

**Appendix E - UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
SENIOR PROJECT - APPROVAL**

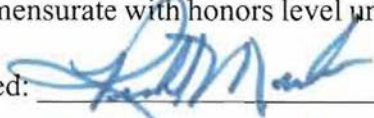
Name: Kristin Hobbs

College: Business Department: Management

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Richard Neubert

PROJECT TITLE: Causes of Organizational
Apathy and Suggestions to
Counteract Apathy

I have reviewed this completed senior honors thesis with this student and certify that it is a project commensurate with honors level undergraduate research in this field.

Signed: , Faculty Mentor

Date: 7-12-01

General Assessment - please provide a short paragraph that highlights the most significant features of the project.

Comments (Optional):

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
SENIOR PROJECT

*Causes of Organizational Apathy and
Suggestions to Counteract Apathy*

By Kristin Hobbs
July 6, 2001

Kristin Hobbs
Senior Project
Fall 2000

Causes of Organizational Apathy and Suggestions to Counteract Apathy

Abstract

We have all, at one time or another experienced a form of apathy, whether in the form of voter apathy or member apathy. The common definition of apathy is a lack of emotion, feeling, or interest, lack of involvement or having a non-caring attitude. As a leader in an organization, one must consult with all members of that organization and consider what is important to the group. Some typical apathetic behaviors include talkative members monopolizing the time, arguments about rules and procedures and subtle attacks upon the messenger rather than the message. Suggestions for overcoming member apathy is to implement a problem solving strategy; identify reason for apathy, and identify solutions. Apathy is merely a symptom of a deep underlying problem. Answering several questions to unveil the relevant group needs can uncover the main source of the problem. Empowering members and applying stewardship delegation are two of the suggested ideas for converting apathy into action.

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Introduction

As an eight-year member of The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), I have witnessed a decline in the membership roster and in member participation and this trend seems to be occurring nationwide. The problem appears to be lack of interest of the younger (under forty years of age) generation in joining the organization and because the average age of the current members are between sixty and seventy years of age and the population continues to age without a sufficient amount of new members to replace the vacancies as elderly members withdraw from the organization or pass away.

The basis of my survey data will come from the members of the chapter I belong to. The intended results of the survey data will indicate why members are not as motivated to participate in activities and attend meetings. I believe the problem is not uncommon to many other organizations today. The results of the surveys should reveal that people are simply too busy to actively participate in organizations, probably because of family and/or career responsibilities. I do not believe age plays a significant part in whether an individual actively participates in an organization. Regardless of an individual's age, I think if someone participates early in life then they will continue to do so throughout their life. Whether we are young or old, there are always reasons to be made as to why we cannot participate.

The purpose of this project is to identify problem areas that can hopefully be resolved through member suggestions and discover why more members are not attending meetings or involved in the organization's activities. The project is intended to help educate the Clinch Bend Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution members about problems the chapter faces and what the chapter can do to meet the needs of the members. It would encourage member participation and organizational growth.

NSDAR Background Information

An Act of Congress incorporated the NSDAR in 1896; the NSDAR is a non-profit, non-political, volunteer service organization with nearly 180,000 women in some 3,000 chapters nationwide, including chapters in Australia, Canada, France, Mexico, the United Kingdom and Japan. The Society was founded in Washington DC on October 11, 1890 and has celebrated more than 100 years of service to the nation. The Tennessee Society (TSDAR) with almost 6,000 members has 106 active chapters within the state. The NSDAR objectives are: Historic Preservation, Promotion of Education, and Patriotic Endeavor. The NSDAR motto is: God, Home & Country.

What is Apathy?

Apathy is commonly defined as a lack of emotion, feeling, or interest. Others include lack of involvement or having a non-caring attitude. According to behavioral scientists, apathy is an extremely hostile and negative behavior. It often reflects a frustration on the part of the grassroots or a feeling of lack of control over their lives. Apathy is a form of "withdrawal behavior" closely aligned with "avoid/attack" behaviors. Apathy is not a passive acceptance of the status quo. It is the enemy of all membership associations. Apathy will smother good intentions. It will steal the "heart" from a person or an organization. Apathy will drain the motivation from positive people and it will bring all forward motion of a dynamic group to a standstill. It will grip and grind the very faith from a civilization. Apathy takes our compassion and caring spirit for each other as quickly as a thief in the night. We have all experienced some sort of apathy in our lives whether it is in the form of voter apathy or member apathy.

Leaders of organizations often utter these words as they see apathy grow among some of their members. "Attendance at meetings is really bad." "I feel like I have to do everything myself." "Why

are our members so apathetic?" This concern faces chapters, councils, and any other membership organization.

As leaders work to further the mission of their group, they are faced with the challenge of involving each individual member in a meaningful way. These members come together with different interests and needs, and it is a leader's responsibility to create an environment where they will all be motivated to contribute equally.

Dealing with Apathy

"When people become involved in the problem, they become significantly and sincerely committed to coming up with solutions to the problem." (Stephen Covey, 1991)

Successful leaders are team players that consult with all the members of the organization, inventory the strengths of individuals and consider what is important to the whole group. Before a group can tackle a problem, such as apathy, that may be affecting the success of an organization, ask the question: are power struggles and prestige throwing the group into conflict? Consider the following behavior cues:

- The most talkative monopolize the time;
- Random suggestions are offered, many of which are beside the point;
- There are arguments about rules and procedures;
- There are subtle attacks upon the messenger, rather than the message;
- There are frequent references to "I", "me", and "my experience", etc.;
- There are arguments about inconsequential points.

When members lack the skill to problem solve, we may find behavior patterns as follows:

- No one is able to suggest how to start;

- Members do not stay focused on the problem;
- Members seek ways to dodge problems rather than solve problems;
- There is continual sidetracking or joking to change the subject;
- Members expect the leader to make decisions for the group;
- There are decisions, but the members are indecisive;
- When decisions are made, members have not taken all considerations into account first.

Delegation

We accomplish all that we do through delegation—either to time or to other people. If we delegate to time, we think efficiency. If we delegate to other people, we think effectiveness. Transferring responsibility to other skilled and trained people enables you to give your energies to other high leverage activities. Delegation means growth, both for individuals and for organizations (Covey, 1989).

Stewardship Delegation

There are certain skills involved in successful delegation in order to allow organization members to feel responsible to the project, committee, or group as a whole. By simply telling a person to “go for it”, and get the job done, that person will not be committed to achieving results. A more successful way of delegating is referred to as “stewardship delegation” by Stephen Covey. This style focuses on results instead of methods. It gives people a choice of method and makes them responsible for results. Stewardship delegation involves clear, up-front mutual understanding and commitment regarding expectation in five areas. It takes more time in the beginning, but it’s time well invested.

- Visualize the desired results clearly and concisely by focusing on the what, not the how.

- Establish guidelines by pointing out potential failure path, and what not to do, but don't tell them what TO do. Allow people to learn from mistakes without re-inventing the wheel.
- Identify resources the person can draw on to accomplish the desired goals.
- Establish accountability standards of performance that will be used in evaluating the results.
- Specify consequences, both good and bad, tied to evaluation of performance.

Inspiring a Shared Vision and Enabling Others to Act

Leaders inspire a shared vision; they don't command commitment, (Kouzes and Posner, 1987). Through intimate knowledge of the dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions, and values of the members of their organization, leaders are able to enlist support and drive from their members. Successful leaders encourage collaboration by making it possible for others to do good work.

Quit Crying Apathy

"Let us quit crying apathy when our members don't participate, and instead let us begin to look for the real reason behind the lack of support." (Cufaupe, 1985)

1. Consider what member needs instead of what you think the members want;
2. Plan activities with everyone in the organization, not just within cliques;
3. Work together to set goals; don't just set goals for your group on your own.

Apathy is a Symptom, Not the Problem

Are the organization's goals important and relevant to the group's needs? Here are some potential problem areas organizations can address among themselves:

- Has the entire group reviewed the organization's constitution in the last year?

- Have the member's needs been assessed through formal and informal surveys?
- Has the group taken time to set goals and objectives for the entire year?
- Has the group set expectations for its officers and have officers shared expectations of members?
- Are all the members involved in a specific aspect of the organization?

Converting Apathy Into Action

Converting apathy into action oriented membership and achieving organizational security and stability requires no magic. It does require changing the common mindset among association managers and board members for survival in today's competitive market. Albert Einstein once said, "One can not solve any problem by using the same level of thinking which created it." The paradox is simply that accepting and embracing constant radical change and instability in the environment is now the only path to association security.

A recent environmental scan by The American Society of Association Executives produced the following five issues emerging across all associations and in a generic sense; they are also reflections of our entire society:

- Explosion of new technology, particularly information technology;
- Increased competition for leadership/volunteers time;
- Rethinking/restructuring governance structures;
- Ethical standards/behaviors;
- Expansion of Governmental legislation and regulation.

There is no magic to converting apathy into action, just professional management techniques, a committed board of trustees and recognition of the world (environment) in which we are living and will be living in the future. The traditional management functions of planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling then repeating the entire process is becoming even more important, not less, according to Fetgatter.

Some associations may benefit from changing the direction of their association, such as:

- Establish a new mission;
- Establish new objectives;
- Establish new advocacy;
- Evaluate financial goals;
- Make changes in governance.

Celebrating the Power of Failure: Reality is no longer perceived as a fixed state of affairs, with predictability of future events becoming more difficult to anticipate even with the most comprehensive planning processes available. Leadership today requires taking risks; there is no more status quo. For those familiar with Thomas Kuhn's "The Structure of Scientific Revolution" which birthed the current concept of "Paradigm Theory," the entire country is experiencing massive paradigm shifts with different views of reality competing for dominance. Change is constant, increasing in speed and in many industries creating as many disasters as successes. Nevertheless, organizations must take risks to ensure even a chance of survival, according to Fetgatter.

How does an organization know if it truly taking risks? The definitive test of whether an organization is taking risks is—"Is the organization experiencing and celebrating failure?" Failure is an organization's best friend in today's shifting, uncertain marketplace. It allows the organization to gain insights and knowledge that can create exponential growth and productivity, whereas success without

failure only leads to marginal gains in productivity. Marginal success and growth will not allow an organization to keep pace with the changes occurring across our society. Failure leads to “breakthrough thinking” and insights that will prove critical to the organization’s future survival and expansion. In today’s world one grows or dies, and it is better to grow enormously than to grow little, because productivity will continue to boom as informational technology creates new opportunities and markets never before imagined. As stated by Fetgatter, “Embracing failure requires a new approach to management best summed up by my assistant who commented spontaneously, “It’s amazing what you can accomplish once you lose your fear of rejection and humiliation.””

All associations must assume a leadership position in pedagogy, the process of teaching and learning. The pedagogical association of the twenty-first century must create an organizational culture which produces growth of the association, elevates its industry or profession and fulfills the needs of its individual members to reach self-actualization on both the individual and group levels. Fetgatter states, “Associations that do not attain these goals will have a limited future at best.” Learning is defined as a “change of behavior occurring when new knowledge, skills, or attitudes are internalized.”

Overcoming Member Apathy

As a general concept, here is an example of a problem solving methodology for overcoming member apathy:

- Identify the root problem
- Define possible solutions
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Act
- Look back and learn (evaluation)

Possible reasons for apathy:

- Group members do not feel that their needs coincide with the mission/purpose statement of their organization.
- Members have conflicting commitments and, as a result, are often unable to expend the levels of time and energy called for by the organization.
- Members believe that they do not play a significant role in the processes that drive their organization.

Possible solutions:

- Identify underlying causes of apathy by answering the following questions:
 1. What are the needs of the group members?
 2. What actions can I, as a leader, take to meet those needs?
- Examine the nature of members' commitments and respond in a manner congruent with the culture/values of the organization:
 1. Hold meetings at more convenient times;
 2. Alter recruiting policies;
 3. Actively engage and empower members to make significant contributions to group processes.

According to excerpts from NIC Campus Commentary, the following four steps provide an alternative to the assumption that members aren't involved because they don't care. By examining these steps, leaders will be able to stop apathy before it starts.

1. Set goals as an organization: Goals can be a motivating force for an organization if they are decided upon as a group. Leaders must remember they serve the needs of their members. They must solicit input from everyone before decisions are made. A group goal setting

session will improve communication and help people feel more invested in the organization's activities. One person cannot single-handedly motivate another, however, by fostering a team approach to leadership, leaders can allow members to feel they are a valuable part of the organization.

2. Organize member's involvement and tap into their strengths: Once the group's goals are in place, encourage people to take specific actions to meet those goals. The actions may require involvement in a committee. Usually most members do not jump up and volunteer at a meeting. The leader's personally asking members to become involved will cause them to feel more valued. The key to their acceptance of the offer is an appreciation of their talents and interests as individuals. Members will be more likely to volunteer if the opportunity fits with experiences and skills. Their involvement must also be well organized. Effective committees need structure and guidelines. The tasks for a committee should be very specific, not just a general subject like "recruitment." A manageable objective will also allow the participants to feel a sense of accomplishment at the conclusion, which is a strong motivator for future involvement. Leaders should monitor the progress of the committee, and yet not manage the process. Useful feedback and suggestions should be offered to those involved. At the same time, the committee members must have ownership in the initiative.
3. Create better meetings to increase attendance: Meetings that involve the entire membership can do a great deal to promote unity. However, a poorly run meeting can have the opposite effect. Monthly meetings should reinforce the importance of member involvement and make everyone feel valued. A lack of information is often a reason for people not wanting to attend meetings. Progress toward establishing goals should be reported at each meeting

as well as current issues and upcoming events. If members feel out of touch with the organization, they will feel uncomfortable being involved. A printed agenda for the meeting can help facilitate a smoother discussion and provide valuable information to take from the meeting in writing. Finally, meetings should always end on a positive note. Even when challenges arise and opinions clash, it is important to find a way to bring good closure so people will want to attend in the future. This is an opportunity to unify the group through a gavel pass exercise or a ritual activity, reinforcing the purpose of the organization.

4. Design a plan for recognition: Recognizing members who have volunteered or participated in a meaningful way is crucial for motivating them to remain involved. Sometimes the best way to recognize contributions is saying thank you in person. Once again, apathy in this case is a symptom of feeling unappreciated. Personally thanking a participant for their contribution gives an opportunity for dialogue. The individual will feel good that someone acknowledged the accomplishment and provided the chance to talk about it in more detail. Leaders should regularly offer personal praise; it takes only a small amount of time to make members feel like valuable contributors to the organization. Significant accomplishments should also be recognized in front of the entire group. Not only does this make the individual feel good, but it also provides an example for other members of the organization ways to get more involved. A presentation at an awards banquet or some other community event is a great chance to give a plaque or other gift in a formal setting.

Once the leaders truly get to know the members in their organization, they will better know what motivates them. The most important thing to remember is the small amount of time it takes to say thank you, in private or public, can be the key to keeping people inspired and involved.

Motivating Members

People act to satisfy their own needs and desires, not the needs of organizations or other people. Thus, to motivate members, emphasize the benefits and satisfactions they will gain, not the benefits to you or the organization. A person's reason for joining a group will tell you what they hope to gain by becoming a member. For example:

- Many people join groups to meet other people, make new friends, and feel they "belong" somewhere. They are motivated by the opportunity to plan social activities or to become involved in a project that has high "people contact."
- Other people join groups to learn new things or to achieve something unique. These people might stay involved by researching a new issue for the group, helping to plan an educational program, or taking on a project that has never been done before.
- Some members joined because they believe in an organization's purpose or cause. These are the ideal members to ask to recruit new members, to make a presentation at a meeting, to help publicize the group, or to write articles about the organization's accomplishments.
- Others join a group to have fun. These members might be perfect to act as "hosts" when guests are present, to staff a booth at a fair, or to help plan social functions.
- Some people have become members because the group relates to their major or future career. These people may be motivated by projects that bring them in contact with faculty or with professionals in the general community.

It is very easy to focus attention on the members who already seem the most dedicated to the group. But as a result, other members will feel neglected and will drop out. Part of a leader's job is to help all members of the organization to become active participants by understanding their motivations

and matching them with the tasks of the group. This will result in meeting the needs of both the organization and the individual. Here are some general motivators that most everyone appreciates*:

1. Be courteous at all times.
2. Be fair. Do not play favorites.
3. Involve members in the group's goal setting and decision-making activities.
4. Treat people as individuals. Refer to people by name.
5. Ask people to do useful, challenging work. "Busy work" soon becomes boring and causes people to lose interest.
6. Encourage members to propose their own projects. People know their own capabilities and limitations better than anyone else and can let you know how they can best contribute to the organization.
7. Utilize special talents of members that may involve experience in their majors or hobbies. This increases commitment to a project.
8. Recognize the limits people are working with. These might be time constraints, financial limitations, or personal attitudes. Identify the constraints and help people to work them out.
9. Keep members informed through newsletters or phone calls. Be sure everyone is included in meetings and feels a part of the "team."
10. If someone is working on a project, give plenty of positive feedback along the way. Publicly let it be known that a good job is being done and is appreciated.
11. Give lots of support. If someone has offered to take on a task, be sure you provide the resources necessary for that member to do a good job. Check in on a regular basis to make sure everything is going well.
12. Show confidence. Although you should be available to offer assistance, your attitude should

demonstrate that you believe your members will do an outstanding job.

13. Make use of the work people have done. It's very discouraging to work hard at something, only to have it ignored.
14. Allow people the chance to "goof." Do not expect that someone will always be right. Help them to learn from mistakes.
15. Provide a chance to have fun. This may mean taking time out to laugh at something or getting together for a social activity. This also creates a sense of belonging, a very powerful motivator.
16. Allow people to provide you with feedback. Solicit their suggestions on how a task can be changed or done more effectively.
17. Reward completed work in some tangible way. This could be as simple as a certificate of appreciation or as elaborate as an awards banquet at the end of the year.
18. Reward especially outstanding work with a position or title. For example, someone who has worked very hard on a membership drive could be asked to become a Membership Director.
19. Have a friendly contest (for example, who can recruit the most new members) and give a small prize to the winner.
20. Allow people to do a variety of tasks. Give them the chance to change and to grow as they participate.

*This list was adapted from material by the Student Activities and Services Office, San Jose State University.

Analysis of Data

Survey data:

Although the marginal majority of respondents (21.6%) indicated the length of meeting time was good, an overwhelming number of comments indicated the meetings were too long and needs to

be more organized. The majority of responses stated the quality of guest speakers and programs were very good (36% and 37% respectively). 31% of the responses said the location of the meetings is good. Most members understand there are not many options for meeting locations. 42 % of responses stated the appropriateness of programs were very good. The member's interest in the programs was split evenly between very good and good at 28% each. The variety of foods at meeting was rated very good at 44%.

Question data:

There was a wide variety of responses to the question about how many meetings attended and after reviewing the data, I realize this should have been a close-ended question instead of an open-ended question for reporting purposes. The responses ranged from zero to ten. Most people agreed that the meetings were held at a convenient time for members. Some would like to see the date changed to Saturdays. Transportation restrictions did not appear to be a problem preventing people from attending meetings. Pertaining to meeting location, there was a variety of responses. Several gave two options, but most combinations differed from one another. The majority of responses indicated that the chapter is addressing the members' needs. Some, I don't believe, understood exactly what the question asked or maybe I didn't interpret their answers correctly. This question would need to be reworded to clarify it's meaning. An overwhelming majority stated the officers/committees, in their opinion, were performing their duties satisfactory, except for the calling committee. The members are split on whether the members are recognized sufficiently for their efforts. No one really stated how they thought the members were recognized or gave an example of recognition, although that was not asked. The majority believes there is a problem with low member participation, but few members had suggestions to increase member participation. Members stated a variety of specific issues they would like the chapter to address. Examples included: recruiting younger members, shorter

meetings, advances in genealogy research, purpose and goal, and recognition. All members agreed that recruiting new members is vital and some suggestions for contacting and retaining new members included more publicity, word of mouth, and my favorite suggestion was to obtain a list of newcomers from the local utility board each month and send them a welcome letter. The types of programs or activities members would like to see implemented are already in place, such as history. New suggestions included wildlife/environmental issues and discussions. About two-thirds of the members would like to see audience interaction in the programs, such as hands-on activities and audience participation. Only half of the members believe communication to and between members is currently effective. This may be contaminated because the calling committee fell down on the job during this survey time period. The calling committee has greatly improved its performance and I believe most would agree communication is as effective as it can be. I would like to see more people go on-line. This is slowly becoming the case as members move into the age of computers. A surprising number of members have access to the internet--almost half the respondents. Nearly the same number have an e-mail account. The e-mail addresses that were collected may be shared with the yearbook committee--assuming we have permission to do so.

Conclusion

After reading the responses from the Clinch Bend chapter of the DAR to the questionnaire, I discovered there are many issues that need to be addressed and procedures that need refining. Although it is not possible to satisfy every member because of the different needs represented among the population, it is possible to meet the needs of the majority. The issues the chapter needs to address specifically are recruiting, alternative meeting time, recognition and possibly a better meeting location

or alternating between different locations. The meetings themselves need more organization and structure to proceed in a timely fashion.

Through my research on this topic, I have found many useful tools that should help increase the morale and participation level within our chapter. I plan to have a meeting dedicated to sharing the results from the survey and my research. This should have the chapter well on its way to increasing its ability to recruit and retain new and current members. I believe the simple act of a "younger" member showing an interest in the health of the chapter and making suggestions for improving the chapter will encourage members to participate. By reading the survey questions, members are now aware of "potential" problems the chapter is facing which I believe will create an increased interest in the welfare of the chapter.

My hypothesis originally stated that age should not play a significant role in active participation, but after analyzing the survey responses I discovered that age does play a significant role. That is why the need for new, young members is vital to the chapter's longevity. The chapter desperately needs new ideas to recruit and retain this segment of the population. Many organizations experience similar difficulties. With the changing times, organization roles will evolve into an entirely different position and in order to compete with individuals' time constraints, organizations will have to completely revamp their purposes and goals to better meet or exceed the members' needs.

Recommendations for Future Work

My recommendations for future work would be more extensive, properly worded surveys to include:

- The local community (through a newspaper survey)-to find out how many people know about the DAR and what they represent;

- Community schools including elementary, middle, high school and college age students-to find out how many know about the DAR and what they represent.

The purpose for discovering how much people know about the DAR indicates how aggressively the chapter would need to publicize the organization.

There is also a need to poll potential members about their interests and what might be preventing them from joining. Based upon the responses, the chapter could address specific issues, such as day care and alternative meeting times.

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Appendix

Description of Procedure

Below is the survey and questions distributed to the Clinch Bend Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on November 2000. Questionnaires were distributed at the November 2000 meeting and the remainder of the members not at the meeting received a questionnaire in the mail. Of the 60 current members at that time, 37 members responded to the survey. I contacted members who did not respond, but was not always successful in receiving a response. Some members were in nursing homes and/or no longer attended meetings. Some members felt they could not contribute any useful information. I interpreted those comments as possibly not wanting to take the time to complete the survey. Some members returned the surveys anonymously while others included their names.

Questionnaire

Survey

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor Don't know

Length of time for meetings

Comments:

Quality of guest speakers

Comments:

Quality of programs

Comments:

Location of meetings

Comments:

Appropriateness of programs

Comments:

Your interest in program topics

Comments:

Variety of food at meetings

Comments:

Questions

1. How many meetings do you attend each year? _____

2. Are the meetings held at a convenient time for you? (Currently held on 3rd Thurs @12:30) _____

If not, when do you prefer to meet? _____

3. If you do not attend meetings because of transportation issues, would you be more likely to attend if someone you knew provided you with reliable transportation? _____
4. Do you prefer meeting at a restaurant, church fellowship hall, member's homes, or other? _____
If other, where? _____
5. Do you believe the Clinch Bend Chapter is addressing the majority of the members needs? _____
If no, what issues do you consider relevant? _____
6. Do you believe the officers and/or committee members are performing their duties satisfactory? _____
If not, what improvements do you suggest? _____
7. Do you believe members are recognized sufficiently for their efforts? _____
If no, what are some suggestions for implementing recognition? _____
8. Do you believe there is a problem with low member participation? _____
If yes, what can be done to increase member participation? _____
9. Are there specific issues you would like the chapter to address? _____
10. How important do you think recruiting new members is? _____
11. What are your suggestions for contacting/recruiting/retaining new members? _____

12. What types of programs or activities would you like to see implemented at the meetings? _____

13. Would you like to see audience interaction in the programs, e.g. hands-on activities, audience participation, etc.? _____ If so, what are some suggestions? _____
14. Do you believe communication to and between members is currently effective? _____
If not, what are some suggestions? _____

15. Do you have access to the Internet? _____

16. Do you have an e-mail account? _____

If so, what is your e-mail address? _____

Results of DAR survey-37 surveys received

Part I

1. Length of meeting time:

Excellent	16.25%
Very Good	13.5%
Good	21.6%
Fair	16.25%
Poor	13.5%
Don't Know	18.9%

Comments:

Too long!

I need to be home by 3 PM to take care of children.

For the amount of things we have to do-2 or 2.5 hours is about right.

Some are too long.

At times meetings are too long and drawn out-need more organization.

We need to move more quickly in our business.

Sometimes too lengthy.

Sometimes seems to drag.

2. Quality of guest speakers:

Excellent	25%
Very Good	36.1%
Good	13.9%
Fair	2.8%
Poor	2.8%
Don't Know	19.4%

Comments:

Not very interesting.

Very interesting and informative.

As a general rule, the speakers are very good. Some may not spend as much time explaining things or answering questions.

3. *Quality of programs:*

Excellent	22.9%
Very Good	37.1%
Good	14.3%
Fair	5.7%
Poor	0%
Don't Know	20%

Comments:

Patriotic-sometimes current, sometimes historical.

We are told what, in general, we should have. I think we do well in getting the speakers we do.

4. *Location of meetings:*

Excellent	14.3%
Very Good	17.2%
Good	31.4%
Fair	11.4%
Poor	5.7%
Don't know	20%

Comments:

I like our present meeting place.

How about a restaurant.

I would prefer meeting at a restaurant if one could be found.

O.K.

Due to the places available in Oak Ridge, we are unable to get a better place. I do not object to the place we meet.

5. *Appropriateness of programs:*

Excellent	22.9%
Very Good	42.8%
Good	8.6%
Fair	5.7%
Poor	0%
Don't Know	20%

Comments:

Some programs are about trips our members have taken or meetings they have attended.

We are told what we should have and do our best to have speakers for those areas suggested.

6. *Your interest in program topics:*

Excellent	17%
Very Good	28.6%
Good	28.6%
Fair	2.9%
Poor	2.9%
Don't Know	20%

Comments:

My special interest is in historical subjects.

Some program topics are more interesting to me than others. History is my choice and we had seven programs last year.

7. *Variety of food at meetings:*

Excellent	17.7%
Very Good	44.1%
Good	11.8%
Fair	5.9%
Poor	0%
Don't Know	20.5%

Comments:

Good variety most of the time-sometimes too many sweets.

We don't need sweets at 12:30 pm!

Should have a minimum number (variety).

The food has been good, but I do miss eating a simple lunch. It just makes for more interaction among the members. However, I am not unhappy with the situation now. It would also make the time there longer.

I seldom made it there in time to eat. Good when I was there.

Sometimes too much food.

Part II-Questions

1. How many meetings do you attend each year?

All

Two responded - Most

Two responded - 9 or 10

Three responded - 9

Four responded - 8

About 7

5

Maybe one-half

3-5

Three responded - 3 or 4

3

Two responded – 2 or 3

2

Occasionally 1

1 last year-previously attended about 3-4

None last year-family illness.

I'm semi-invalid (hope to start back)

Depends upon my health

I am relatively new to the chapter. I hope to attend 80% of meetings.

None

When living in TN, I attended 8-9

None-I live in Kentucky so I will never be able to come to meetings.

None

None-I can't help you on this survey-I consider myself as an inactive member.

None

In the past I attended regularly. Since 1998 circumstances keep me from attending.

Have attended only one, but plan to attend as many as possible, except during the winter when we usually go to Florida.

2. Are the meetings held at a convenient time for you? If not, when do you prefer to meet?

21 people responded - yes.

Yes, but I can attend on the weekends too.

Yes, but Saturday meetings might be better to allow working members and prospects to attend.

Meetings are held at a very convenient time for me, and for any of our members who are still working outside the home.

I can attend at the current time, but a Sat or late afternoon (5pm or 6pm) would be better.

A.M.

Saturday (anytime monthly)

Good.

The time itself isn't a problem; I have a standing conflict the 3rd Thursday each month.

Yes, but my problem is conflicting activities.

No, I can't "fault" the time, it is just my situation.

No, 1st week in the month-I'm usually in town then.

No. Wed or Sat.

No. In the evenings.

Cannot attend anytime-teaching school.

Two responded N/A

3. If you do not attend meetings because of transportation issues, would you be more likely to attend if someone you knew provided you with reliable transportation?

Three responded - no.

One of my friends provides me with transportation.

No problem for me as long as it's during the day time.

No, but a great idea.

4. Do you prefer to meeting at a restaurant, church fellowship hall, member's home or other?

Fellowship hall or member's home.

Six responded restaurant only.

Restaurant, how about a breakfast?

Restaurant-not much choice in Oak Ridge.

Eight responded fellowship hall only.

Restaurant or fellowship hall are o.k. We could even bring a sack lunch or sandwich material to make lunch.

Prefer member's home - then restaurant.

Restaurant or fellowship hall

Fellowship hall or member's home

Restaurant or fellowship hall.

Members' homes was the best arrangement until we got too large; restaurant may be preferred, abut finding a suitable place for meetings is difficult; fellowship hall is adequate but rather gloomy.

Restaurant or member's homes

Home was more preferred, but growth in membership requires larger area.

Prefer fellowship hall or possibly civic center meeting room (for which there is a small charge of course).

Let the attending members vote on their choice for meeting places.

Four responded - doesn't matter.

5. Do you think the Clinch Bend Chapter is addressing the majority of the members needs? If no, what issues do you consider relevant?

17 responded yes.

Yes, except the meeting time is not convenient for younger members or for those who work.

The majority of members are elderly and since they continue to attend, the meetings must be acceptable to them.

Need to shorten the length of meetings.

Yes, however we can only address the needs we know about and have the members who are willing and able to do it.

I am not well acquainted enough to judge.

I cannot answer for other members. Transportation for some, hearing loss for some.

Probably bigger interest or need is better info.

No. I feel we are not letting the public and civic organizations more aware of what our organization and goals, aims are.

Most

Need to have lively meetings without someone fussing and causing unpleasantness.

No, need to have two meetings: older members during day; younger members during evening.

To help new members to get to know more what DAR is all about.

6. Do you think the officers and/or committee members are performing their duties satisfactory? If not, what improvements do you suggest?

18 responded - yes

Yes, when they cannot attend a meeting, they usually provide a substitute.

Yes, have been most helpful with getting genealogy records.

Yes, except for callers.

Yes, there should be a way to keep some of the officers to not have to take on too many jobs, one office or one committee chairmanship should be enough responsibility for one person.

As far as I know. Shorten reports to the maximum.

Most.

Check mark.

No. We need more contact before meetings.

Not all, need to look at duties and educate.

Stick to Roberts Rules of Order-seems our officers get off track at times.

Meetings need to be more organized.

Phone committee not functioning properly. Hostesses need to know how much refreshments to prepare.

Unknown

I'm not familiar with the offices.

7. Do you think members are recognized sufficiently for their efforts? If no, what are some suggestions for implementing recognition?

10 Yes

Most

Check mark.

In most cases

Probably

As far as I know

We may fail to give credit or compliments at times, but I think we strive to do so.

Everybody except maybe Janette

Probably not

No-well somewhat.

No

No, Certificates or plaques for years been member. Also, for jobs well done and for serving as officers.

Not sure.

I do not know. When I held an office, I felt sufficiently recognized.

Yes/no. Perhaps more praise for work done-making serving an honor-would create more enthusiasm for recruiting officers. Maybe we'd have more of "It's an honor to serve" rather than "I'll do it because nobody else will."

Unknown.

8. Do you think there is a problem with low member participation? If yes, what can be done to increase member participation?

Yes. Poll the members for their interests.

Some members might be able to do more, but some have other obligations that require much time.

What is % turnout? If turnout is low, maybe programs & speakers should be improved.

Yes. Shorten time.

Yes. More contact to offer transportation.

Yes. That way in most organizations now.

Yes. Hard question. Needs to be discussed. Some could be picked up if they wished. Maybe an initiative or gift (door prize).

I feel age or health of family members effect the meetings -at least on a personal standpoint.

Yes. We need to know the interests of young people.

3 responded - yes

Yes. Better programs so members won't fall asleep during programs or won't leave mid-program.

Yes. Try harder for new members.

Yes. A chapter project; national or local.

Yes. Change attitudes of members that think attendance is all they need to do.

Yes. Don't know.

Many members have been active in the past, but are getting older and prefer to let the younger members be active. Thus we need younger recruits. Time of meetings seems to be a problem for younger members especially working women.

Yes. Meetings too long. Chapter needs some "new blood." Chapter needs interesting projects, but age is catching up with members. Make meetings fun and lively--keep them awake.

There are enough active members to keep things going.

Yes. Don't know.

Yes. Tell inactive members that someone will pick them up and accompany them to meetings.

This can't be helped because of some ages.

2 responded - No

No. Get younger people.

Unknown.

9. What specific issues would you like the chapter to address?

Try to recruit some younger members.

How about advances in genealogy materials? Speakers from various historical societies.

We should first address those issues we have to address and then prioritize and try to do a little more every year. I feel everyone should do something.

I have enjoyed the history lectures.

Yes, our purpose and goals!

Limit amount of time-programs-questions following programs.

Too longer programs.

Maybe keeping business brief and to the point.

Unnecessary bickering drives prospects away. Fussing about small items gives a bad impression. Some have said they would not come again unless certain unpleasant members were not there. This is a MAJOR PROBLEM.

Recognizing members who perform exceptional jobs.

10. How important do you believe recruiting new members is?

17-Very important

Very important for the future of our organization.

Very-life blood

Most important thing we need to do. Every organization has same problem, younger members to replace older, however having a daughter who works with three children, I can understand problems need to discuss.

Very-encouraging and attracting younger members. However, we have to realize many of them work and have young families. Also interest usually increases with age.

Extremely important! The average age of our members is over 65.

We have to have them to keep functioning, so many other people have died.

Vital

Very, especially getting young members.

Very important, new younger member create enthusiasm. It's refreshing to have such a young, efficient treasurer.

Very, we need more.

Recruiting is the lifeline of the chapter. The chapter is getting weaker and weaker because of aging.

Top priority.

It is the only way to keep an organization viable.

Recruiting new members is vitally important.

11. What are your suggestions for contacting/recruiting/retaining new members?

Offer to do genealogy workshops at various locations, more publicizing through newspapers, radio and library.

Each member might be able to encourage a younger member of their own family to join our group by asking them to visit some specific meetings.

There are a lot of young women who are eligible, but whose only knowledge of the DAR is the Marian Anderson incident in their history books.

Get new members involved.

Visit genealogical organizations to explain requirements and advantages of membership.

Writing, calling, visiting, having interesting programs, asking them to participate in a project, something for children to do, having when they can come.

Through daily contacts in other organizations (church, craft organizations, etc.)

Show an interest in the new member--more than just a "welcome" to the member at the first meeting.

Instructional papers, speaking at local history classes, forms for students or family traditions.

Ask your friends if they are interested.

Have each member invite a person who has shown interest in DAR to a tea or meeting for that purpose.

Perhaps--more members explaining at historical societies "memberships in DAR or becoming a member.

Personally talking to friends and possible new members building up the chapter.

Word of mouth, publicity, genealogical societies. Keep programs/meetings interesting and brief.

Have Saturday meetings. Make sure every member brings her manners to the meetings.

Do things(?) To make active members more enthusiastic--they'll bring in new ones.

Their interest in the organization and not only on the membership list.

More aggressive publication of requirements and purpose/goal of organization.

Telephone.

Constant effort.

Tell inactive members that someone will pick them up and accompany them to meetings.

New members could be recruited by obtaining a list of newcomers from the city utility board each month and send a welcome letter, with a brief statement of our purpose. PTA membership lists would also provide a source for recruiting stay-at-home moms whose time is more flexible than the workplace moms. I'm not sure how to obtain those lists, but there must be a way. For members who have not been participating, a friendly note now and then might spur better attendance.

12. What types of programs or activities would you like to see implemented at the meetings?

Wildlife/environmental preservation.

People seem to become more interested in ancestors as they approach middle age (play up genealogy/play down "patriotic activities").

Information-history

More information on history and contributions of common people.

As busy as we are already, I guess that what we need to do is be more innovative in the presentation, good speakers, questions, and displays, etc.

I enjoy history-some more about the Oak Ridge area.

The monthly subjects seem to be interesting. Get through business matters quickly.

If you're a new member, it's very hard to get to know the other members.

More historical

I like the programs that we have.

At least once a year, a program in the school system.

Shorter programs-less rambling around after programs.

The program committee does a good job in following the suggested programs.

Programs are usually good.

They have been satisfactory.

We need a local project. The Oak Ridge Oral History project would be excellent, but no one was interested.

We have good programs.

The records that are available for research.

Programs were satisfactory.

Some discussion if controlled timing per person.

I would like to hear from other members about their research and what they found about their ancestors.

That would make several interesting programs. Also, a study of the constitution and how it came about would be very useful, particularly at this time of debate over the electoral college.

13. Would you like to see audience interaction in the programs, e.g. hands-on activities, audience participation, etc.? If so what are some suggestions?

2-Yes.

Yes. Perhaps show and tell

Yes. We usually interrupt a speaker.

Yes. Have a time for questions something in relation to program on display, handouts, use of pictures, etc.

It would be interesting to ask for audience interaction.

Yes. Try to ask questions so people have to answer.

Programs are fine, too long sometimes.

Check mark. - Maybe sharing, like small antiques, some interesting fact about Revolutionary ancestor, family tradition, musical program, panel members.

Hands-on Activities, audience participation?

Yes. This would be great if everyone remembered to bring her manners to the meeting. I'm blank.

Yes. Perhaps hands on chores/crafts our forefathers/foremothers had to perform.

Yes. Do not go long, as some will be inattentive or tired.

Variety is usually a good idea.

Doesn't matter.

No. Our time is limited.

7 responded - No

14. Do you think communication to and between members is currently effective? If not, what are some suggestions?

10 responded – Yes

Yes. It is for me.

Only if they come to meetings.

Sometimes.

I imagine so if I could be an active member.

Probably living in Oak Ridge, one probably has more contact with members.

Check mark.

Somewhat. Communication is improving. For some time, there were some differences evident among relations between members. It isn't 100%, but it's better. This is probably one of the main causes of apathy in our organization. There has been a big change since the time I joined. I was "in awe" of those nice, active, enthusiastic ladies-proud of their heritage and anxious to serve in the chapter. They were cooperative and felt it an honor to serve. They operated by the rules. It wasn't so political.

Only between certain ones.

Only marginally

Not really, e-mail those that have access.

No. One call to come to meetings is not effective though appreciated.

No. Need better response from "calling people." I have not been called so far this year.

No. A call the day before a meeting is not sufficient reminder notice.

No. A newsletter?

No.

Have phone committee function properly.

Considering age differences we get along great.

15. Do you have access to the internet?

20 responded - No.

16 responded - Yes.

Not personally.

16. Do you have an e-mail account? If so, what is your e-mail address?

21 responded - No.

15 responded - Yes.

Confidential

Tnptk@yahoo.com

jmarshtn@aol.com

hildahsharp@aol.com

jeanrparsley@aol.com

bobkemper@att.net

wkhndrsn@aol.com

jayers@ccdi.net (not my preferred way to communicate)

S080332@aol.com

mllldal@cs.com

jan@romance.win.net or <http://www.win.net/romance>

bcwasilko@aol.com bogreene99@aol.com

tomasita@aol.com

Other comments:

I think the length of meetings can be shortened by asking if there are committee reports instead of going down review by every committee chairman.

My husband is retired and has projects for me at home or wants me to go with him on errands so I don't get to attend DAR like I want to.

I have not been to the meetings enough to make judgments on the work presently being done. The ladies who have been present when I was there seem to have a handle on their work. Wish I could be of more help.

Business should be conducted efficiently-in a brief manner. Too long meetings cause disinterest and discourage attendance.

I'm afraid I don't have a lot of suggestions since I'm fairly new at this, but I do want our chapter to be successful and I do try, considering the limitations on my time. Thank you for insisting that I fill this out.

I do not think my situation of distance and ill health of husband make my answers of much help. The fault is not the chapter. It is just a circumstance I can't help.

Meetings should be over by 2:20 p.m. There should be a short break after the program. Prospects should be welcomed. Members need to leave egos at home and bring manners. Phone committee should have a count of anticipated attendance and inform hostesses so they will know how much food to fix. Members should not be rude, ugly, belligerent, argumentative and just plain nasty. If each member would do a bit of work, the others that are employed would not be so overloaded. Members can discuss and disagree amicably, but some are not aware of this or do not know how to discuss politely. So many members have been driven away by bad behavior of members. It would be great to have interactive skits, programs, etc. to include members, IF some could be found to do it. Going month after month to sit and listen doesn't spark much enthusiasm for anticipating. Neither does dreading what might happen at a meeting because of manners that someone (or 2 or 3) left at home. This happens repeatedly. The chapter needs to give the outside speakers some sort of gift.

I don't feel I can answer some of the questions since I don't attend meetings and have very little knowledge of the organization.

I do not feel qualified to respond to most of your questionnaire, since the Nov 2000 meeting was my first since being accepted into DAR. However, I can cite similar experiences from memberships in other women's organizations. It is a fact that most younger women are now in the workplace, severely limiting the time they can devote to their families and even less to club activities. I don't know how to identify those younger women who are homemakers, but that should be an important objective. Most of the membership now are quite elderly, and we need to bring in new blood. We need to reach out to new members and get them involved right away. Just assign something simple, like bringing something to a meeting (a chair, a table, a flag, or anything that might be lacking in the meeting place.) Or a one-time assignment-research a particular subject. I don't advise asking new members to accept an office or full-time duty right away. It scares them off.