwhelming amount of power if they decide to collude against other members of the Steering Committee. When both of those people also hold positions with UAC, it makes their power that much stronger.

Long before the vote for AFAN’s UAC Veteran Speakers I made some suggestions about how the election should take place – including the participation of a disinterested third party as an observer of the voting process. This was not even given the dignity of open discussion – the Presiding Officer and Democratic Procedures Chair decided that since the Bylaws state they shall conduct all elections, input from other Steering Committee members was not needed or desired. This is against the spirit of AFAN.

The entire reason that this action against me is taking place is that I refuse to condone any Steering Committee member or appointed officer to violate the AFAN Bylaws with impunity. I object to other organizations encroachment into what should be internal AFAN matters. I refuse to allow an appointed Presiding Officer and a cabal of Steering Committee members to work against the interest of AFAN’s Networkers, its spirit, and its Bylaws.

I request that a disinterested third party, rather than the Presiding Officer and the Democratic Procedures Chair, run or closely observe this recall election. It is a conflict of interest for my accusers to count the votes in secrecy.

I will be publishing the recall document sent to me and my response as PDF files on my personal website at proastrologer.com to ensure that the original recall document is not changed after I submit my rebuttal.

Once again, I urge you to vote NO on my recall and allow AFAN to return to being the organization it was created to be.

Sent and posted 28 September 2016, 4:27 a.m., Philadelphia, PA

Limit 1910 words, 1909 words submitted.