

INTERMOUNTAIN DISTRICT



SUBJECT: District Meeting Summary (April 20, 2013)

Vice-President General's Remarks. The District currently has no bylaws for governance; therefore, the VPG presided over the meeting as the senior NSSAR officer and also represented the IDSSAR. President Layton Patterson, represented the UTSSAR, and National Trustee Lon Brown represented the MTSSAR. The WYSSAR was not represented. The order of business is listed below by corresponding agenda number. These discussion topics were selected based upon input from the District's leadership and VPG observations. A discussion of each item ended in a gentlemen's consensus of opinion. This summary is an attempt to elaborate in some detail on the discussion of each item. Although the absence of District governance was never discussed, it is strongly recommended that this become an agenda item at the next District meeting.

No. 1 SKYPE – Making A Large District Smaller

Discussion:

- The weather prevented Lon Brown from traveling to Salt Lake City from Kalispell, MT. He was present for the meeting via SKYPE. My laptop computer and his computer linked us throughout the entire District meeting. This connection was extremely valuable in that it demonstrated how a digital feed can reduce the size of our large District. Lon's contribution to the discussions would later prove to be very helpful.

- All four states comprising the District are geographically immense. Through the use of SKYPE or other similar connecting programs, computers

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provide a dimension to meeting participation that has never before been realized. Boards of Managers can and should use this medium for wider member participation at scheduled meetings.

No. 2 SAR – OFFICER

Discussion:

- This rootsweb.com service is provided to all in the chain of leadership, i.e. Chapter, State Society, and National Society leaders. SAR-OFFICER is used by these leaders to disseminate information deemed to be relevant to SAR operations. It is not a blog nor is it a chat-room network.
- Though its network allows for the swift distribution of important SAR information, it is not mandated that elected officers become a subscriber to SAR-OFFICER. It is recommended that the service be used for an information gathering and quick distribution system by Chapter, State Society, and National Society leaders. Those choosing to subscribe should contact the NSSAR Director of Operations, Mike Scroggins, at 502/589-1776 or mscroggi@sar.org.

No. 3 National Candidate Endorsement

Discussion:

- A healthy exchange of comments occurred on this subject. State Societies have a voice in all National elections if they choose to participate. Candidates campaign through various means available, i.e. in person, by letter, or email. Individual compatriots, collective groups, i.e. Chapter and State Societies can endorse the candidate they feel would best perform the duties of a particular office. This applies to contested and uncontested National level races.
- We all must remit National dues annually. Our National governance allows for Congressional Delegates to vote in the election of National officers at every Annual Congress. This being the case, it is our responsibility to exercise the given right to vote for the best candidate. Reference: NSSAR Bylaw 19, Section 2, Paragraph (c) Endorsements. *“Individual Compatriots, State Societies, Chapters and Districts may endorse candidates for General*

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Office. Endorsements may be mailed by postal or electronic means to the Chairman; provided that such endorsements are postmarked (or emailed) no later than February 1. The Nominating Committee will not consider endorsements sent (e-mailed or postmarked) after February 1."

No. 4 District and State Society Websites/Newsletters

Discussion:

- I began the conversation by throwing my thoughts on the table for newsletters. The time for printed newsletters is fast being replaced by digital ones. All generally agreed that newsletters are beneficial, and generally all agreed that they are also expensive to publish and distribute. After turning the discussion focus to websites, Lon Brown was particularly vocal on this issue. As the District and MTSSAR Webmaster, he was very knowledgeable on the building of websites. The IDSSAR, more especially Webmaster Compatriot Frank Huntley, was complimented on the design and attractiveness of his State Society's new face. Lon Brown was complimented on his efforts to establish the District's site.
- Websites represent many avenues. If attractive, they draw in readers that could become new members. It is also an excellent tool for posting information. All agreed that newsletters (in some form) and websites are important to the annual operation of a State Society.

No. 5 District Size – Are We Too Spread Out?

Discussion:

- The geography of the district does not lend itself to good management. The spine of the Rocky Mountain Range divides Wyoming and Montana from Utah and Idaho. During the long winter months, travel by automobile can be risky. In fact, during the best of driving conditions, the distances are so great that in most cases, expensive air travel is the best option. In any event, whether travel is by airplane or automobile, overnight lodging is required to attend SAR activities.

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- The idea of splitting the District in half and forming two Districts from one large District was batted around. No formal recommendations on this were made.

No. 6 Coordination and Scheduling of State Annual Meetings

Discussion:

- It was brought to the attention of the representatives present that coordination among the four State Society Presidents is necessary to prevent a collision or conflict of State Annual Meeting dates. The District VPG should attend these meetings as an invited guest, and in order to accommodate everyone, coordination among the State Societies is necessary.
- The District VPG should step into the ring as a coordinator with other State Society Presidents to avoid District conflicts. This year worked out well as all four State Societies have or will meet on dates that do not overlap, but 2014 dates have not been established. The leaders of State Societies must work through the District VPG in avoiding scheduling conflicts.

No. 7 NSSAR Leadership Conferences/Trustees Meetings

Discussion:

- Participation at these gatherings by the State Society President (or Senior Vice President) and State Society National Trustee (or alternate) is not required, but it is strongly recommended. This is an implied responsibility for all elected/installed State Society level and National level officers. State Societies must groom from within for these positions of responsibility. As individual State Society Boards of Managers govern, so too will the Board of National Trustees govern the NSSAR.
- As dues paying members to the NSSAR, every State Society has the ability to voice opinions and exercise the right to vote in National level affairs. Since the initiation of relocating the Headquarters, and the constructing of the Center for Advancing America's Heritage began in 2007, significant issues with respect to the building project have been brought before the National Trustees for final decision. This is a historic period in the life of the organization, and this cannot be over emphasized.

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- All compatriots are encouraged to attend the semiannual Leadership Conference/Trustees Meeting, and it is essential that the State Society's leadership attend. The Board of National Trustees generally meets three times a year – one in the fall, in the spring, and at the Annual Congress.

No. 8 National Trustees – Different From State Society Officers

Discussion:

- The nation's independence was secured largely over the issue of taxation without representation. A National Trustee is the State Society's representation in the governance of the NSSAR. All members are required to remit National dues (tax) annually, thus the membership assumes its interests in National level decision making is ably represented at each Board of National Trustees meeting.
- NSSAR Bylaw 16 provides the following language. *“Section 2. The names of the nominees for Trustee and Alternate Trustee to represent each of the State Societies shall be communicated to the Secretary General at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Congress. The President of the State Society shall be considered the nominee for the Office of Trustee to represent his State Society if the society timely fails to notify the Secretary General of a nominee. The State Society's Alternate Trustee shall function as Trustee if the elected Trustee cannot fulfill the duties of this Office. The nominees for the Board of Trustees pursuant to the above subsections shall be elected to the Board of Trustees by an affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates and delegates at-large at the Annual Congress. Section 3. The Board of Trustees shall be the legal custodian of all National Society property, both real and personal. It shall manage the business and the affairs of the Society, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to it at any meeting of the National Society; with the proviso that the Board of Trustees shall not have the power to sell, convey or encumber any real estate which belongs to the National Society, nor shall it incur any liability other than for ordinary current expenses of the Society, unless so ordered by an Annual Congress or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of the Board of Trustees present and voting.”*

No. 9 Youth Contests/C.A.R. (orations, essay, etc.)

Discussion:

- All the information and procedures pertaining to the NSSAR youth contests, awards, scholarships, exchange program and the C.A.R. are conveniently located on the National Website (www.sar.org) underneath the EDUCATION/CAAH Tab.

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- State Societies desiring to participate should consider sending a designated member to the specific National committee for contest oversight to understudy the parameters before entering into a National sponsored contest.

No. 10 Establish VPG Rotation Among the Four State Societies

Discussion:

- No one knew for sure how the rotation was established if established at all. A previous District VPG said that the rotation was by alphabetical order, i.e. ID, MT, UT, WY. If this is the case, the WYSSAR would be next in the VPG rotation. I explained that my thought was that the rotation ought to be set according to the date that the State Society was admitted by the Board of National Trustees, i.e. the MTSSAR (1894), UTSSAR (1895), WYSSAR (1908), IDSSAR (1909). If this methodology is adopted it would be consistent with the alphabetical order arrangement. As an aside, the District's website designation, the icon used to open the site, is comprised of the four State Society flags in order of admission into the NSSAR. The MT State Flag is positioned in the top left corner with the UT State Flag to the right of it. The WY State Flag is positioned in the lower left corner with the ID State Flag to the right of it.
- Those present for the meeting agreed that the WYSSAR should be next (2013-2014) in the District's VPG rotation. Since the WYSSAR was not represented at the District meeting, I indicated that I would consult with President Robert Allen on this matter.

No. 11 123rd Annual Congress (6-10 July, Kansas City, MO)

Discussion:

- Several of those attending the District meeting were officers of the UTSSAR. Ralph Erickson, UTSSAR Historian, was a first-time attendee at the Annual Congress last year. Compatriot Erickson briefly described his experience at the 122nd Annual Congress hosted by the NMSSAR/AZSSAR in Phoenix, AZ. MTSSAR National Trustee Lon Brown also expressed his previous experience.

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- All present at the meeting were encouraged to attend Annual Congresses. All present were also encouraged to volunteer as Delegates from their respective State Society.

No. 12 Hosting A Congress

Discussion:

- I led this discussion by explaining that the NSSAR Congress Planning Committee contracts with future Congress sites four years in advance. (The TNSSAR has accepted the committee's approval for their Congress site in 2017.) The Chairman encourages all State Societies interested in hosting an Annual Congress to send a representative to the Congress Planning Committee meeting for information growth and development purposes. The committee's emphasis is being placed on finding smaller cities, if possible, that possess a strong Interstate network and a nearby airport.
- This District has many cities with those attributes, and as the District grows, the State Societies should begin considering the possibility of hosting an Annual Congress before the end of the decade. Ogden, UT and Boise, ID were mentioned as possible future Congress locations.

No. 13 District Awards

Discussion:

- The VPG will present District level awards to the recipients at each State Society Annual Meeting beginning today with the UTSSAR. The WYSSAR conducts its annual meeting in Casper, WY on May 11th. The IDSSAR conducts its annual meeting in Boise, ID on May 18th. The next District VPG will present the District level award to the recipient in Butte, MT on August 3, 2013.