

On Tuesday, June 13, 2017 6:25 PM, Nancy Wittenberg <newittenberg@gmail.com> wrote:

The NEC meeting on Tuesday, June 6, was short. Frank Sayers reported that we do not know if the new program will be ready July 1 to renew YREs. If it is not, the old program will be used. The next Checkpoint will have current information. The NEC approved the budget for the next fiscal year. More information in the convention Treasurer's report. We also approved the Program committee's continued work on a new National program. More information at the August NEC.

The following was on the Walklist. It's a good synopsis of the convention, so I've included it.

For those who couldn't make the convention in Billings, MT these past few days here's a recap of significant activities.

Pre-convention walks:

Around 500 participated in Monday's walk in Buffalo, WY. Hot temperatures produced faster runoff of snow in the mountains causing Clear Creek to overflow its banks in several locations, some of which were where the laid out trail went. With some quick rerouting the convention team adjusted. It was a pretty walk out and back along the creek with its rushing water.

Around 400 participated in Tuesday's walk in Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in SE Montana. Participants overwhelmed the park for the route down the ravine leading up to the last stand hill and along the ridge the cavalry tried to hold in vain. Another sunny, hot day with comfortable morning temperatures.

Convention

Day 1. After a morning walk along the Yellowstone River south of Billings (high water again forced the committee to reroute us), the business began. 202 delegates and proxies out of 245 total were credentialed.

In spite of rumors, there were no officer nominations from the floor so Nancy Wittenberg for Vice President and Sam Korff for Secretary were elected by acclamation. Candidates for Treasurer (Bob Morrison and Candy Purcell) and President (David Bonewitz and Bob Wright) gave short speeches; the meet-the-candidates forum was moved to Thursday.

Bylaws amendments were decided along the lines of the NEC's recommendations, with little discussion on any of them. The proposed amendment to change the name of the NEC to a Board of Directors effective July 2019 passed by over 70%; proposed amendments to list considerations for

candidates seeking office, separating regional duties from those of directors, and adjusting standing committees were soundly defeated.

In other business the necrology through June 3 was read--125 names.

The Meet-and-Greet social was held outdoors in the Red Lion Hotel courtyard. There was recorded German music and dance lessons (you'll understand why soon).

Day 2 began with workshop sessions. After a make-your-own deli sub sandwich lunch, about 35 volkspporters attended the Meet the Candidates forum and asked great questions, mostly to the candidates for president.

By the business session, credentialed individuals increased to 207.

The Treasurer reported on the AVA's financial situation. Despite a record Big Give (over \$68,000 last month), the AVA likely will run a \$70,000 deficit, with a \$110,000 deficit projected for next fiscal year largely as a result of steadily declining sanctioning and participation fees. (This would draw down AVA reserves by about 20%; at this rate) the Treasurer projects the AVA will deplete its reserves in 7-8 years.

President Dennis Michele introduced the core convention committee's 6 members and announced the results of voting on an AVA mascot--more than 75% voted for none of the 6 choices.

Publicity committee chair Andy Bacon announced publicity awards in newsletter, traditional and year-round event brochures, photography (no subcategories this year), logo, and website categories. Multiple winners include Walk 'n' Mass (3), Upstate Pathfinders in SC, and the Nebraska Wanderfreunde Trailblazers (2).

President Michele presented Hall of Fame awards to 3: Phyllis Olsen (IA), Donna Seline (MN), and Annette Tollett (VA).

Awards committee chair Linda Neu presented

- 5 Distinguished Achievement awards: Helen Bateman (TX), Maryann Brown (OR), Deborah Carter (TX), Joanne Forinash (TX), and Ed Hainline (OR)
- Trailblazer award: Washington state's Daffodil Valley Volkssport Association
- Ted Ballman youth award: Deb Kruep (IL)

Kevin Kooistra, of Billing's Western Heritage Center, gave a lengthy, informative presentation on Billings' history.

Finally, President Michele presented president's awards to Chris Zegelin (CA) and Dolores Grenier (VA).

The evening walk wound its way through downtown Billings and passed a number of local brew pubs (yes, a number of walkers stopped in one or more of these establishments). Temperatures were down to the low 90's by then.

### Day 3

The morning's walk was on the bluff above the Yellowstone River on the north side of Billings. (FYI, the convention committee had not published participation numbers for the 3 Billings walks as of publication.) After a box lunch it was time to conclude business.

By meeting time, credentialed individuals had increased to 214 out of 245.

First, President Michele recognized the current NEC. Then convention committee chair Sherry Sayers introduced Russ Palmer who spoke about the Montana Warrior Run; afterward the convention presented the run's local sponsor, the American Legion post, a check for \$500 for its work helping veterans in the community.

Albany, NY gave a detailed presentation for its bid for the 2019 convention, June 1-9. The theme is "Walk Thru History." Sal (of "Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal" song fame) will be the mascot. All 9 clubs (2 of which are very large) are participating in the planning. The Radisson will be host hotel (tentatively \$117/single, \$132 double, including breakfast; 312 rooms are blocked) and there are plenty of eateries with varied cuisine in walking distance. Walks are planned for Portsmouth, NH, Danvers, MA, and Deerfield, MA before the convention, Saratoga, Waterford, and Albany, NY during, and Cooperstown and Hyde Park, NY post.

Finally, President Michele announced results for the election of the remaining 2 officers. For Treasurer, Bob Morrison received 104 votes to Candy Purcell's 102. For President, David Bonewitz received 186 to Bob Wright's 17.

This evening there will be a "bash." Christine Handy, cancer survivor and author of *Walk Beside Me*, will be featured speaker, followed by music for dancing.

Post convention walks continue in Red Lodge, MT, and Cody, WY this weekend.

Sorry you couldn't be there to enjoy it all.

Bob Wright

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