

February 2008

It took two days for the sting of missing the Reno convention to pass. On that Tuesday, I got an enthusiastic e-mail from attendee Howard Duncan telling the SCCA Foundation how all the NORPAC regions have embraced the Safe Streets School. This is something that I wanted to do, and I THANK Howard (as well as Vice President Terry Ozment) for attending the convention and carrying this message to Area thirteen.

A few days later when Michael Johnson called from SW Montana and echoed Howard D's comments, I knew the message was received. I was able to tell Michael personally that the Safe Streets programs have the potential to make the small regions a real force in community relations. This program also has the ability to enable small regions to work together to put this show on. Safe Streets is the way to recruit new members for Solo, Rally Cross or even Rally. All this and it comes with a business plan that is almost loss-proof.

Also coming out of Michael's phone call were his upcoming plans for "Top Gun" and the other divisional Solo that are going to happen at the Helena site. I promised to be there for one of the events and, God willing, no unanticipated problems will keep me from visiting the "undiscovered jewel" of Area thirteen. Helena may also be a great site for the NORPAC time trials in the future.

Also checking in is our scribe to SportsCar, Tom "the elder" Masterson, who reminds one and all to get things into him well BEFORE the fifteenth of the month for publication. That goes especially for that region in Idaho that he has not heard anything from in over a year. Tom's column in SportsCar is an excellent vehicle to get the word out to the rest of the club of the great things are being done in this area. PLEASE use it.

A tip-of-the-helmet goes out to Reno Region for receiving the Regional Achievement Award from the directors of NORPAC. This is the first region to repeat getting this honor. Reno won because of their work with the Safe Streets program, and hosting the NORPAC time trials event. They additionally hope to host a regional event and bring a new venue online for NORPAC by the end of the year

Condolences go out to Margie Swanson on the loss of her husband Neil after lingering complications from cardiac surgery. Neil was an outstanding NORPAC worker with stints as Divisional Administrator and later as National Administrator for sound. Neil and Margie have both volunteered untold hours of work to road-racing. A big thank you goes out to Sherri Masterson for keeping Area 13 updated on Neil's condition throughout his hospitalization.

I am glad the NORPAC board and Gary VanHorn had the insight to change the plan for the 2009 convention and consider moving to a more streamline business model. Stay tuned for updates as this is a work in progress.

Hopefully the 2009 NORPAC convention will have Pego Mack and it will be the year of Rallycross and I have that dream that all nine regions in this area will have a rallycross program.

On the upside all three divisions (SCCA Inc, Enterprises and Pro) all finished in the black for 2007. On the downside if the early January Nationals are any indication, the downward trend of entries is continuing. This trend is a huge concern for the board, as we continue to be impacted by the high cost of gas.

With support from the Board, I have asked the CRB to address "greening" this club and to look into bio-fuels. Demonstrating our concern for the environment can encourage public and political support for our club.

I am looking forward to the National Convention, and I will return next month with much more to report.