



**Minutes of State Board Meeting  
Sons In Retirement Inc.  
Tuesday June 2, 2015 at 9:30am  
at  
Hiddenbrooke Golf Club, Vallejo.**



**State Board Members**

President: Bob Hairston	Director, Region 3: absent
Vice President: Don Dill	Director, Region 4: Bob Staib
Secretary: Derek Southern	Director, Region 5: Robert Fox
Assistant Secretary: Ron Flagel	Director, Region 6: Dick DeVoe
Treasurer: Karl Ryden	Director, Region 7: Patrick Misener
Assistant Treasurer: Hal D'Ambrogia	Director, Region 8: Jerry Strain
Director, Region 1: Bob Roberts	Director, Region 9: Mark Stuart
Director, Region 2: Russ Salazar	Director, Region 10: James Filippo

**Invited Participants**

Past Presidents: Dwight Sale (State Advisor, Parliamentarian), Mel Augustine  
Maynard Rodland (Nominating Committee), Rich Dettmer,

Rules: Dwight Sale for Larry Powers	Tax exemption status: Mike Berry
Travel: Bob Spellman	Insurance: Angelo Coero
INFOSYS: Dean Steichen	Insurance: Craig Hofflines
Training: Richard Kabenek	Bocce: Jack Maylink

**Invited Area Governors**

Ed Benson (R6, A2)	Ron Saltgaver (R6, A24)
Pat O'Keefe (R7, A21)	

**Call to Order**

The State Board meeting was called to order at 9:30AM by President Bob Hairston. Secretary Southern confirmed a quorum was present. The Treasurer gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was said by all. President Hairston welcomed the Past Presidents in attendance and recognized, by name, all invited participants in attendance. Motion was made to approve the Minutes of the April Board Meeting minutes as written (MSP).

**Treasurers report:**

Karl Ryden reported that thanks to the successful efforts of the Insurance Chairman and his committee we have a new insurance company and we have saved approx. \$1500 with coverage that includes water sports (including fishing). By excluding terrorist acts we may save even more.

Our revenue has been slumping (fewer members) but expenses have not been reduced. He expects a shortfall of up to \$10,000 for the year but it is possible that we come in close to budget. Other details will be covered by Vice President Dill in a later report.

Karl thanked the Regional Directors for making efforts to give details on their expense reports (Form 15) as this makes it easier to complete the one page report with everything

lined up.

In the discussion that followed past President Maynard Rodland asked why the cost of the Annual meeting met or exceeded the costs of all the Board meetings for the year. President Hairston responded that he felt it was worth it to show appreciation to the Big Sirs and area Governors by getting away from the poor food, bad acoustics and low quality screen at the previous Vallejo facility.

The report was accepted: MSP

**Tax matters:**

Mike Berry gave a detailed report of the tax situation and volunteered to stick with the problem until it was resolved. His report is in Appendix A. Mike noted that if we lose our tax exempt status we lose our current insurance, but he felt this was highly unlikely.

In the subsequent discussion. President Hairston thanked Mike his report and urged him to continue his good work.

**OFFICER'S REMARKS**

**President Bob Hairston:** Bob quoted from a Business Insider article about a Navy Seal program called *The Mission Continues*. The author quotes his book and relates the way he talked to his friend Zach. His friend said "I'm struggling". This is a guy who had been a Navy Seal, a war hero, and an entrepreneur. He comes home. And now when he called me he was an unemployed alcoholic on disability who had been arrested and was now looking at the prospect of having his kids come to visit him in jail.

One of the first things I said, related the author, "Look, Zach, you used to wake up every single day with a mission, you used to wake up every single day with a sense of purpose, you also used to wake up every single day with a team around you, with people who were counting on you and where you knew you were able to count on them.

But what happened to Zach – and this is the same thing that happens to professional athletes when they leave the game, AND IT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHEN THEY RETIRE. A lot of the time people get to a place in their life where they're uncertain what their purpose and mission is and they are also in a new environment where they're uncertain who their team is.

Sons In Retirement is that new team. That new purpose. That new mission. There are men who are newly retired and those who have been searching for years. We are here. Let's go get some new members.

He pointed out some merchandise at the back of the room with Sir insignia from a source in San Jose., including golf bag, head covers, briefcase, polo shirts, hats etc and they will be at a table at the Annual meeting. If others have similar suppliers contact Ed Benson who is arranging vendor tables at the meeting.

The President's dinner will be held at the Claim Jumper Restaurant the night before the Annual meeting for all the Board members, Presidential Advisor, and Past Presidents plus the local organizer Ed Benson. Income from vendor tables will go towards paying for the dinner. Bob circulated a flier with details of menu choices. In response to a question about a Wives' program Bob said that would be up to one of the wives if they wanted to organize something.

**Vice-President Don Dill:** Don reported he has not attended all activity meetings but intends to visit all of them. He has participated in many of the meetings such as Training and G&M and has spent a lot of time on planning the Annual Meeting and has given the table layout to Dwight Sale so table tents can be printed. Area Governors will sit with their Area Big Sirs, and Regional Directors will sit at a table at the front of the room. He is planning a

recognition program for branches which have done very well, and thanked to Sir Bill Peterson (Branch 8) for his work in liaising with the Hilton staff.

Bob announced that he has 35 applicants for a new branch in Grass Valley, more than the 25 minimum required for a Provisional Charter. He predicted that the membership will hit 50 by the end of this year, the main problem is lunch facilities being quite expensive.

About 7 of the new members are from the Alta Sierra branch (124) but were from the other Grass Valley branch (55) which closed about 2 years ago.

His branch has an active Bocce group (40-50 people with coed participants) and is an excellent activity for attracting new members. The Bocce Committee has languished and there has been no tournament organized, Bob introduced Jack Maylink, an experienced player, who has volunteered as Chairman for the group.

**Secretary Derek Southern:** Derek thanked Sir Eck Sellinger for standing in as Secretary for the April meeting and for writing excellent minutes. He requested Regional Directors to send their reports in Word (.doc or .docx) format or as a plain text file within 10 days (June 12) and stated they would be attached to the minutes as submitted. In answer to a question about the acceptance of a report in Excel format he replied that would be acceptable.

**Assistant Secretary, Ron Flagel** had no remarks

**Assistant Treasurer Hal D'Ambrogia:** Hal stated that his main task is to account for Form 28, but he is not receiving them on a timely basis, and is not receiving some of them at all. He feels Branch Treasurers are not receiving the training that Rule 124 requires for Branch officers which leads to basic errors in the report. This leads to a lot of time being spent hand-holding individual Treasurers and he feels this is something that Area Governors could minimize by providing better Branch Officer training. Questions were asked about Hal keeping Regional Directors and Area Governors informed about less responsive branches as agreed at the January Board Meeting. Hal usually gives a 2 week grace period before badgering branches for late responses, calling RDs and sending emails. Some branches don't seem to have computer capability as about 15% of Form 28 are sent in by snail mail! He suggests that RDs or AGs encourage Treasurers in such branches to get help from members with some computer skills. Some of the reports are hand written, some are submitted on old (2006) versions of the form. It is obvious that the instructions on Form 28A are not being followed, again emphasizing the need for better training.

Only about 33% of Form 28 are submitted in Excel format which means he has to reconstruct many forms manually. Many times the disbursements and revenue for lunches do not balance – and they should. AG Ron Saltgaver asked how free lunches (birthday boys, guests etc) should be handled and was told that the instructions (F28A updated Feb 2015) covered this, any further discussion of this question would continue after the meeting.

Since only 2 Treasurers do not have email addresses it was puzzling that 20 (15%) report by snail mail! INFOSYS Chair Dean Steichen pointed out that Mac users have an equivalent Excel, and for members without Excel there are free programs such as Open Office and Libre which give the same capabilities and can read/save files in Excel format.

**REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS:** see Appendix B

Comments from several Regional Directors noted a focus on drives to generate more guests as well as a correlation between the number of activities (or new activities) at a branch and membership growth. Co-Ed activities were recognized as important components of successful branches by several Regional Directors.

## STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Nominating Committee:** Maynard Rodland reported the following complete slate of candidates:

President: ..... Don Dill  
Vice-President: ..... Jerry Strain  
Secretary: ..... Derek Southern  
Assistant Secretary: ..... Ron Flagel  
Treasurer: ..... Karl Ryden  
Assistant Treasurer: ..... Jimmie Johnson

In prolonged discussion questions were asked about the possibility of Write-In candidates which, as Dwight Sale reminded the meeting, has only happened once in his memory but it led to him being elected President! Mark Stuart reported a feeling from the field that there should be more transparency in the process. It was suggested that the names of all qualified candidates who wish to be identified be published in time for the August meeting along with their answers (for President and Vice-President) to the question “What are you running on?”

Don Dill commented that he was interviewed thoroughly before being chosen as the candidate.

One unanswered question was “Why should Big Sirs come to the Annual Meeting when there’s only one person to vote for?”

**Budget Oversight Chairman:** Don Dill reviewed the reconciled financial report for Jan—May, especially the costs of Board Meetings. He reported that the money spent for the 2 Board Meetings (line 302) thus far is \$2500 vs \$2700 last year, lower because of not needing to pay a room rental fee. The Regional, Area, and Branch meeting expenses have gone way up. The organizers should be complimented on meeting more with their Big Sirs. Sometimes there is a marked improvement in membership, sometimes not. Don encouraged more emphasis on membership at these meetings.

The other expenses that are unclear year are the final costs of the Annual Meeting and the Training meeting. Bob was surprised to hear that meeting at better places was less expensive.

A flier about the Annual Meeting was sent out some months ago. A new flier is available (and was shared with participants) for sharing with all Big Sirs. Don is budgeting for 120 Big Sirs to attend, an increase of 20 over last year. [Reminder: If a Big Sir cannot attend the Annual Meeting the Branch BEC shall appoint an alternate to attend in his place, ref Rule 166]

**Growth & Membership:** Jerry Strain reported that his committee has been busy on many fronts. One item of interest has been the inventory of merchandise, for example over 4000 decals for the front of binders (at \$1 each).

When he started as Chairman Form 27 data was being collected by the former Chair and he took over the job. Too many branches are slow or not sending them in at all, some forms come in handwritten, others in non-Excel format which show up on screen as 8-10 pages. He cannot understand why Regional Directors have not responded to his request to follow

up on branches which do not send in Form 27. He asked Dean Steichen to password protect the F27 form that can be downloaded. Dick Devoe reported his Mac deletes any password protection on his F27. We need to educate and stop users from attempting to change the form structure. Area Governors should follow up with forms they receive which are screwed up. Dwight suggested making the Membership Chair at each branch responsible for the Form 27, not that they have to complete it, but they have the responsibility for seeing it is completed properly.

For the SAT Derek Southern presented his analysis of the last 4 years with an emphasis on the growing number of small (under 100) branches (see Appendix C). He predicted that by 2020 there would be 80 branches under 100 members, and many of them would have already failed. This would leave SIR with 50-60 branches and under 10,000 members unless something changes, the question is "What will change?" In discussion that followed it was suggested that many branches had not culled their rosters of inactive members carried as 'active'. Once they did that their recruiting efforts were slow and this has led to the decline. Derek pointed out that a previous President complained 10 – 15 years ago that we were now down to 175 branches and 27,000 members, If we don't change we will continue the steady linear decline presented in the data.

Area Governor (and Regional Director elect) Ed Benson then described the RAMP process that Region 6 recently introduced at a training round-table for the branches of Area 8 (see Appendix D). President Hairston cut the presentation short and (after the meeting) called for a Special Board Meeting at which the Growth and Management Committee should explain RAMP and other ways to effect change and reverse the membership decline.

**Bocce:** Jack Maylink reported he has volunteered to chair the Bocce Committee. He said he has played USBF tournaments and has seen Branch 79 gain new members from the sport. He will be putting together an annual tournament, and will send an email to each Director asking for their Region contacts.

**INFOSYS:** Dean Steichen reported that Wayne MacDonald has been added to the Committee membership since the April 2015 Board meeting. Minor changes to the sirinc.org website were made to include the Bocce Activity and to add back Fishing. Routine updates to State Roster, SIR Manual, State Meetings, Membership Statistics, Branch Data Sheets, SIR Database, and Travel Management were made by Dean Steichen from files supplied, primarily by Dwight Sale and John Skarpelos. Alan Baker keeps busy supporting Branch Websites as requested/required. Wayne MacDonald has taken over the month-end reporting activities from Dwight Sale and will be producing the month-end statistics and other reports each month. Continued progress has been made in developing the new Database using CiviCRM. Marty Owen has refined the loading process of the new Database and has populated it with test data. Testing of some reporting is progressing. Dan Weller has revised the new Form 28 posting & review process and is working on the Form 28 update process. It soon will be ready to be tested by Dwight and the Treasurers (Karl & Harold). Dwight has provided all his documentation of the necessary processes and organizational info necessary for developing the new system.

Another excellent edition of SIR Happenings has being prepared by Don MacGregor, Dwight Sale and John Skarpelos and is available on the website now. The State Treasurer, Asst. State Treasurer, Email, Roster, Manual (Rules), Forms, and Certificates members have been busy performing their services updating the SIR Database as required to support our members.

Don Dill asked for the Mission Statement to be included on the website, Dean responded that he would add it as a button on the left side.

**Travel:** Bob Spellman passed out a form explaining what is happening by Region and Area for travel forms. He reported that he received a Form 46 from a branch for a travel trip. This is not a Travel Committee responsibility as it's a Branch trip and responsibility.

**Golf:** Bill Wilhelm submitted a list of the proposed 2016 State Golf Tournaments to be approved by the Board, with all dates being on, or about, the stated date:

Napa: .....April 18 and 19  
Reno week one: .....June 13-17  
Reno week two: .....June 20-24  
Team Championship: .....August 15  
Fall Classic: .....September 19-22  
Individual Championship: .....October 17-18

Dick DeVoe said a number of questions had been raised by branches in his Region about the costs of State tournaments. Jerry Strain responded for the golf committee that hotels comp a few members based on the number of rooms booked so golfers are not paying to provide committee members with free rooms. Dick suggested better communication with branch golf chairs so they are made aware of the costs. Jerry noted that a Reno tournament cost \$533 and that included 3 rounds of golf, 4 nights in a 1<sup>st</sup> class hotel, 4 breakfasts, 2 drinks a day plus a \$1,200 slot machine tournament which were detailed in a flier circulated to all Sir golfers. Don Dill commented that the cost had been increased due to the move from Circus-Circus to Atlantis, a much better hotel. He also noted that the cost of a 2 day tournament in Napa was \$160 at 2 of the best courses in N California, and that cost included prize money. Sirs paid for their own hotels and meals.

Ed Benson noted his branch was losing golfers and asked if this was a common problem. Don Dill replied that the number of rounds played has been decreasing nationally, especially at country clubs and other expensive courses. He noted that Co-Ed golf is the only growing sub-division of SIR golf. Karl Ryden commented that his branch attends a Golf Expo and typically get 75 leads, from which they gained 15-20 members last year.

**Insurance:** Angelo Coero introduced Craig Hofflines as the member of his committee who handles about 200-300 Certificates of Insurance per year. He explained that there are now no "Water Exclusions", and this covers fishing! The only item considered as an exclusion is houseboats. Our former insurance company included Water Exclusions, and he found a company that would cover this insurance. He found there are a lot of inactive members going on field trips (including fishing), and they are not covered. He's also heard that 2 Sirs might take out a boat with 10 or 15 guests. This is not insured unless Sirs (and spouses and children) are 51% of the party. Angelo warned that if we take advantage of the new coverage by adding hazardous sports (kayaking in rapids for example) we might lose this coverage.

Angelo said a number of branches have not been informing our broker of changes in meeting places. A recent request reversed this process; a member was asked to get a certificate from a charter boat for a group outing, naming Sirs as an additional insured.

Angelo asked Regional Directors to survey their branches to discover how many active Sirs are involved in fishing as nobody has any idea how many there are. Names are not required, an approximation by branch will be good enough.

**Training:** Mark Stuart introduced Richard Kabenek as a new member for his committee. Each committee member is working with 2 regions, and about half of the regions have indicated where their meeting might be held. He is working on curriculum and has a good menu of items, and the trainees will include Big Sir, Little Sir, Treasurer, Secretary, and the Membership Chairman. Content and timing may vary by region depending on their needs.

The current plan is to have training at 10 locations at least. With general topics in the morning (using committee members) and specific topics in the afternoon taught by subject matter experts (SMEs).

Dwight asked who trains the trainers. Mark replied the training committee will work with members in each region who have been identified as SMEs. Dwight commented that we have been trying to move from State trainers to local trainers and for the past 13 years we have not been successful. Maynard Rodland added his opinion that the RAMP topic introduced by the SAT was a huge concept to get across and it was a great topic for training. He asked if there could be a special meeting to explain RAMP and other ideas from SAT. Mark Stuart responded that the purpose of training was to make members operational and to create better Branch Officers. He felt that the purpose of Training was not to solve all the problems of SIR, the right group to solve SIR problems is here – the Board.

Dean Steichen asked if the Board wanted newly elected members to be trained, or to make it clear that re-elected members were also expected to attend. It was agreed that all elected members were to attend. Dean added the purpose of training is to enable Branches to solve their own problems. Bob Fox commented that last year's training was the best he had experienced, and thought the addition of SMEs would give a better chance of training on Forms.

**Rules:** Dwight Sale substituting for Larry Powers stated he would only read the rule and not the explanations (for which see Appendix B).

**Rule 125 as amended: Each Branch should establish a Chairman of a Committee for each of the four RAMP functions (Recruitment, Activities, Member Relations, and Publicity). These Committees should report to the BEC and are intended to focus on their specific area of membership-related responsibility, and to bring continuity to their functions with turnover of Branch leaders.**

Discussion: We are asking branches to have these positions reporting to the BEC, but what if a branch doesn't follow the rule? Dwight suggested that only about 1/3 branches will ever follow the rule, but it doesn't mean we should not pass the rule. Russ Salazar spoke against the motion as he thinks all branches have these functions so the rule is not needed. Don Dill suggested that large branches would have no problems finding members to fill these roles, but a small branch would have problems. He supports the idea, especially Recruiting and Publicity, but passing a rule won't make it happen. Dwight suggested the wording should be amended from "shall" to "should". The amendment was MSP, 2 opposed.

**Rule 125 MSP as amended, 4 opposed**

**Rule 650: The following are not SIR authorized activities:**

**(b) Water activities in or on houseboats.**

During a brief discussion it was confirmed that white-water activities are excluded under SIR rules, so insurance coverage is not relevant.

**Rule 650: MSP unanimously.**

**Rule 768**

**A Candidate for the office of President or Vice President shall be a past or present State Board member or Area Governor.**

**Rule 768.1:** deleted

**Changes to Rule 768 and 768.12nd Board Meeting  
MSP as written, unanimously**

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:**

Bob Fox asked about ladies attending lunch meetings. It was noted that women can be invited as guests to a lunch meeting, for example if their spouse was receiving an HLM award. In general, external persons (non-members) can be invited to come and listen to guest speakers.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 pm.

**The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting  
on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Concord Hilton.**

## **Appendix A: Tax situation report – Mike Berry**

It would be easy to blame the current failure to resolve the three running issues on the reported staff shortages at IRS, recently exacerbated (reportedly) by them having to use the depleted resources to handle the rush of Affordable Care Act problems, given that this is the first year for reporting on that front. There is no doubt that we have experienced long delays in getting replies to anything, and often when we finally do the item has been overtaken by a later event. Phone calls were resulting in waits of one hour or more. There also remains some concern about IRS Ogden Utah and the soundness of their mail tracking. You will recall that one of our issues was to do with 'lost' returns. I recently mailed the parent return for 2014, on May 4. I asked for Certification of Delivery. Via the USPS tracking system I can see that the return arrived at Ogden on May 11, 4 days ahead of the deadline. The filled out Certificate of Delivery, from IRS, is stamped May 18, three days after the deadline!

It would also be easy to blame the origins of these issues on the previous Treasurer, who provided signed copies of return filings but may not actually have filed them. He was also recipient of any IRS notices to do with non-filing but declined to pass them on. Even so, some of the issues are on my watch, and with hindsight I can see how we could have improved our checks that filings actually happened.

Nevertheless, we are at the point set out below, and I feel the need for some input from you all on the course we are currently on.

### **Issue # 1 Loss of exempt status for the parent (the State Organization)**

This was revoked in May 2013, we did not discover so until September 2014. despite attempts to 'prove' we had filed, we were not able to persuade Ogden that it was so, and in November 2014 the Board approved a conservative step, that for a fee of \$850 we



would file for re-instatement. This we did and it was granted (back dated to May 2013) in March 2015. THE DATA BASE STILL SHOWS IT AS REVOKED HOWEVER. I have two different promises that it would be changed 'soon'. In the meantime we tries to file 2014 by software, because this gives you an instant 'we received it' indication. It failed of course because the parent still shows as revoked. So I mailed it, with the confusing Ogden confirmation of receipt noted above.

### **Issue # 2 Did the Branches lose their status?**

Evidence that they did not:

- a. They are not in the Revocation Data Base
- b. If you searched in the data base of 'did they file their 990N postcards' you will find them exempts you will find them
- c. We have heard nothing from any Branch that indicates they ran into an exempt status challenge, we have done in the past

Evidence that they did:

- a. an attempt to file postcards for 2013 tax year, in December 2014, failed on exempt status grounds but that could have been the parent status, which was still in progress
- b. an attempt to file a 2014 postcard in April 2015 also failed, on exemption status grounds, but that could have been the failure by IRS to update the data base after the parent exemption was restored.

If we have to file for reinstatement of the Branches it is relatively simple, will take 6 months for IRS action but demands a fee of \$3000. One not so simple step is that we have to confirm that each Branch has agreed to have State file its postcard. Depending how we do it, this could take forever.

I have been seeking help from my local Congressman's office and have asked them to get this fee waived (should we have to file). Given all the b-s we have endured it seems to me a justified request. Last I heard from them is they are waiting for a reply so maybe they sit in the same queue that we do. I should tell you that the Congressman's office has been helpful, but has actually delivered nothing. They do not appear to have a special hold over the IRS that I had hoped for.

### **Issue #3 Penalties for not filing a 'group' return for tax year 2013**

This may yet prove to be the most intractable of the issues, and may well fall into the 'seemed like a good idea at the time' bucket. The IRS seem to be really digging in here but that may be a function of left hand/right hand problems or their responses are so long in arriving that frequently they miss an information fact we provided in the meantime. Presently we are presented with a penalty of \$5800 plus interest. The penalty consists of a daily fine for not filing a requested return.

Historically we have filed a parent 990EZ return and then a 990N 'postcard' for each Branch. Postcards are relatively easy to do, made even easier by a file that Dwight produces on request. But they are an absolute pain in the backside, 130+ of them to do each year. In 2013 we committed to file a 'group' 990 return instead, this being an aggregate of the 130+ Branches. It is not a real world entity, there is no SIRS group accounting unit or organizational structure. I made two mistakes in the filing:

- a) I used a group ID I was given by California FTB without spotting that it was not a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN)

- b) I did not spot that the aggregate dollars exceed the 990EZ filing limit and we needed to file a full 990.

It is not the end of the world to file a full 990 except it is 18 pages and asks a zillion questions about 'Board' members, very difficult to answer since there is no 'group' per se. So in October 2014 I wrote to IRS, apologizing for my delay in replying but making sure they knew I was underwater chasing the newly discovered loss of exemption status, indicating that we would return to 990 N filing for the Branches and asking that hey forget about the new 'group' EIN. Incidentally, in the same letter, I asked for their opinion on this proposal, I never received a response to that question.

Almost as though I had never written the October letter, now the penalty assessment letters started to arrive. Despite replies of astonishment on my part they have continued.

In April I set everything out for the Taxpayer Advocate office asking for their help in getting this penalty zapped. They claim independence even though they are an IRS entity. They were extremely nice and seemingly helpful but their charter is clear. They will not help you if you have not followed procedure. I learned from them, a total surprise, that even though they had rejected my 2013 filing for the group because a) the EIN was not valid, and b) I filed 990EZ instead of 990, THEY ACTUALLY HAD IT ON FILE UNDER THE 'NEW' ID THEY GAVE US, BUT AS A 990EZ NOT A 990! So unbelievably, the Advocate closed the case with advice that we should now zap that return by filing an amended return of zeros! So I did just that and , advised by the Advocate, also identified the amended return as the past that would be filed, in keeping with our wish to have the whole ID ignored since we do not intend to use it. On April 29 I spoke with an agent in the IRS Accounting office, the origination point for the penalty letters, and he indicated that it would be thirty days before he would get any indication from the line organization handling it that the penalty should be removed. In theory that 30 days was up May 29, but we received another penalty letter May 27. I cannot tell whether this is left hand /right hand again or that the Advocate's advice did not work. Their letter requests a statement signed by an officer if there we believe the penalty should be removed. I have drafted a statement for Bobbie.

## **Appendix B: Regional Director's Reports**

[to be added]

## **Appendix C: Rule Changes**

### **RULE 125- RAMP POSITIONS**

*[Referred by Growth & Membership Chairman/Region 8 Director Jerry Strain and the Survivability Action Team (SAT)- Chairman Walt Schick, Member/Region 6 Director Dick DeVoe, Member/Area 2 Governor Ed Benson, and Member/State Secretary Derek Southern.]*

#### **Introduction**

The G&M Committee has made many proposals over the years to the President and State Board to significantly improve branch membership performance. Among those have been the Membership Action Plan (MAP), the Leadership Action Plan (LAP), Strategic Planning Initiatives, and Survivability Action Team recommendations.

Most proposals, even though approved/supported at the time, have not changed the relatively consistent SIRinc membership decline rate. The primary reasons: implementation has been optional, approvals have been guides rather than rules,

and branch/AG/RD leadership turnover has resulted in loss of knowledge/experience/emphasis involving the approvals. Recruitment, Activities, Member Relations, and Publicity (called RAMP for simplicity) have been identified for many years as critical for some branches and important for others. Yet these four functions typically have no Chairman and no Committee in most branches.

### **Proposal**

Experience has taught that the majority of Branches have not placed the emphasis needed to recruit and retain members. Branches that have instituted RAMP in their branch organizational structure have found that they offset attrition and grow. Recruitment, Activities, Member Relations, and Publicity should be an integral part of every branch's focus on membership, with a Chairman and a Committee for each function. Without leaders filling these important RAMP positions, branches at moderate-to-high risk are not able to effectively turn their membership problems around and thereby lower their survivability risk. Neither do they have the continuity year after year that these Committees and Chairmen would provide. This proposal below establishes that branches are expected to "RAMP up", in order to effectively carry out their important responsibilities.

## **PART 2- BRANCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Article 1- General

**RULE 125 (New).** Each Branch shall [should] establish a Chairman of a Committee for each of the four RAMP functions (Recruitment, Activities, Member Relations, and Publicity). These Committees shall [should] report to the BEC and are intended to focus on their specific area of membership-related responsibility, and to bring continuity to their functions with turnover of Branch leaders.

### **MSP with 4 against**

RULE 650: Revised to authorize previously unauthorized water sports, and adding activities in or on houseboats to the unauthorized list. Submitted by Angelo Corero, Insurance Committee Chairman, and Larry Powers, Rules Committee Chairman.

RULE 650. The following are not SIR authorized activities:

- a. Winter sports including, but not limited to, ice skating, snow skiing, or sledding.  
(Revised 9/24/02)
- b. **Water activities in or on houseboats. sports, including but not limited water skiing, boating, sailing, surfing, and fishing.**  
(Revised 9/24/02)(Revised 04/08/15)(6/2/15)
- c. (Deleted 1/15/96)
- d. Participation in sports, including but not limited to, football, basketball, soccer, hockey, and the like, in which participation normally involves bodily contact.
- e. Air travel on any air-supported device other than a regularly scheduled airline or air charter company.
- f. Operating or learning to operate any aircraft, as pilot or crew.

- g. Mountain climbing.
- h. Riding or driving in any motor competition.
- i. Activities involving firearms.

Revised 4/7/09, **4/8/15,6/2/15** New Page 6/5/12

- 43.3 –June 2nd

Moved in 612 through 650 from page 43.2

## **MSP unanimously**

### **RULE 768 & 768.1- QUALIFICATION FOR PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT**

*[Referred by Region 6 Director Dick DeVoe and Rules Committee Chairman Larry Powers]*

*[Qualification requirements for Vice President and President are in need of improvement. Rules 768 and 768.1 do not allow a State Secretary, State Assistant Secretary, State Treasurer, or State Assistant Treasurer to qualify for either of these positions unless they have served on the State Board in one or more of those positions “for more than two years”. Yet a present or past Area Governor (who has never served on the State Board) and a past or present Regional Director both qualify with no minimum time requirement.*

*This proposal allows any past or present State Board member and any past or present Area Governor to qualify as a candidate for Vice President or President. Approval of this proposal combines the two rules into one.]*

**RULE 768. A Candidate for the office of President or Vice President shall be a past or present State Board member or Area Governor. ~~must be a past or present Regional Director, Area Governor or Vice President or held or holding the office(s), singly or in combination, of State Secretary or Assistant, or State Treasurer or Assistant, for more than two years.~~**  
(Revised 11/14/06) **(Revised 6/2/15)**

**RULE 768.1 A Candidate for the office of Vice President must be a past or present Regional Director, Area Governor or held or holding the office(s) singly or in combination, of State Secretary or Assistant, or State Treasurer or Assistant, for more than two years. (Revised 11/14/06)**

## **MSP unanimously**

### **Appendix C**

Powerpoint slides giving SIR membership facts from 2010-2014  
(to be added)

### **Appendix D**

Explanation of Ramp presentation to Area 8 branches at round-table meeting  
(to be added)