

# State of the NAR

July 2015

Ted Cochran

NAR President





# NAR Officers and Trustees

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Ted Cochran, President

John Hochheimer, Vice President

Joyce Guzik, Secretary

Tom Ha, Treasurer

Ryan Coleman

Randy Gilbert

Vince Huegele

John Lyngdal

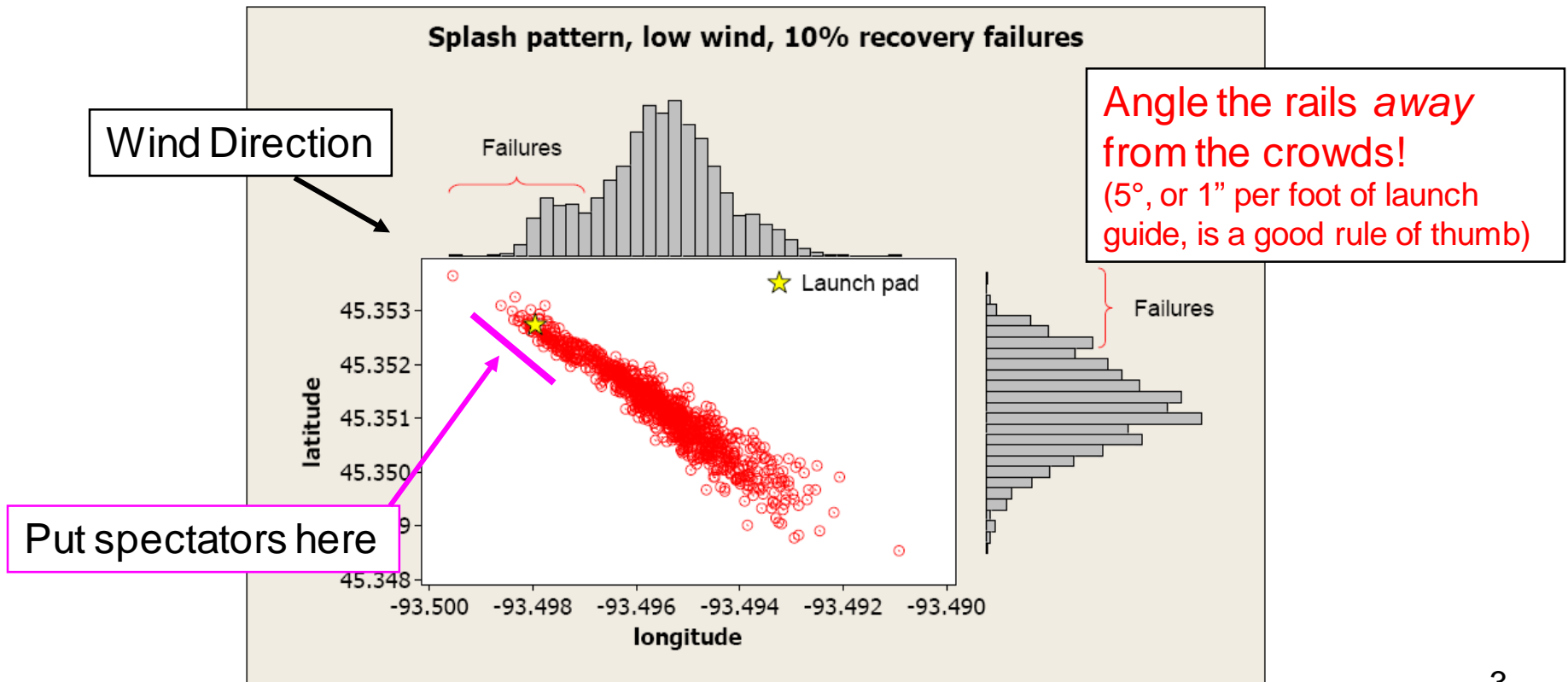
Mark Wise



# Safety Minute:

## Keep Spectators Safe

Significant risk reduction can be achieved by positioning people and vehicles crosswind from the launch pads.





# It's been a GREAT year!

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- Our membership reached an all time high;
- We reached 166 Sections;
- Our financial position remained extremely healthy;
- Our magazine is the best it has ever been;
- Our high power certification rate has achieved record levels;
- We partnered with the Museum of Flight to establish a significant new sport rocketry exhibit and establish the National Collection of Model and Sport Rocketry;
- Our liability insurance was increased to \$5M;
- Our membership dues were reduced for Senior members age 25 and under;
- We launched a new web site;
- We maintained a robust section grants program;
- We consistently delivered on our partnerships with AIA on TARC and NASA on SLP, and shared the Brewer Trophy from the NAA with AIA, and
- We significantly increased our budget for educational grants and scholarships—at \$35K, it's now one of the biggest components of our budget.





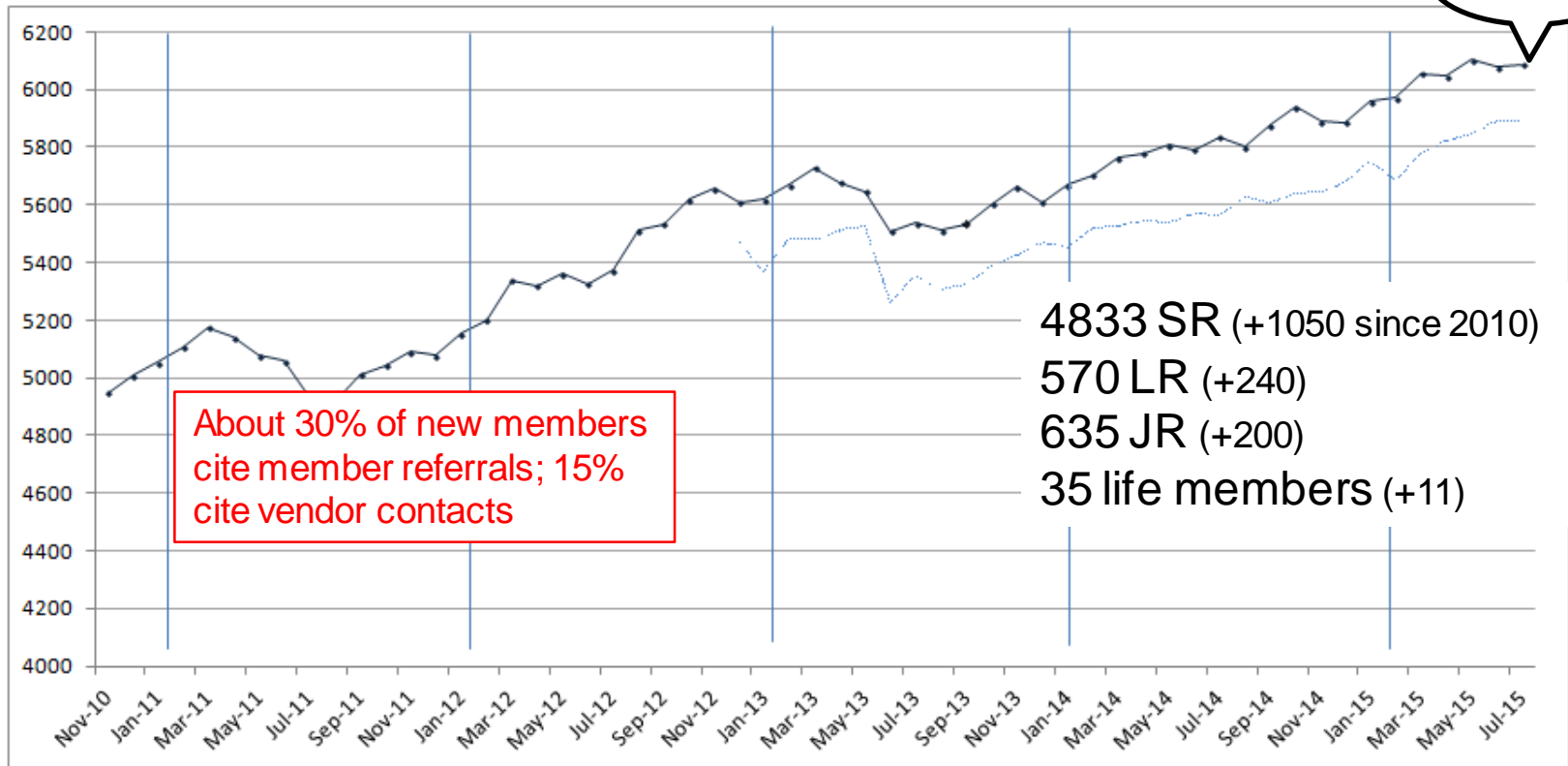
# How Are We Doing?

- Our membership is growing

Around 6000 (+700 in last 3 years)

due in part to kit flyers and the \$5 recruiting bonus to members

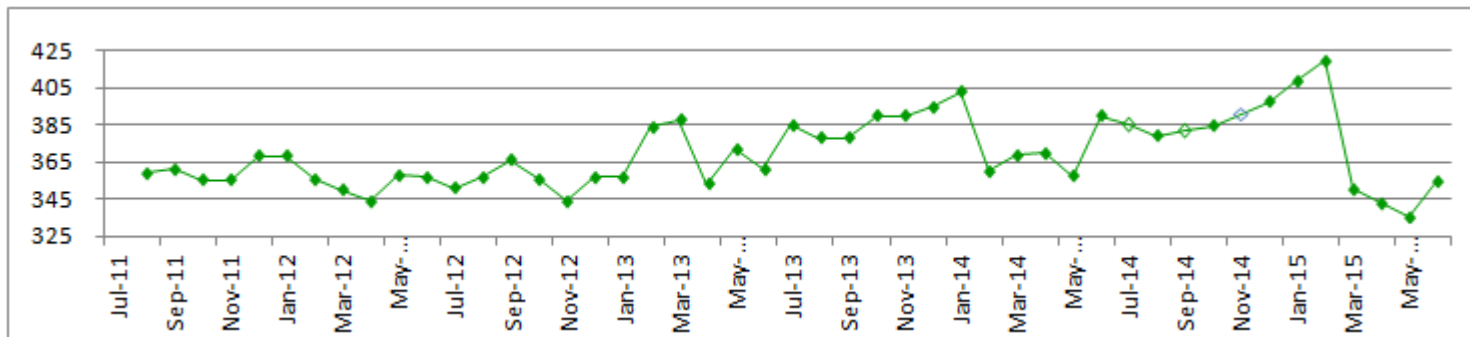
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# How Are We Doing?

- Our finances remain healthy
  - ~\$400K annual revenue, well-executed budget, appropriate reserves
  - We continue to increase services to meet emerging needs
  - Section grants, educational support and outreach, launch infrastructure, upgraded technology, scholarships and grants

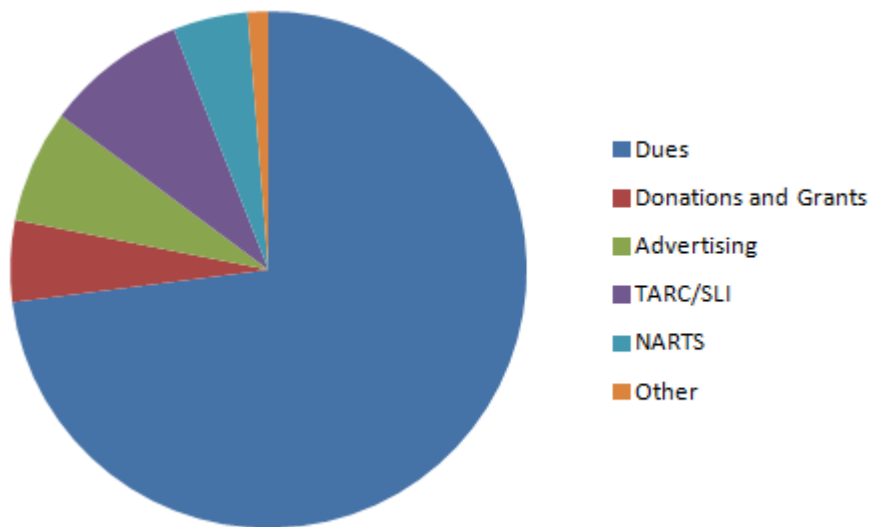


Funds Balance

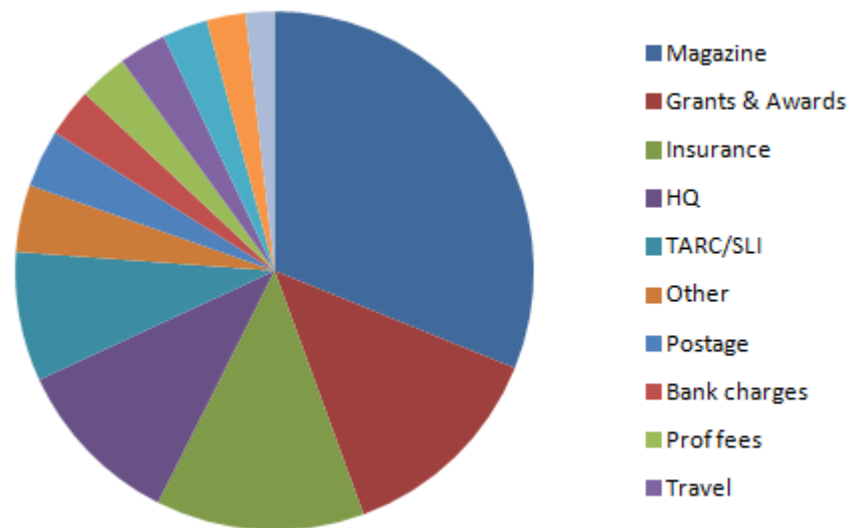


# Income and expenses

- Income



- Expenses





# How Are We Doing?

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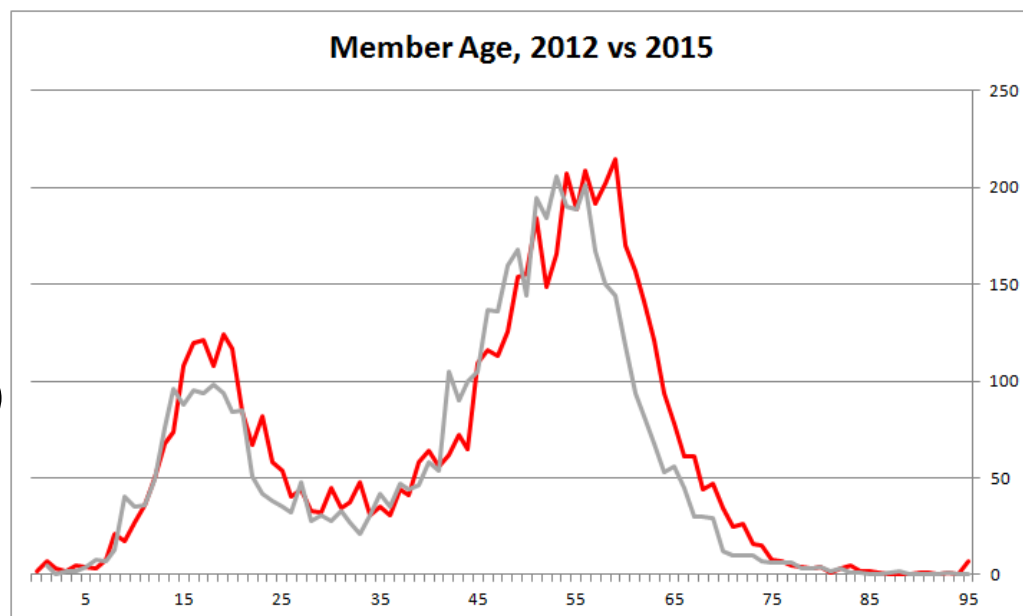
- Our magazine is the best it has ever been
  - Paying \$350 for top-quality “how to” and technical articles
  - Always looking for great content to sustain 56-page issues
  - Now the *only* rocketry magazine
- Our outreach programs are doing well
  - TARC: 13 years! 685+ teams!
  - Educational funding: Cannon Grants, Extracurricular grants, Scholarships, R&D Prizes, Travel grants
  - 4-H partnership: Strong and growing
  - NASA SLI: Back strong in 2015
  - Seattle Museum of Flight: National Collection of Model and Sport Rocketry
  - Civil Air Patrol: New Memorandum of Understanding signed





# Our Association is Diverse

- Age
- Membership duration (~20% <1 year; ~14% > 20 years)
- ~300 Contest flyers
- 3032 High Power flyers (~60% of eligible members)
  - 157 Jr (+9)
  - 1281 Level 1 (+100)
  - 1226 Level 2 (+20)
  - 468 Level 3 (+25)
- 325 Teachers (+175)
- 160 Sections
- 3391 Section members (56%)





# Membership Survey

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- About 725 NAR members responded to our online survey
- Good consensus on priorities, and we are focused on them:
  - Increase support to sections
  - Provide better support for efforts to gain/maintain launch site access
  - New NAR website, including members only content
  - Enhance the “how to” article content in Sport Rocketry
  - Enhanced Insurance
  - Establish exhibit on Sport Rocketry in major museum
  - Teacher support and student scholarship programs
- Next up:
  - Improved National Events

Your feedback will continue to drive the NAR Board's agenda



# Our Priorities

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- Continue to make flight safety our organization's first priority
- Support and celebrate all forms of commercial sport rocketry: Model rockets to Level 3 high power, High performance to oddrocs, sport rocketry to international competition.
  - HPR Awards
  - New web content for contest flying
- Increase our organization's size: Members and sections, then increase member services as our size goes up
  - Headquarters support, section support, member support
- Support and expand outreach and educational efforts
- Offer members full transparency and the opportunity to participate
- Continue to provide national support to our local sections
  - More grants, New Section Manual, effort to leverage partnerships with 4H and CAP

**Be safe, have fun, pay forward**



# Recent NAR Board Actions

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- Reaffirmed Section support: Section grants on continuous basis
  - Not limited to safety items
  - Will have a list of suggested items (Horns, signage, range safety vests, etc) with subsidized pricing through NARTS
- Raised Liability Insurance limit to \$5M
- Significant new support for Education:
  - \$35,000 (+\$20,000) allocation for scholarships and grants in 2015
    - Up to \$2000 per scholarship, new Extracurricular activity grants for teachers.
  - \$1000 support for student teams who participate in the Small Satellites for Secondary Schools program in 2015
  - Lowered dues for late-college-aged kids: *Now \$25 for everyone aged 25 and under.*
- Support for Museum of Flight Sport Rocketry exhibit
- Support for another round of kit stuffers in Estes kits
- Back issues of Sport Rocketry will go online starting this year



# Also Still Happening

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- Still paying up to \$350 for Sport Rocketry Articles
- Recognizing HPR skills with “Rocket Science Achievement” awards
- \$5 recruitment bonus for new members
- Expired Motor testing program
- Motorcato.org
- Facebook page, now 3640 members (+1100)



# Our Primary Concerns

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Rockets that should *not* be flown too often *do* get flown

- Near misses and landing mishaps occur too frequently
- Financial health would be significantly impacted by a major incident
- “Minor” incidents happen too often (several times per year)



# Our Other Concerns

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- We need to continue to attract and retain new NAR members to sustain our future
- Development encroachment and landowner fear of “safety” or litigation continues to reduce access to launch sites
- We could use still more sections; too many members do not belong to one
  - We need sections with flying sites near every major population center
- We need more NAR volunteers to improve our services and programs, both locally and nationally
- *To better serve our membership, we need to address the structure of our National Events in general, and contest rocketry in particular.*



# Contest Rocketry

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- An integral part of our organizational history
- A foundation for technical advancement in the field
- The primary source of non-HPR technical challenges in sport rocketry
- A core group of member enthusiasts

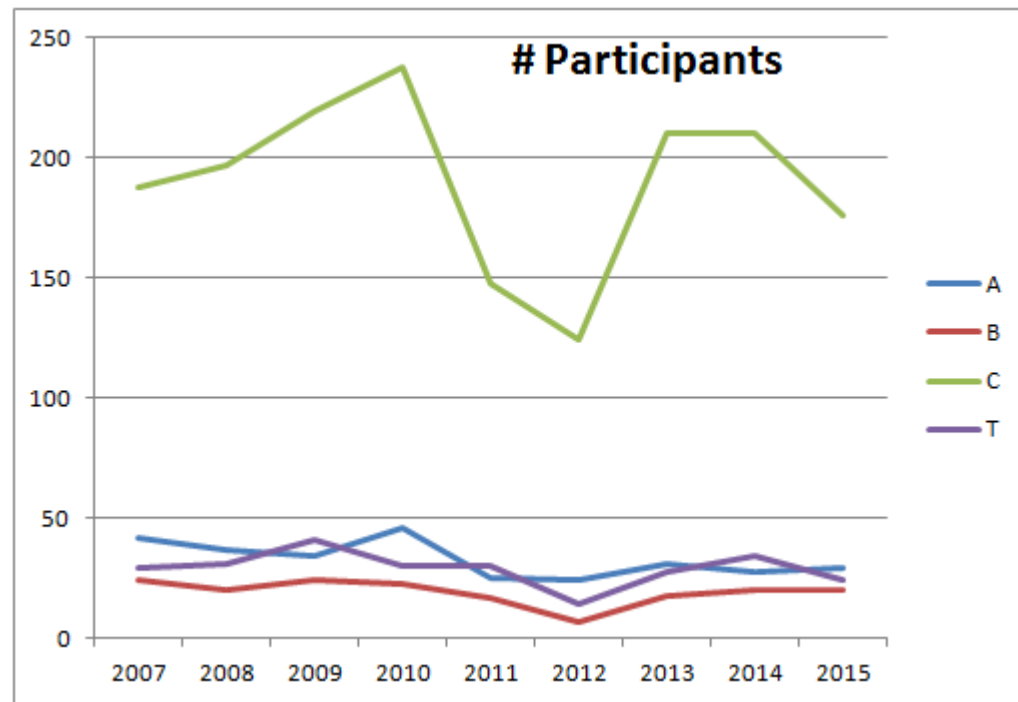
...but declining





# Contest Rocketry

- Flat to declining participation even as NAR grew by 30%
- Threatening to become insignificant in terms of numbers of members
  - There are more L3 fliers
  - There are more Teachers
  - 8X members are Jr HPR vs. B-division contest fliers



Estimated number of contest participants



# Contest Rocketry

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## Issues include

- Barriers to entry
  - Well-established, but insular, community
  - Few mentors outside of contest-oriented sections
  - Significant investment to be competitive
  - Highly technical (for the novice) rules
  - Converging designs
  - Few contests, lack of publicity
- Organizational structure making it impossible to drive change from within
  - System has evolved such that everyone acting in good faith and within the rules can not address the problems



# National Events

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- NARCON strong and growing
- NSL depends on location, but strong demand for multiple (regional) HPR launches
- NARAM flat to declining
  - 7 days may be (probably is) too long for modern families
  - Competition draw is flat to declining
  - HPR draw increasing, depends on location
  - Significant investment on the part of sponsors (Thank you Ed and Stephen!)
  - Now the smallest National Event in terms of participation



# Enhancing National Events

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Board of Trustees has established a Special Committee for the Enhancement of National Events to recommend ways to attract more NAR members to the NAR's National Events and to reinvigorate all forms of rocketry competition.

- Chaired by NAR Vice President John Hochheimer
- Specific charter and membership to be established by the Executive Committee and approved by 2/3 vote of the Board of Trustees.



# Enhancing Contest Rocketry

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The Special Committee will have enhancing contest rocketry as part of its charter.

In addition, there being no bids to host NARAM in 2016, the Special Committee will itself establish NARAM-58, which will likely be shorter in duration and significantly different in content from previous NARAMs.

- However, if a good “classic NARAM” bid is received by September 30, it will be accepted.



# Enhancing Contest Rocketry

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The Board of Trustees has voted to make three pink book changes to spur growth and enable change.

First, to increase flexibility of scheduling and judging of R&D:

- Add the following to the end of Rule 63.5.5:  
The written portion of R&D entries must be submitted as a .pdf file to the NAR website ([nar.org/rd](http://nar.org/rd)) no later than two weeks prior to the opening of the contest.



# Enhancing Contest Rocketry

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Second, limit teams to three members to reduce insularity and increase competition

- Amend first sentence of Rule 8.5 from "Two or more..." to "Two or three..."



# Enhancing Contest Rocketry

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Third, encourage mentorship with a new event

## Event 64: Mentorship

- 64.1 Scope: The purpose of this event is to encourage expanded participation of NAR members in rocketry competition.
- 64.2 Weighting Factor: 15. This event shall be held at all sanctioned contests except record trials. The weighting factor of this event shall not count against the maximum weighting factor for a contest as described in Rule 6.6.
- 64.3 Scoring. A "new competitor" is defined as a NAR member that did not receive competition points from the previous contest year. A "mentor" is defined as a NAR member who is named by a new competitor as their mentor on the contest entry form. Only one mentor may be named by each new competitor. Each mentor shall receive one point for every new competitor that names them for that contest, provided the new competitor attends the contest and makes at least one qualified flight. Placement is determined by the number of points. No place shall be awarded for zero points.





# Our Value Proposition

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- At \$62/year (\$25 for Age 25 and under) dues, we are the best value in the hobby and should say it proudly:
  - The hobby's only **magazine**, 56 pages, every other month
  - Includes **\$5M insurance** that is valid anywhere in the US & Canada, any time, including **fire insurance** for launch sites
  - Includes HPR certification through Level 3
  - Includes US & international competition programs
  - Offers a family member discount of \$12

**We all need to recruit personally to keep our NAR going and growing!**



# What Can You Do?

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- *Fly safely*, and ensure that others around you do the same!
- Recruit new NAR members, HPR flyers, competitors
- Take your own turn volunteering to help with your section or with the NAR nationally (see me for our pressing needs)
- Do community outreach to community leaders, young people, parents, and to those who work with young people
- Make sure everyone knows and takes advantage of our scholarships and grants

**Be safe, have fun, pay forward**