Membership Involvement Is the Key to Healthy Growth

District 8 Conference
Officer’s Meeting
1 May 2011

Stf/C Anita F. Walker, JN
954-781-8061
anita5040@bellsouth.net

• Follow the slides – some of the detail is a bit small, especially the statistics
• Take notes and record your own thoughts and ideas
• A starting point for your own Squadron retention/involvement program
• We’re going to:
   Talk about some of the district and squadron numbers
   Discuss a plan we developed some years ago – the process and how it might work in your squadron
   Get your ideas, too!
Agenda

- Why do people join and why are new members so important
- What are the statistics
- How can we retain more members
- When should the various actions happen
- Who can/should lead and participate in getting/retaining new members
- Summary

Involvement is everyone's job
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education – to take classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating Club (Fraternity/Fellowship) – to enjoy activities on and off the water with a group of people they like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service – to improve the boating education of the area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At every level, we see our net membership declining. The national vision and focus will concentrate on retention and involvement for healthy growth.

- Three parts of USPS – Education, Fraternity and Community Service
- People join for all three, or just one or two...
- Don't exclude people if they only join for one reason versus the other
Red is Negative and Green is Positive

| Squadron         | New Members | Non-Renewals | | Squadron         | New Members | Non-Renewals |
|------------------|-------------|--------------| |                 |-------------|--------------|
| Biscayne Bay     | 0           | 0            | | | | |
| Coral Ridge      | 0           | 11           | -11 | | Miami           | 3           | 7            | -4 |
| Cutler Cove      | 0           | 0            | 0   | | Palm Beach      | 7           | 29           | -22 |
| Ft. Lauderdale   | 30          | 9            | +21 | | Pompano Beach   | 13          | 17           | -4  |
| Hollywood        | 0           | 0            | 0   | | Port St. Lucie  | 1           | 5            | -4  |
| Homestead        | 1           | 5            | -4  | | Sebastian       | 0           | 2            | -2  |
| Key West         | 40          | 7            | +31 | | St. Lucie River | 2           | 2            | 0   |
| Marathon         | 7           | 1            | +6  | | Vero Beach      | 55          | 15           | +40 |

Source: Dues Database 4/23/11

• Most new members
  ❖ Vero Beach
  ❖ Key West
  ❖ Ft. Lauderdale

• Most non-renewals
  ❖ Palm Beach
  ❖ Pompano Beach
  ❖ Vero Beach

• Squadrons with positive growth – four!
  ❖ Vero Beach
  ❖ Key West
  ❖ Ft. Lauderdale
  ❖ Marathon

Don't forget most of our non-renewals come from the annual billing numbers in June – not anniversary billing between January and May
Calculate your numbers!

- Anniversary versus traditional billing
- Time lag for new or non-renewals
- Participation lists – different departments keep their statistics differently

www.usps.org/dues/reports/memberstatus.php

- Check this report frequently
- You will need your squadron number and password – your Commander has both
- Call me if you have problems getting in and I'll help you!

- You have to know what the problem is before you can solve it!
Why Is Participation Declining?

- Do we ask too much too soon?
- Do we communicate the right way for new members? In-active members?
- Maybe we don’t ask enough at the right times. . .

Some would say we need more volunteers rather than more members. . .

What do you think?

- Why do we lose members?
  - Moved away, health, insurance, etc
  - Took all the classes they wanted
  - Didn’t like our activities
  - Somehow. . .We didn’t meet their expectations
- Do we offer enough? (ask audience)
  - Classes
  - Rendezvous
  - Dances
Let’s Look at Members’ and Squadrons’ Needs Across Time

Members
- Commitment
- Experience
- Learn New Skills
- Use Learned Skills

Squadrons
- Volunteers
- Committee Chairs
- Students And Instructors
- Bridge Positions

Time

In the business world, this is called succession planning

- We can all remember situations where new members were put into positions they could not handle well because they actually didn't know enough about the organization
- Sometimes, we fill Bridge positions with people who don't plan to do anything
- This is why succession planning is so important
- If you are re-cycling bridge members, this is one of the characteristics of a squadron in trouble which is a completely different discussion
Succession Planning Matches People Needs Against a Time Window

- **Members:**
  - Join for different reasons
  - Have different interests and experience levels

- **Squadrons**
  - Have different needs at different times
  - Don’t always think about a 3 year time period

*Think about new members and involvement across all the departments*
Examples: Matching New Members' Interests to Squadron Needs

**Commander's Department**
- Dinner With the Commander
- Participate/ chair a Committee

**Exec's Department**
- Coop Charting
- Change of Watch
- Participate/ chair a Committee

**Admin's Department**
- Dinners
- Land/water Events
- Participate/ chair a Committee
- Be an Assistant

**Education Department**
- Proctor
- Take Courses
- Teach Courses

**Secretary's Department**
- Write Articles
- Participate/chair a Committee
- Be an Assistant

**Treasurer's Department**
- Participate/ chair a Committee
- Be an Assistant
We Hope a New Members’ Commitment and Experience Increase Over Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small Time Commitment/Limited Experience (year 1**)</th>
<th>Increasing Time Commitment and Experience (year 2**)</th>
<th>Significant Time Commitment and Experience (year 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend CDW</td>
<td>Become a committee member</td>
<td>Chair a committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with charting</td>
<td>Become a vessel safety inspector</td>
<td>Take an assistant or bridge position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with charting and/or other outside functions</td>
<td>Take operations training</td>
<td>Teach a course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set tables at a dinner meeting</td>
<td>Organize a rendezvous or other land event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help serve a dinner</td>
<td>Proctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Dinner, Raft up or Other Land Event</td>
<td>Take a Course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with rendezvous or Land Event</td>
<td>Write an Article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greet at a Dinner Meeting</td>
<td>Attend a District Conference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a Few Phone Calls</td>
<td>Join the Executive Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Some first or second year members may be qualified depending upon their experience when they joined the Squadron – however, too much too soon can be a path to non-renewal/non-involvement.**
Involvement and Communication Are Two Sides of the Same Coin

- We can inform people passively
  - Mariner (Squadron Newsletter)
  - Commander’s Letter
  - Other mailings (Membership Involvement Event Invitation)

- We can include them actively in a variety of ways
  - Calling Committee
  - Commander’s follow-up call
  - Face to face discussions
  - Greeting at Dinners
  - Asking for participation in a focused way
How the Nominating Committee Can Help

- Ask people about their interests and how/if they would like to contribute more
- Make it easy to say yes or no
- Think through candidates for 3 years into the future

The Nominating Committee can be about more than filling the Bridge

- Don't lie to people!
- Don't say a job requires minimal time if it doesn't
- Don't downplay the need to have a merit mark or advanced grade
- Make sure officers understand the responsibilities of attending district and national meetings
- Make sure officers understand there will be some financial outlay
- Be careful who go onto the nominating committee
Let’s Combine the ‘Who,’ ‘When,’ and ‘How!’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action (The ‘How’)</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commander’s Letter and follow-up call</td>
<td>Commander</td>
<td>First Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greet at Dinner Meeting/Invite to Commander’s Table, Ask to help serve dinner</td>
<td>Commander, Admin, Bridge, Membership Involvement</td>
<td>2 to 3 Dinners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Call (details on next slide)</td>
<td>Bridge, Executive Committee</td>
<td>Initial 3 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask to Proctor (if appropriate)</td>
<td>Education Officer, Bridge</td>
<td>Initial 3 Month follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor New Member/Membership Involvement Event</td>
<td>Membership Involvement</td>
<td>As Appropriate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Here are a few things we can start or continue to do... Let’s not forget all of our past successes*
First Steps... Just a Few Phone Calls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call 1</th>
<th>Call 2</th>
<th>Call 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New member just completed</td>
<td>Discuss Upcoming Classes</td>
<td>Talk About Previous Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Public Boating course</td>
<td>Date of Dinner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New member transferred from</td>
<td>Invitation to Proctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>another squadron</td>
<td>Date of Other Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New member – other source</td>
<td>Ask About the Manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discuss Upcoming Classes

Date of Dinner

Invitation to Proctor

Date of Other Events

Ask About the Manner

Date of Dinner

Discuss Upcoming Classes

Date of Dinner

Discuss Upcoming Classes

Date of Other Events

Ask About the Manner

Date of Other Events

Ask About the Manner
Summary

- To increase involvement and reduce non-renewals requires an organized effort by Squadron Leadership
- We need to formalize a plan that matches the diverse needs of our membership with the variety of opportunities the Squadron offers
- Using a 3 year approach should increase involvement and help simplify the job of the nominating committee