

Post Card From Kansas
February 2008

I've just returned from the National Convention in San Antonio, Texas. Those members who claim San Francisco or Reno as their region of record certainly have a lot to be proud of. San Francisco region captured the first place award for communications among jumbo regions. Communications included the website and newsletter. Both of these were substantially improved during 2007 and the results were clearly evident. Region Administrator, Sherry Grantz, gets most of the credit for the improvements to the website. Sherry, along with Editor John Blakemore and assistant Regional Executive Peter Nosler receive accolades for the new "wheel" which is vastly improved and a wonderful read. To the surprise of many in attendance, San Francisco region captured the award for Roadrally of the year. We were amazed because many didn't even know we had a sanctioned roadrally in the region, but in the true fashion of "The region that knows how" not only did our region administrator work with the promoters to make it happen, it just happened to be the best darn roadrally in the country in 2007!

Reno region, which just has to be one of the fastest developing regions in the club, received the first place award among medium size regions for regional achievement. Reno was recognized for advancing their solo and track trials programs and for getting their street survival off the ground. In my humble opinion, the street survival program, which is targeted at newer teenage drivers, and is administered through the SCCA Foundation along with the BMW Car Club of America (BMWCCA), has the potential of being one of the biggest and best programs in which we have ever been involved. The best thing about it is that it works and **it saves lives!** That makes it practically a clean sweep for Reno region who received the region recognition award at the Northern Pacific Division convention in January. When you're hot, you're hot!

Along with region recognition, NORPAC Division received special honors when our Executive Steward, Gary Meeker, was awarded the "David Morrell" award for outstanding service by a Steward. Gary is one of the many outstanding members of our club who has dedicated the better part of his life to making SCCA the best that it can possibly be.

And if that weren't enough, Kjell Qvale, who was one of San Francisco Regions founders and an inductee into the region Hall of Fame last year, was inducted into the SCCA National Hall of Fame. Still sharp at 88 years of age, Kjell presented a humorous recount of the SCCAs early events in San Francisco region.

Out of the National convention came a workshop for jumbo regions to share and compare best practices. The jumbo regions discovered that they shared more issues than they thought and they agreed to continue with regular conference calls to address problems of mutual concern. This is something that has been needed for some time and I'm glad to see that it is finally happening.

It was announced that our 113th region has been formed on the Island of Puerto Rico and they can't wait to get their road racing program under SCCA sanction. Anybody for a "road" trip?

The National Board of Directors has harbored concerns about our National racing program for the past couple of years. The number of competitors is slowly dwindling and the championship Runoffs do not seem to have the prestige they once had. With an idea to improve all of this, I have appointed a seven member task force (no committees on my watch) to develop a proposal for the Board's review which will fix our National racing program and its championship. You should be hearing about the results of this effort in early May.

Financially the club is in the best shape it has been in for several years. The Club (Inc.) and both of our wholly owned subsidiaries, Pro Racing and SCCA Enterprises, are in the black. In fact, to the surprise of many at the convention, Pro Racing presented the club with a \$10,000 check in payment on their loan from the club, while SCCA Enterprises continues to pay principle and interest against their loan from the club.

While membership numbers are down slightly, participation is holding steady. In today's economy that is a good sign.

The National Convention is moving to Las Vegas next year. The facility will be totally self-contained and promises to be vastly improved over recent convention facilities. All of the glitz and fun associated with sin city will be only a short drive away. I hope that many of you who have been reluctant to attend this important club function will attend now that it will practically be in our backyard. Just don't let what you learn in Vegas stay in Vegas!

This summer, Reno region is taking a leap of faith in presenting their inaugural road race. It will be a National/Restricted Regional at Reno-Fernley Raceway in Fernley. It will be held on Father's Day weekend of June 14-15, 2008. If you are a competitor, here is your opportunity to break in a new track. If you are a volunteer race official, Reno region would certainly appreciate your assistance. If you are just curious about what's involved in putting on a first class road race, stop by, we'll give you a first hand look.

The racing season is at hand, so I'll see you at the track.

RJ