

CHAPTER 21: NOBILITY IN THE “FIFTH GENERATION”



1994! It was the Winter of 1984 when we began our story as the brainchild of three representatives of such diverse localities as Alexandria, Norfolk, and Henrico County. We were also into our tenth year of what was an ongoing vigorous growing and rigorous edifying process. We were diverse; but we were also united in effort to produce results consistent with the standards of excellence in the profession. As John F. Kennedy once reminded us in a speech at Rice University 12 September 1962, “If ...history...teaches us anything, it is that man, in his quest for knowledge and progress, is determined and cannot be deterred.”

That quote best characterizes the persona of our newest President, Pat Noble. Those who have worked directly with her know all too well that she is a person with the skills to teach and learn, the wisdom to know when to lead and when to follow, and the keenest sense of fairness. However, once determined, she “cannot be deterred”. In that venue, Pat issued an announcement for a first meeting of the “Fifth Generation” that sounded more like a challenge than an invitation. “Here we are into a new year”, she wrote, “and ready to tackle the administrative work that continues to keep us busy but a growing organization.”

That meeting was scheduled for 13 January 1994 at the Springfield Hilton, which was the designated conference site. After reading the agenda, which read like a table of contents for a parliamentary session, our board was called to order; and a “Fifth Generation” prepared to act. As usual, the minutes of 17 November 1993 were read and approved after minor adjustments. Since the financial report was incomplete with an audit pending, Pat requested clarification of our bottom line dollar amount on hand.

Brenda reported on committee business affecting memberships and newsletter. She asserted that nearly one half of those in attendance at Charlottesville were non-members. Hence, an effort would be undertaken to correspond with that group to solicit their active participation. Moreover, Brenda also advised the board to assist in providing articles for the newsletter; and that she would be communicating with them as prospective subjects for a biographical presentation to inform our members who’s who among our officers.

Kris Keyes (Newport News), our new Vice-President, advised the board on the

status of Scholarship Committee revisions. It was agreed that a completed version of those guidelines, together with the details of the training workshop stipends, would be printed in our newsletter and dispersed to the membership. Moreover, the board approved the composition of the scholarship group to include: Nancy Tyler (Fairfax County Schools), Mark Hartman (Roanoke), and, of course Kris. Connis must have smiled down from his lofty perch knowing that the scholarship program, which bore his name, was in such capable hands! After all, he never let the local records managers in Virginia down; and he supported every program with his characteristic vim and vigor.

In addressing the next business item, Pat invited George to inform the board of progress in writing the VAGARA history. The prologue of VAGARA: A DECADE OF DIVERSITY, UNITY, AND PRODUCTIVITY, which was the work's title, was read aloud to our board members. It was agreed that the prologue should be published in the newsletter's next edition. That publication, by unanimous decision, was also to include a series of VAGARA trivia questions which, if correctly answered, would net the winner a \$25.00 cash prize. The "trivia quiz" was scheduled for back to back newsletter issues; and the two winners would receive their awards at the 1994 conference.

The progress in planning that annual event was conveyed to the group since each member received a copy of the conference manual, which detailed the responsibilities of individual Chairs, formulated budgetary guidelines, and presented a list of program speakers. Moreover, the "gala night out" for 1994 featured an evening dinner cruise on the Potomac River aboard the "Dandy", which guaranteed an unforgettable view of our nation's monuments to Lincoln, Washington, and Jefferson. Our 10th Anniversary Conference was shaping up to be a very special occasion!

An open discussion followed with Kris addressing the necessity of updating our VAGARA brochure, which had been initiated by our "second generation" officers. Kris' comments were reviewed and approved for implementation. In addition, Pat was interested in pursuing another workshop offering sometime in May of 1994. After venturing into some areas of "unfinished business", which required board approval, we adjourned. The "fifth generation" was moving with a renewed spirit of determination to succeed. A spirit which would not "be deterred".