



STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT SAIR AND SAIR ELECTIONS

August 1, 1994

Jim Nichols

Among the advantages of age (other than grandchildren) is the ability to see events and developments with "crystal clear hindsight" and to express your views with little fear of impacting your future (which has in many cases already past). I'd like to share a few thoughts with you about the electoral processes which support our national and regional professional associations. I've taken part in the electoral process in both associations as a winner and a loser in each. Long ago, in one of the first SAIR elections, I believe I was running against a character named Fred Flintstone.

Let's get one thing clear: I support the electoral process. In most instances, the electoral process has worked well for SAIR and AIR and the most able/competent/deserving candidates have been elected. Unfortunately, however, both AIR and SAIR members also have inflicted upon ourselves officers that we have quietly endured and survived.

Why have our professional organizations occasionally had to endure leadership widely identified as second best? Why do a few of our colleagues upon taking office become more enamored with the great prestige of holding office and the promise of the next "higher" (?) office than with doing what is best for the association or speaking their mind in what may be perceived as a truthful and polite, but not necessarily "politically correct," manner?

Often the election of officers obviously less qualified by experience, ability, and willingness to work has been the result, in my opinion, of what can be described as "hardball" organizational politics...primarily serving the egos of those involved rather than the welfare of the organizations. This is clearly the "worst" of the electoral process and should be abhorred by all of us who seek to serve our organization rather (or more) than themselves. Such "hardball" is usually the result of pitting regions, genders, or races against one another. I personally believe that this type of activity is why it is becoming increasingly difficult for nominating committees to persuade capable and experienced colleagues to have their names placed on the ballot.

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**Public Trust in a Time of Doubt:
The Challenge for Research,
Evaluation, and Planning**

October 8 through 11, 1994
BE THERE!

Several months from now, all of us will have the opportunity to take part in the SAIR elections and many of us in the AIR elections. At this time, I am gratefully unaware of the candidates for office in either association. However, I urge you to examine their qualifications for the offices they seek. What have they done previously for the organization? How well, in your opinion, did they serve? Can they do the job? Do they really want to serve? Reject potential regionalism, sexism, and racism in your decision.

Regardless of whom you select, I urge you to vote. Officers in both AIR and SAIR are being elected with far less than a majority of those eligible to vote. Participation in AIR elections by those from SAIR states is not (despite what you may have heard) the strongest of any region. Along with program participation and attendance at annual meetings, voting in elections and service as an officer in your regional and national associations are the greatest contributions you can make to our profession.

See you in San Antonio!

San Antonio: A Sampler

El Mercado (Market Square). This three-square-block area is the romantic center of San Antonio's Hispanic culture. Authentically Mexican, El Mercado is enriched with the legacy of public markets. To accommodate SAIR/SCUP conference attendees, El Mercado will remain open on Friday and Saturday nights until 8:00 p.m.

La Villita. Meaning "little town," this unique arts and crafts community is a National Historic District. Twenty-six shops with working artisans and three restaurants are located in adobe dwellings.

River Walk. The Paseo del Rio is a 2.5 mile cobblestone pathway at the banks of the San Antonio River. Walkways lead visitors to river-level shops, restaurants, and nightclubs.

The Alamo. For 13 days in 1836, a small band of Texans were besieged by Santa Anna's army. The site of that siege is right next door to the Hotel Menger.

Southwest Craft Center. Located on the banks of the San Antonio River. See the Southwest's finest example of French architecture, the Old Ursuline Academy.

Institute of Texan Cultures. A wonderful museum detailing the rich cultural history of Texas, within walking distance of the Hotel Menger.

Arneson River Theatre. An outdoor theatre showplace where the river separates the audience from the state.

And much more. Come prepared for a good time.

Other Regional Meetings

"Demonstrating Excellence in Higher Education Through Research and Planning" is the theme of the **1995 TAIR Conference**, which will be held in San Antonio on February 22 through 24, 1995. Questions about the conference should be directed to the program chair: Vickie Natale, Director of Planning and Institutional Research, Del Mar College, (512) 886-1207.

The **Fall 1994 OKAIRP Conference** will be held early November at Oklahoma State University in Oklahoma City. Direct inquiries to Kurt Jackson, East Central University, Ada, OK, 74820. Or, by telephone (405) 332-8000 or FAX (405) 332-1623.

New Faces, New Places

William R. Fendley has taken the position as Director of Institutional Research at the University of Alabama. You can telephone Bill at (205) 348-7204, fax him at (205) 348-7208, or send e-mail to bfendley@ualvm.ua.edu.

Marsha K. Moss has been promoted to Assistant Vice President and Director of Institutional Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her promotion took place during the restructuring that makes the Office of Institutional Studies part of the Provost's Office. Marsha has been a member of the OIS staff since 1973 when she joined as a computer programmer. She also served as a programmer analyst, systems analyst III, and acting director before being named OIS director in 1982. Marsha also has served in a number of positions in TAIR, SAIR, and AIR.

SAIR Officers, 1993-1994

President: James O. Nichols, U. of Mississippi
Vice President: Karen Gentemann, George Mason U.
Past President: William Fendley, U. of Virginia
Treasurer: Linda Smith, Coastal Carolina U.
Secretary: Joseph L. Marks, SREB
Members-at-Large:
 Karleese Clark, US Dept. of Agriculture
 David B. Fleming, Clemson University
 Dianna B. Lowe, East Carolina U.
 Albert M. Searway, Jacksonville State U.
SAIR/IHE Liaison: Larry G. Jones, U. of Georgia

Southern Region

SCUP Representatives, 1993-94

Southeast: Joseph Szutz, U. System of Georgia
Southwest: Mary Marks Guillory, U. of Houston
Southcentral: Ann Tomlinson, U. of Southern Miss.

SOUTHERN AIR Editor

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DEADLINE for Submissions

Please submit material for the next issue of SOUTHERN AIR to the editor by the second week in January.

Musings from TBCU

Jackie Stewart

TBCU members had a most "full-filling" evening at the AIR Forum in New Orleans where they were treated to authentic New Orleans cuisine at a "Seafood Buffet a la Creole" catered by the Xavier University food service staff. The dinner was held on the campus of Xavier and, in addition to TBCU members and friends, Association officers **John Muffo**, **Gerald McLaughlin**, **Bill Fendley**, and **Terry Russell** joined us at table. **Charlie Brown**, the "Godfather" and Association Member Emeritus, remarked on the need to include and encourage the participation of local TBCU institutions in local arrangements whenever possible.

While in New Orleans, **Sam Baldwin**, **Alice Simpkins**, and **Jackie Stewart** received the Charles I. Brown Service Award in recognition of their active and cooperative participation in the TBCU Special Interest Group.

Three TBCU members were nominated for positions in SAIR for 1994-95. They were **Sam Baldwin** (Member-at-Large), **Willie Jackson** (Nominating Committee), and **Jackie Stewart** (Nominating Committee). Election results will be announced at the San Antonio conference.

*Obviously, a man's judgment cannot
be better than the information on which he
has based it.*

Arthur Hays Sulzberger in an address to the
New York State Publishers Association
August 30, 1948

The Votes are In

Ballots for the SAIR election were distributed in July 1994, and the voting period closed on September 5. **Bill Fendley** reports a "good turn-out" in this year's elections and reminds the membership that the results will be announced during the business meeting at the SAIR/SCUP conference in San Antonio.

Update on Experts' Corner

The experts agree! They don't want to be called experts. So, the editor went back to the drawing board. But, before I get into that issue, let me update you on the activity of our gracious volunteers.

As of August 30, 1994, Theresa, Marsha, Charles, and Leslie fielded a combined total of 14 requests for assistance from the SAIR membership. Time devoted to their colleagues' inquiries totaled **205 minutes** (nearly 3.5 hours).

Operating under the premise that the moniker "EXPERT" might be scaring away would-be volunteers, the Southern AIR Experts are hereby renamed Southern AIR Special Topic Representatives. The new designation more accurately captures the spirit of what this feature is intended to accomplish, which is to create a network of resource people to better meet the needs of the membership...**NOT** to showcase the knowledge and skills of individual members. We would like to see this feature grow.

Your Southern AIR special topic reps remain:

Student Retention Studies

Theresa Y. Smith, University of Oklahoma
Phone: 405-325-3681 FAX: 405-325-7470

IPEDS Surveys

Student Right-to-Know Legislation

Marsha Moss, University of Texas at Austin
Phone: 512-471-3833 FAX: 512-471-8950
Internet: ismkm@utxdp.dp.utexas.edu

SAS (Statistical Analysis Software) Assessment of Institutional Research Executive Decision Support Systems

Charles Harrington, West Georgia College
Phone: 404-836-6449 FAX: 404-836-6720

Proposed Changes in SACS Criteria

Leslie Bielen, Florida Atlantic University
Phone: 407-367-2665 FAX: 407-367-2750

Leslie would like to inform the membership that the proposed changes in the SACS criteria are to be distributed and voted on this Fall. For those of you with SACS reaccreditation visits looming in the near future, it might pay to give Leslie a call.

If you would like to serve as a Southern AIR Special Topic Representative, please contact **Deb Barshafsky**, Editor.

Please use or pass this form on to an interested colleague. The completed form and check should be mailed to:
Linda Smith/ SAIR, Coastal Carolina University
PO Box 1954, Conway, South Carolina 29526

DR./MR./MRS./MS. (circle one) FAX

☐ GRADUATE STUDENT* (\$10) ☐ EMERITUS** (\$0) ☐ REGULAR (\$20)

REMINDER: You are a paid member for the year following a SAIR conference registration or payment in lieu of registration.

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