



An Urgent Dispatch for the General Staff

the E-newsletter of the W3R US -- February 2010
edited by Ralph D. Nelson, Jr., DEpatriot@aol.com



Regional Planning Session

The first regional session was held in Princeton NJ on February 12, with 24 participants representing state W3R organizations, historic parks, town historians, SAR, DAR, and bicycle trail groups from NY, NJ, and PA. A report will be issued after all three regions have had sessions.



NPS staff, Julie Bell and Joe DiBello post responses from participants on vision and goals for the W3R-NHT

Proposals arising from the Teleconferences

by Ralph Nelson

The four teleconferences in January considered several issues and suggestions for modifying the current Bylaws. Members will get an Email when the specific proposals for amendments are posted on our Website in March.

Problem: A **minority of members** attend the Annual Meeting, so most members are not represented there. Proposed change: Change to a meeting of Delegates elected by the members and thus better representing them at the Annual Meeting.

Problem: Current Bylaws require **3 Directors per state** (up to 40 maximum) and only attendees at the Annual Meeting can vote on them. This gives too large a Board for effective consultation, ties directors too closely to states, and gives the same number of Directors to states with large or small member numbers. Proposed Change: Elect only 15 directors, nominate on a national rather than a state basis, and let all members vote for them by mail or Email.

Problem: Currently **state dues are not uniform and may or may not include national dues**; some state members do not belong to the W3R-US. Proposed Change Have the W3R-US set and collect all dues (all states set at the same rate) and transmit state dues three times each year. States may ask their members for additional donations for special projects.

Problem: Members and local affiliates may prefer to **coordinate local activities through a local organization** rather than a State W3R Chapter. Members from states far from the route may want a less formal structure than an incorporated state organization. Proposed Change: Allow formation of Local Branches in addition to State Chapters.

Problem: At present **both nominations and elections are done at the Annual Meeting** and Bylaw amendments may be proposed from the floor there. These should be resolved or brought before all the members prior to the Annual Meeting. Proposed Change: Nomination and election will be completed (and involve all members) before the Annual Meeting, and Bylaw amendments must be submitted in time to be sent to all members with the notice for the Annual Meeting.

Problem: Officers with **one-year terms** have inadequate time for developing expertise and programs. Three-year terms are a bit long for Directors. Proposed Change: Transition from the present terms to two-year (staggered) terms for both Director-officers and Directors-at-large.

Problem: **Proxies** allow members who secure them from others to gain disproportionate representation at meetings. Proposed Change: All members will be represented by Delegates; proxies among Delegates will be limited to other Delegates.

Problem: State Chapters may be formed by a **petition of three members** but there is no provision for suspension if the number of members decreases below that. Proposed Change: Require 10 members for starting a State Chapter and 5 for a Local Branch; suspend charter when numbers drop below 5 and 4 respectively.

Problem: **Life Membership fees** go into the Operating Account, and there is no guidance for using them. Proposed Change: Specify a separate LM account and how much to transfer annually to the Operating Account.

NOTICE: The Bylaws Committee will accept proposals for amendments until March 15. See Bylaws Article 11, Section 7, for the present provisions on making amendments.

Non-W3R Events of Interest

May 12-14: Partnership for the National Trails System:

2010 Nat. Historic Trails Workshop, San Antonio TX

June 5: National Trail Day - many groups will have hikes this weekend (see 2010 Events on our Website)

WWW.W3R-US.ORG

January, February 2010 Highlights

by Joseph DiBello, Superintendent for the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (W3R-NHT)

- On January 2, 2010, I **met with the Executive Committee** of the W3R-US (Ralph Nelson, Sallie de Barcza and Carl Nittinger) in Philadelphia to plan a series of workshops to develop a strategic plan and foundation for the comprehensive plan.
- We have \$30,950 available to W3R from the **National Trails System Challenge Cost Share program** in FY10. We will obligate these matching funds through an agreement with the W3R-US.
- On February 12 a group of about 30 people representing prospective partners in NY, NJ, and PA met at the Nassau Club (courtesy of Sallie de Barcza -- Vice Chair of the W3R-US) in Princeton NJ to discuss the **resources and themes of the NHT**, its mission and vision, and future actions. The NPS and the W3R-US facilitated and hosted the session with the help of Julie Bell, a planner from the NPS' Northeast Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. A summary of the meeting is being prepared.
- A **second work session** -- for prospective partners in MA, RI, and CT -- will be conducted on March 12 in RI (courtesy of Roseanna Gorham -- chair of the W3R-RI). A **third work session** -- for prospective partners in DE, MD, DC, and VA -- is planned for March 26 (courtesy of Glenn Williams -- advisor to the W3R-US Exec Comm). The results of all of the work sessions will be presented in April at the annual W3R-US meeting in Poughkeepsie NY, and additional opportunity for input will be provided.
- Joe attended NPS **National Trail System Staff Meeting** and the Federal Interagency Staff meetings in Washington DC on February 23 and 24 during **Trails Advocacy week**. It was a great opportunity to exchange information with other national trail projects and to discuss common issues. **A National Historic Trails workshop is planned for May 12-14, 2010.**
- We are **working with other NPS units** -- the John Smith NHT, Star Spangled NHT, and Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail -- which share common geography and also rely heavily on partners. We are working together on comprehensive management planning, GIS coordination and mapping, and agreements with states. We are **coordinating all of our trail efforts** and acknowledging each effort as part of the other so that the NPS and the National Historic Trail brand are prominent.

• NPS' Harper's Ferry Center is prepared to **develop an NPS brochure and logo** for our new trail to share information and foster continuity and identity for the W3R-NHT. We are awaiting confirmation of the **FY10 budget allocation for the W3R-NHT**. Harper's Ferry is proceeding to design a National Historic Trail logo for us incorporating the existing W3R-US logo.

• We are **responding to many requests for information** and questions about what happens next. We are in the very early stages of the next phase of this project. We will be working with parks and partners to **develop a strategic plan** that will serve as our foundation for the more comprehensive management plan. With the help of the Northeast Region's Interpretation and Education Division (Tom Davies and Pat Dantona), we are working to **establish an NPS website** for the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail.

Autobio of the Chair (and Editor)

After ten years teaching college chemistry, I took courses to become a chemical engineer and spent 25 years with DuPont -- most as an internal consultant on particle technology. I retired to do pro bono work for technical and historical organizations -- for example designing and managing the Web sites www.erpt.org, www.rccpc.org, and www.w3r-us.org; serving as District Commissioner in Scouts, chair of the AIChE Particle Technology Forum, and Vice President General of the SAR; and writing many brochures and Web pages on history and technology.

Within the W3R I helped found the W3R-DE, started its first Web site in 1999, served as van driver and a speaker during Lee Anderson's 2004 Walk in the Footsteps of History, serve as liaison for the W3R-US with the National Society SAR, gave fund-raising talks nationwide for the 2006 America's March to Yorktown, participated in uniform at many W3R ceremonies and parades, and served as Organizing Chair of the W3R-US in 2003-4, Corresponding Sec. 2007-9, and now Chair.

I am about to move to Florida and enter a less active phase of life, and I thank the members and friends of the W3R-US for their enthusiasm, leadership, and friendship.

Calendar of Events (and also see our Website)

March 12 - Regional Planning Workshop for MA, RI, and CT in Warwick RI.

March 12 - Regional Planning Workshop for DE, MD, DC, and VA in Baltimore RI.

April 10 - Annual Meeting of the W3R-US at Marist College in Poughkeepsie NY, with installation dinner Saturday night, and optional tours on Sunday.