VOITURE NATIONALE
LA SOCIETE DES 40 HOMMES ET 8 CHEVAUX

FAITH
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As we begin the run to the finish of the 2011-2012 year perhaps it is time to reflect on the first four months of the year. From what I can see most of our activity has been directed toward membership. It is necessary of course because it is our life blood. So why does it does it have to be such a painful and drawn out experience every year?

Perhaps it is because of the economy? I doubt that is the case because it has been a painful drawn out experience for years through good and bad economies.

Perhaps it is because of apathy? I have talked to several Commanders of Veterans Service Organizations and they are having problems even getting a quorum at their monthly meetings. These are Organizations with 300 to 600 local members having less than 20 at a meeting? What is going on?

Believe me; I am not pretending to have an answer! But, I know that the answer to any problem is never forthcoming until the cause is identified. What it takes to keep people involved and interested involves generation, regional or local culture, priorities and above all pride. We are all proud Veterans but our backgrounds, politics, religion, financial positions and age are as varied as the pieces of a huge puzzle.

The only common factor, one that is paramount in getting and keeping people involved is pride. Pride in the accomplishments, the association with and involvement in those accomplishments. The other factors are all as varied as fingerprints and require local leaders to come up with local solutions. Pride will come when your Voitures accomplishments appear the local media; when a photo of a local Voyageur receiving or presenting an award appears in the local paper. Or a story of the locale Voiture meeting the needs of returning Vets or helping Nursing Home bound Comrades. How about the children who we help after a tragic fire or natural disaster or the Nurses we have helped get their educations?

These types of activities happen every day and never appear in the local media. Moreover, members of the local Voiture who don't attend Promenades don't know about them or find out about them after the fact.

What is the answer? As I stated before I don't pretend to have the answer but here is a suggestion. Develop a contact list for your local media and send them a press release when you have an event. Form a "call Committee" from those members who attend Promenades regularly. Give each of them a list of five members who do not attend regularly. Then task them with calling their five members the day before your Promenade to remind them. Won't hurt to give them a proposed agenda and perhaps have a social hour before the Promenade also.

I hear every day about our Voitures having to call members to ask for their dues. I would think that call would be unnecessary if the member was attending Promenades regularly.

Will it work? Will it even help? You never know until you try!

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