

US Area Council Meeting in Las Vegas (Aug 3-4)

By Eddie Miwa, Hawaii Regional Director, Y Service Clubs International

I had the pleasure of attending the US Area Joint Canada Area/Caribbean Convention held Aug 5 - 7 at the Hampton Inn Tropicana in Las Vegas. I flew in a couple of days early ahead of the rest of the Hawaii contingent to attend the Area council meeting held (Aug 3-4). **Area President Tibor Foki** presided over his first area council meeting as Area President with Immediate Past Area President Charley Redmond by his side in front of the nine U.S. Area regional directors and for the first time a 10th seat reserved for US Area Youth Representative **Matthew Rodriguez**. along with Area officers and interested spectators.

After the opening and introductions, the first order of business was the Installation of new officers with **PAP Debbie Redmond** reciting the ceremonial oath to AP **Tibor**, and first year RDs Pac. SW Region **Jeffrey Brandeen**, Pac. Central Region **Carla Murphy**, N.Atlan. Region **Matthew Chamakkala** and Mid East Region **John McFadden**. The ceremony was a little rushed, I guess due to the busy agenda.

Charley as the outgoing AP, reported his concerns, which mirrors some the same that we are experiencing in the Hawaii Region:

- US Area membership remains an issue –US Area **CFO Gene Koester** reported membership for 1st Semester 2016-2017 at 1054 members / 2nd Semester at 1016. The possibility of merging the US Area with the CAC (Canada Area Caribbean) is a very strong reality. And also there is another possibility that International is contemplating of combining the 9 Global Areas into Zones, that would amalgamate (combine) all of North and South America under one Zone –of course the biggest challenge being language barriers.
- Finding members willing to take on leadership positions in the US Area is becoming more difficult.
- Many of the regional constitutions and by-laws are out-of-date and need to be looked at; **Charley** cited Hawaii's efforts most recently in revising and submitting amendments to its by-laws to International (ICRC) for approval.

Charley also stated, that with the onset global climate change, he would like to see a National Disaster Emergency Relief Fund established, no further details were given.

AP Tibor has high on his priority list for a new, if not improved US Area Website; he has been highly critical of the website, and faults the area for not providing webmaster **Bob Daniels** the historical and up to date content that makes for an effective media platform. He has appointed **Charley** and our own **Russ Lynch** to help **Bob** to upgrade the area website, **Tibor** regards the Hawaii Region Website as the standard to where the US Area and other Regional websites should be.

- Tibor announced that **Area Secretary Nancy Libby** will be attending the 82nd Hawaii Region Convention in Hilo. Nancy has never been to Hawaii and indicated she is looking forward to it. *Note: Nancy's mothers had passed away during or shortly after the convention, please all join me in expressing our Heartfelt Condolences to Nancy and her family.*

- **Tibor** wants to meet with the Area Council quarterly (via WebEx online conferencing) instead of semiannually.
- **Tibor, Charley** and A/Secretary **Nancy Libby** will be looking to revise and mostly clean-up grammatical errors in the US Area By-laws (note: the US Area does not have a Constitution – only By-laws). The most significant being the inclusion of a seat and vote in the US Area Council for the Area Youth Representative.
- Longtime US Area bulletin editor for the Y's Alliance, **Fred Leonard**, has announced he is stepping down as Editor due to health issues. **Tibor** has appointed a committee to look into utilizing ConstantContact.com as a media source for the Y's Alliance, and a search for a new bulletin editor.
- For us older members who have been shying away from social media, welcome to the 21st Century. Besides *Constant Contact*, Tibor is looking into Facebook and other online marketing venues such as MailChimp.com and SurveyMonkey.com, and *Google Web Hosting for 501(c) 3's* as vehicles for communication and public relations. POS (Point-of –Sale) Systems –this was a little above my head, but in doing some research on this, it can automate and email invoices to the clubs and create a record of all receivables. You will be hearing more about these in the near future.
- A motion was seconded/carried to transfer the Alexander Scholarship Fund financial responsibilities back to the Area CFO (**Gene Koester**); ASF trustees were reinstated to handle the beneficiary selection process. **Tibor** appointed **Dave Craytor, Dave Evans & CFO Gene Koester** to work out the transfer.
- With US Area Youth Representative **Matthew Rodriguez** in attendance, a MSC to approve a seat and vote in the US Area Council.
- A motion to approve a donation collection during the convention to go toward the Youth Convocation being held at the convention –any shortfall of \$500, the balance to be covered by the US Area, MSC.

The last few hours of the council meeting were dedicated to breakout groups to brainstorm on ideas of *How to approach a YMCA in starting up a Y Service Club, How to establish better relations with the YMCA of USA, Project ideas to help meet the greatest needs of our community, and of course Membership.*