Document #3

**Report to the Board of the 1st Vice President**

**July 2020**

Sadly, or perhaps mercifully, my report is shorter than I would have liked. The long list of events attended and presentations given that usually accompanies reports such as this has been reduced to zero by the pandemic. I almost made it to Winterfest in Annandale, VA thanks to a kind invitation from Vice Director Morine, and Director Hippisley, but that was cancelled in mid-March, and at that point the well went dry.

So, my activity has been largely confined to committee work, which will be covered in the committee reports. Currently I am serving with the A&F Committee, the Executive Committee, I’m chairing the Bandplanning Committee, and perhaps most important to the League right now, I’m serving on the CEO Selection Committee. I’ve also been tasked by the A&F to head an advisory committee for IT matters. I’m still working on getting a statement of purpose written up for that. In all of these, the effects of the pandemic have complicated the committee work. On the up side, we have all gotten quite proficient at Zoom.

At the behest of President Roderick, I have also been acting as something of an informal liaison with the group of Section Managers, headed by Dan Marley, K7REX, SM for Idaho, that has been organizing and running a variety of well attended and often quite informative online events. There has been concern expressed by some that these sessions might get in the way of League initiatives, particularly where interaction with federal agencies are concerned, or where there is a possibility of League Intellectual Property being used improperly. Dan is aware of these concerns, which he and I have discussed.

Perhaps more important, though, is the view from 10,000 feet. The laudable initiative being shown by the Section Managers is being prompted in part by a partial communications vacuum on the part of the League. There is sense among the SM’s that communication between them and the Board is spotty. Some SM’s, perhaps the majority, feel they have excellent relations and communication with their Directors, but others don’t.

Of course, a part of the issue is that the deliberative pace of interaction with the Board and the League seems excessive to many. We live in an era in which people seem to expect instant results.

I believe that the appointment of an EmComm manager and the selection of a new CEO will go a long way toward filling this vacuum. There are other things we could do, however. I had suggested a forum shared by SM’s and ODV for the exchange of information; that idea didn’t get a lot of traction. Perhaps there are other approaches?

There is also the lingering influence of our feudal past. When I first got onto the Board, there was a very strong sentiment that each Division was its own little kingdom. There were, back in the day, some spectacular fireworks displays in the aftermath of one Director communicating with a member in someone else’s Division. The influence of this thinking remains with us today to some degree, causing friction. It also causes us to limit the communication paths that we use when dealing with member concerns, and particularly with the SMs’ concerns. The SM’s are especially important and knowledgeable group with a lot of insight to share, and not only on local matters. We need to find a way as a Board to hear them and others better, and to do so we need to recognize that the feudal view of our organization is woefully behind the times. Do we need to establish a committee to dig into all the communications issues?

Other than League work, I’m keeping myself busy starting a small suburban farm and figuring out how to mount a radio and antenna on a 1949 Ford tractor. I hope you are all finding equally enjoyable things to do during the lockdowns as well.

73,

Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF

1st Vice President