



**December 2013 RVC Column
by RVC Greg Kontz**

Hi guys –

I missed the December 7th board meeting in West Palm Beach. It was 20 below zero, with 40 below wind chills up here in Dickinson, North Dakota. I was looking forward to spending a couple of days in Florida. My flight was to leave at 5:55 a.m., so I got to the airport at about 4:45 a.m. – and sat there until 1:45 p.m., when they finally cancelled the flight. Apparently, the APU (generator) they use to get the plane going had been left out overnight. Not a good idea this time of the year in North Dakota – the diesel fuel had gelled up, and it was inoperable. So – nine hours in the Dickinson airport, with a cancelled flight at the end of it. This is not an airport you can go shopping in, or go to a restaurant. You shop at, or dine from, the vending machines. We also had a security breach that emptied out the secure room – everybody had to go through security again. We were told right up to the last hour that our flight was going to leave. There were a lot of oilfield workers looking to get home (South) on their days off. Let's just say there was a fair amount of chagrin in the place by 2:00 p.m. or so. Anyway. . .

Even though I did not attend the meeting, I can give you a summary of some of the highlights:

- A new program “Achieving Communications Excellence” (ACE) will be forthcoming. There will be an award for local groups that demonstrate excellence in newsletter, website, and social media use.
- An early warning program to identify and assist local groups that are struggling was formed – “Local Group Revitalization Task Force”. Desiree Sagray was appointed chair.
- Handbooks will be transitioned over to officer guides that are part of the online content of the website.
- The position of Regional Ombudsman was made official. It is encouraged, but not required, that Regions fill the position. Region 7 does not have a Regional Ombudsman at this time.
- The language in the “weapons” motion from the October meeting was amended to use the word “firearms” rather than “weapons”. It was felt that the previous wording was too broad and difficult to enforce. The motion passed 12-5-3.
- A motion to allow and facilitate audience member participation in the discussion of motions failed 3-16-0. The majority felt that, since it can be allowed by the Chair already, making it official was unnecessary.
- By the time you read this, details should be posted on the Mensa website – just go to “Read” > “Board meeting reports” – you’ll be able to see everything that was on the agenda. I encourage you to do so.

On another note: Dickinson, North Dakota will be hosting an RG June 13-14-15, 2014. We had one in June 2013 in Fargo, ND that had 45 people from 9 states and 1 province. Details will be forthcoming. This is an ‘oil boom’ area, with lots of new construction (the first oil refinery in a long time – being built 4 miles away), a hectic pace of business and life in general, and the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Dickinson was also listed on “Livability.com” as #1 in the Top Ten Best Small Towns for 2013. We look forward to having a great RG again in 2014. It will be held at the Ramada in Dickinson. I should be able to get some details out in January.

Later,

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