

## March 2006 Talking Points

The 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference --- “Our Next 100 Years” --- promises to be a thrilling meeting. The Conference is April 26 – 29, 2006 in San Diego, California.

- Early Bird Registration ends Friday, March 31, 2006, with registration running at unpredictably high numbers.
- Unexpectedly, we were just informed that the hotel is already fully booked. We are working with the City of San Diego to assist in nearby hotel alternatives for our members, at the same rate; we will also develop a system for anyone who wishes to share a room with another member. (The Planning Committee and the Board regret implications for those members unable to stay at The Wyndham. The problem results from sound fiscal planning and the requirement of hotels to provide a commitment nearly a year in advance to a set number of rooms. Based on past usage, a block of rooms was reserved which would limit the risk of incurring fines and losing money for the Society.
- A number of innovative features are planned: keynote with full-conference interactive workshop on developing vision and strategy; first annual membership meeting in which members and Board will dialogue about key strategic initiatives and priorities; and to meet an ongoing request of our members, a CD will replace the large binder of materials! We look forward to seeing many of our colleagues and friends in San Diego.

The Board discussed the increasing need for managerial oversight in addition to RMP's administrative infrastructure, due to expanding society activities and service needs. Richard will establish a small Task Force to explore feasibility, advisability, and ramifications of moving to an Executive Director/administrator position.

Under the lead of Carol Maxwell, Treasurer, SSWLHC has selected the firm of Robin, Kramer and Green to conduct an audit of our account.

The new Resource E-blast has clearly met a networking need. Within the first few weeks of its inception, 12 questions have been submitted, responded to, and sent back to members. The feedback to us has been very positive. Please continue to let us know how we can refine and improve the communication network among our members.

The Board has received very helpful membership feedback on the recent reorganization into Regions. Based on your input, we are making minor modifications to reflect more meaningful geographic regions. The results are posted to the Web. The Regions are designed so that members can communicate directly with the Board through your regional liaison, and to allow for future regional programming.

Stay tuned for a most exciting new product, to be launched at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in 2007. The Leadership Institute Work Team held its first meeting, beginning the process of creating this leadership development initiative.

Responding to numerous requests for baseline data, the Society will invite all members to participate in a Salary Survey. You will be receiving information through email, as well as the Website.

The Membership Work Group will be working with the VA to improve our capacity to communicate with individual VA members. Their progress will be reported as they develop linkages.