

## UMRCNA XXIII – Spiritual Refreshment – July 2006 Report

We had a tremendously successful event in every sense. Exact attendance is unknown, but at Saturday dinner the dining hall was completely full, which has not happened in at least a decade. The lodger counts were: Thursday 26, Friday 149, Saturday 190, and Sunday 175. We had 50 daypasses on Saturday, and 14 more on Sunday, meaning 240 on-site Saturday and 189 on Sunday. We provided 25 “Newcomer Specials,” which included Saturday dinner for \$5 (or free).

The weather was wonderful, and the general atmosphere matched the weather. We had addicts from as far away as Washington, Texas and New York. We had many attendees from treatment centers and half-way houses, from up to two hours away. We even tripled the number of attendees from the Manitoba Area, up from two to six. At this rate of growth we will have 13,122 attendees from Manitoba in 2013... I don't think we had any attendees from Lewis & Clark Area.

**Merchandise:** Once again the Upper Midwest Service Office helped with merchandise, and they quickly sold out of many items. We had our own mugs for sale, and were able to sell those out as well, at very low prices. We held some in reserve as gifts to our neighboring Regions and our Areas for their own raffles. We had many requests for t-shirts, so we may do that next year. We are unsure how to deal with Speaker CD's, which are now available – we will be posting an MP3 file to the Regional Website soon.

**Financials:** Financially, the event was also very successful, and we are flushing \$2,168.18 back to the Region (see attached Financial and Category Reports). It is our understanding that some of this money is left over from the Western ND campout planning – perhaps \$100-200. We would like guidance from the Region as far as our role in this type of event in the future. We are keeping \$1,810 start-up for 2007, which accounts for 109 2007 pre-registrations: 103 x \$15 = \$1,545; 4 x \$15 (Trivia Prizes) = \$60; 1 x \$185 (Silent Auction – full ride) = \$185; and 1 x \$20 = \$20... = \$1,810 total.

*Addendum:* After balancing the checkbook register with the June 7<sup>th</sup> statement, we found a deposit of \$100 had not been recorded on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and a \$30 deposit error on May 31<sup>st</sup>'s deposit of \$861 meant only \$831 was actually deposited. The register now has a balance of \$1,880 (\$1,810 + \$100 - \$30 = \$1,880).

**Inventory:** We did an event inventory at our last meeting in June, and had very little by way of negatives. There was some confusion at the registration desk at one point, where the suggested daypass donation of \$10 was made to sound mandatory. I contacted the only person I knew who was upset by this and offered a refund, which they declined. Other than that, the biggest complaint was that the dance proper didn't start until 11:30 instead of 11! We had a Trivia Contest at 9 PM Saturday which was very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed – even though a large group of about 25 addicts who do trivia in their cabin every year (and a big part of the reason we tried it) did not attend (they held their own contest again). We came up with many other ways to tweak the event – the activities, scheduling, etc. This includes possibly doing karaoke, adding a late night Sunday activity, etc. These will be discussed throughout the year.

One of our major need areas is to do better outreach by getting flyers out much earlier (the committee didn't form until February), and getting pre-flyers out this summer or early fall. We also want to be able to easily sell pre-registrations at Area and Regional events, ours or our neighbor's. This year we sent out well over a hundred letters to treatment centers and half-way houses within 100-150 miles of Detroit Lakes, and had a dedicated Liaison on the committee for this.

We also would like to see better attendance from all three of our Areas – the event is still attended heavily by addicts from the Twin Cities and St. Cloud. These returning addicts are wonderful, and a testament to the history of the event (going back to when the Region included Minnesota and South Dakota), but we'd like the Regional event to be more of a gathering of addicts from our Areas as well.

**Future:** In this light, the committee is developing ideas for holding a Regional event that travels from Area to Area every year. This idea has been floating around the heads of committee members for many, many years, but has been impractical with only 3-4 regular committee members. Now that we have about eight committed people, and many others who are showing interest, it has become more practical.

In theory, this new event would become "THE" Regional Convention, and Spiritual Refreshment would simply become a Regional event of its own. No matter what, attendance across the international border poses a problem for many with criminal records. One solution would be to hold it at The International Peace Gardens, but we worry about lodging, which would make a multi-day event a problem. Assistance would be sought from the "host" Area if we rotate the event, although we have a high level of confidence that the committee can put together a successful event at any location on its own, as every year we plan for Spiritual Refreshment from a distance anyway.

**2007:** Dave W. is willing to serve as Regional Activities Chair, but cannot be here today due to border issues. I suggest we elect him in absentia, as there is planning to undertake this summer. Many of us are familiar with his service record, including the fact that he has Chaired the convention twice before.

I appreciate the trust put in me by the Region to spearhead this year's event, and am tremendously appreciative of all the hard work my fellow committee members put in before, during, and after this event. Although exhausted at times, I certainly have been Spiritually Refreshed throughout the experience.

Paul S.  
Outgoing Regional Activities Chair