

## CHVA Tour Scheduling

I have just returned from the 2010 CHVA National Tour which was thoroughly enjoyed. I was especially thrilled that I returned home without any significant car problems for the first time since the Kansas tour.

At the board meeting Bob Trueax made a couple of comments about tours one of which suggested that tours be limited to 7 days in order to appeal to folks who are still working and have to schedule vacations in order to participate. I have been thinking about that on the 3 day trip home and I think that the day the tour ends is more important than the length.

First of all it is important to appeal to these younger working folks if we want to slow or reverse the decline in membership we have experienced over the last several years. So consider if you are one of these working folks and you look at a tour schedule where the final banquet occurs on Saturday night, as it usually does, then you have only one day to get home in time to go to work Monday morning. You might be able to mitigate that if you can negotiate a day or two after Sunday in exchange for dropping a day or two at the start of your vacation but that may be difficult in some firms. Typically vacations are scheduled in Monday to Friday blocks. Rather than go through any hassle you would probably elect to forego the tour.

Suppose the final banquet occurred on a Thursday. That would give 3 days to get home. A 7 day tour would start on a Friday and a 10 day tour would start on a Tuesday both of which could be accommodated in a 2 week vacation.

Most of us are retired so what do we care when the banquet occurs. It might even be beneficial. I recall a tour in which the banquet was held in the parking lot of the hotel because the previously scheduled meeting room was taken over by a wedding, a common occurrence on a Saturday. We may also see an increase in participation from our younger members and prospective members.

It is probably too late to effect the 2011 tour in May but I would encourage the folks planning the 2012 tour to consider these thoughts.

Tom Stacey