

August 18, 2007

John Tetzlaff, Chair, Region 7 Nominating Committee
Ron Larson, Region 7 Nominating Committee
Pete Yanke, Region 7 Nominating Committee

Via email

Dear John, Ron, and Pete:

After two years of thoughtful consideration, I am submitting my resume to you as a candidate for 2nd Vice President of Region 7.

When my husband, Mike, and I joined the WBCCI, we “jumped right in” because we enjoyed all of its members and activities so much. We have embraced the organization and are passionate about its principles. Initially, we attended our first winter IBT meeting to learn more about the “workings” of the club. Later, I found the meetings to be an excellent resource, and after attending three IBT meetings, I felt I was becoming more informed and was “in training” to develop my skills as a better officer and leader of the club. My experience in the Wisconsin Unit has demonstrated strong organizational and leadership skills. I would work vigorously to build on and improve the strong foundation and mission of WBCCI.

I firmly believe that I would represent our Region in the whole realm of WBCCI with excellent character, sincerity, honesty, and integrity. I recognize that everyone brings contributions to organizations and feel that they should be respected, appreciated, and valued. In my attached position statement, you will see what I feel are the two most important challenges WBCCI and our Region are facing and how I have successfully addressed these issues in the Wisconsin Unit. Communication is always a two-way street, and I would welcome ongoing input on every matter from our Region members.

Working with Wisconsin Unit and Region 7 members has been immensely enjoyable for me and I would be pleased and honored to represent Region 7 as 2nd Vice President. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joan Lahr

Attachments

Joan Lahr
Nominee for
2nd Vice President, Region 7



WBCCI
Wisconsin Unit
Member 2003–2007

President, Membership
Chair, 2007
Delegate, 2007 Annual
Delegates Meeting
First Vice President,
Membership Chair, 2006
Second Trustee, 2005
Region 7 Acting Recording/Corresponding Secretary, 2005
Region 7 rallies—attended last four
Region 8 rallies—attended last two
International rallies—attended last four
IBT rallies—attended last three
Participated in all 4 Unit Officer/Membership Workshops
at 2006 International Rally
Unit Parade Chair at International Rallies, 2005 and 2006
Participant of two caravans
Hosted three Unit rallies
Attended every unit rally except one

Husband, Mike: Unit First Mate and Quartermaster, 2007
International Rally Traffic Control Committee, 2006 and 2007
Region 7 Parking Chair, 2006 and 2007
Unit Parking Chair, 2006 and 2007

Occupation

Alliance for Children and Families (retired May 2006)
2002–2006, Director of Human Resources/
Executive Assistant to Chief Operating Officer
1993–2001, Executive Secretary, President's office
Team Spirit member, 3 years
Associated Bank
1986–1992, Executive Assistant to the President/
Office Manager

**Community
Leadership**

Waukesha County 4-H Leaders Association Board
Member 2 years
Secretary, 1 year
Menomonee Falls 4-H Club leader, 14 years

Education

Waukesha County Technical College
– Business / computer applications courses
American Institute of Banking
– Financial courses
– Supervisory training
Management Resource Association (MRA)
– Business / HIPPA / diversity training sessions
Wisconsin Lutheran High School graduate

Other

Strong organizational, communication, and detail skills;
team player; reliable; experienced conference planner;
enjoys working with people and with WBCCI

Personal

Married to Michael for 46 years
Two sons and two daughters, 6 grandchildren
Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Member St. James Church, Menomonee Falls, since 1963

Joan Lahr
Nominee for
2nd Vice President, Region 7

Position Paper

The future of Region 7 and the WBCCI will have challenges and work needs to be done in some areas now. Our two most important Region initiatives should be communication and membership retention and recruitment.

I feel that a high level of communication is of utmost importance in every organization, and in WBCCI, particularly Region level, communication should be the responsibility of the officers. Members should feel engaged, welcomed, important, and valued. Keeping members "in the loop" is essential to maintaining a quality organization! I strongly feel that officers should be visible and attend every event. As President of the Wisconsin Unit this past year, I implemented an email program and contacted all members to remind them of every upcoming event and other pertinent news. This was successful to keep members informed and increased attendance at luncheons and rallies. Our monthly Unit newsletter was informative and timely and won a 2nd place award in the publications contest at the International Rally. Another strong communication tool is the Unit Web site. I've been instrumental in recruiting a very capable individual to serve as Web Master for the Wisconsin Unit and we worked together to develop our Web site in early August. This individual also volunteered to serve Region 7 as its Web Master and assisted other members at the recent Region 7 rally to create their Unit Web sites. As Region 7 2nd Vice President, I would be committed to ensuring that the Region 7 communication process is thorough and successful, focusing on a quarterly newsletter, the Region Web site, and consistent discussions with our Unit Presidents through emails and telephone calls. Information would be disseminated promptly and in a timely fashion.

As I am a former employee (13 years) of a membership association similar to the WBCCI, I have experience with the efforts and energy it takes to maintain membership. In September, 2006 I initiated a Membership Retention Program and asked for volunteers to contact 36 members who I felt were at risk. My assessment was that these members had not attended any Unit function for the past three years and needed to be personally contacted to engage them to become active in the club or to just say "hello, how are you?" I divided the list geographically and six people volunteered to contact these members, of which most of them renewed their membership. I have been our Unit's Membership Chair for the past two years and have sent a letter to every new Airstream owner, made numerous follow-up calls, and have carried membership kits in our trailer, as well as encouraged Unit members to do the same for recruitment when we travel. Using encouragement and persistence in the past, I recruited a former Unit member to rejoin after they told me they did not feel welcomed previously and became members at large. I would concentrate my recruitment and retention efforts on personal contact and perseverance if I serve as Region 7 2nd Vice President and would also focus on developing interesting, enjoyable, and quality events that members of all ages would be eager to attend. Region 7 may be small but we are mighty!

1. Please read WBCCI Blue Book Bylaws and Policy, pages 20-26. Ref. Item D Guidelines for Qualifications and Requirements of the Region President's Position. (These can be found on WBCCI.ORG under General Info pull down tab) **Are you willing to support these guidelines as outlined in Item D above? If you answer no, please explain why.**

Yes, I fully understand these guidelines and will commit to supporting them with utmost integrity.

2. Communication is important in any organization. **Please discuss your communication skills and how you will use them in your dealings with the units of Region 7, other Region 7 staff, and the International body of the WBCCI?**

I feel that a high level of communication is of extreme importance in every organization, and in WBCCI, on every level, communication should be the responsibility of the officers. Members should feel engaged, welcomed, important, and valued. Keeping members "in the loop" is essential to maintaining a quality organization. I strongly feel that officers should be visible and attend every event. As President of the Wisconsin Unit this past year, I implemented an email program and contacted all members to remind them of every upcoming event and other pertinent news. This was successful in keeping members informed and increased attendance at luncheons and rallies. Our monthly Unit newsletter was informative and timely and won a 2nd place award in the publications contest at the International Rally. Another strong communication tool is the Unit Web site. I've been instrumental in recruiting a very capable individual to serve as Web Master for the Wisconsin Unit and we worked together to develop our Web site in early August. This individual also volunteered to serve Region 7 as its Web Master and assisted other members at the recent Region 7 rally to create their Unit Web sites. As a Region 7 officer, I would be committed to ensuring that the Region 7 communication process is thorough and successful, focusing on a quarterly newsletter, timely information on the Region Web site, and consistent discussions with our Unit Presidents and Region and international officers through emails and telephone calls. All pertinent information would be disseminated promptly and in a timely fashion.

3. **Please explain your vision of how the WBCCI can refine its practices and improve its image to the nonmember Airstream owners.**

WBCCI should be "a work in progress," as should be every organization. It seems international leadership is "turning the page" offering some new, very different, and excellent activities for the next international rallies. Hopefully, these initiatives will draw away from the "older" image our club now has. This is a good start, but only the tip of the iceberg and much more can be done. We need to put more effort into attracting and retaining younger members by offering them activities geared toward their interests.

I feel we have a somewhat stodgy image due to some of our traditions and customs and the culture of our club. Because of this culture, changes most likely will only be accepted through small, baby steps, which is understandable. I would encourage and support subtle changes, such as relaxing the dress code, introducing business casual for some events, and have less reserved seating for officers at international rallies.

And, a thorough review of the Constitution and Bylaws is in order, streamlining policies and procedures and bringing them up to date with the times.

4. Please explain how you would improve retention of current members and improve the activity level of the membership.

As I am a former employee (13 years) of a membership association similar to the WBCCI, I have experience with the efforts and energy it takes to maintain membership. In September, 2006 I initiated a Unit Membership Retention Program and asked for volunteers to contact 36 members who I felt were at risk. My assessment was that these members had not attended any Unit function for the past three years and needed to be personally contacted to engage them to become active in the club or to just say "hello, how are you?" I divided the list geographically and six people volunteered to contact these members, of which most of them renewed their membership. I have been our Unit's Membership Chair for the past two years and have sent a letter to every new Airstream owner, made numerous follow-up calls, and have carried membership kits in our trailer, as well as encouraged Unit members to do the same for recruitment when they travel. Using encouragement and gentle persistence in the past, I recruited a former Unit member to rejoin after they told me they did not feel welcomed previously and became members at large.

I feel members attending their first international rally should be recognized and valued beyond the ringing of a bell and wearing a gold ribbon. This may have been helpful years ago, but a few activities for first timers exclusively would give them a better sense of value and welcome and they would become far better informed and engaged. It also would be a good idea to have first timers sit together toward the front at the rallies.

One small thing I initiated in our Unit this year was to assign members to committees at our rallies rather than volunteering. This system keeps everyone engaged, meeting each other and participating, if even in a small way, and members become involved and "a part of." I've met many Region 8 members at their rallies while participating in successful mixers and would initiate similar activities at our Region rallies to encourage members to meet and get to know each other.

As I've demonstrated in the Wisconsin Unit, I would focus my recruitment and retention efforts on personal contact and perseverance as a Region 7 officer and would develop interesting, exciting, enjoyable, quality events that members of all ages would be eager to attend. At Region 7 rallies I would encourage all members, perhaps through a brief recruitment/retention "pep talk" or seminar, to don't lose hope, that there still are prospective members "out there" just ripe for the right contact.

5. **Other than communication, what is the most important skill you will bring to the leadership of Region 7 and why is it important?**

I have proven excellent leadership and organizational skills through my 20-year professional career and have applied these skills to my office and committee commitments within our Unit. Successful management of Region 7 requires excellent leadership and organizational skills to enable the organization to run seamlessly and smoothly, keeping members informed and engaged and eager to participate and contribute. I feel that I am a team player and a high energy person with a positive attitude and am not afraid to “dig in” and do the work that needs to be done. It’s been my experience that when others see good leadership, they will join in and make worthwhile contributions to the cause.

6. **An organization should strive to meet the needs of all of its members. Please explain how you will do this during your tenure as a Region 7 officer?**

I recognize that everyone brings contributions to organizations and feel that they should be respected, appreciated, and valued. As a Region 7 officer, I would encourage diversity and welcome input on every matter from all of our members. I believe that WBCCI portrays different things for our members and it’s important to be aware that members may not participate at the same level. I would strive to have an “open door” policy and to be inclusive to meet the needs of all of our members.

7. **Please make any comments that you think are pertinent regarding your decision to serve Region 7.**

Working with Wisconsin Unit and Region 7 members has been immensely rewarding for me. After observing the leadership of WBCCI at the past three winter IBT meetings and at four International rallies and the last four Region rallies, and with encouragement from many members in our Unit and throughout the WBCCI to serve as a Region officer, I have spent two years of thoughtful deliberation considering what the commitment would mean to me and my spouse to serve. After much heartfelt consideration, we would be very pleased and honored to serve Region 7 and the club and foster and build on the strong foundation and mission of the WBCCI. I would be extremely dedicated and am confident that I would represent our Region in the whole realm of WBCCI with excellent character, sincerity, honesty, and integrity and that I could make some valuable contributions to the organization.

Thank you, again, for your consideration.