

SPAAMFAA

CONFERENCE

CONVENTION

MUSTER

MANUAL

(Revised April 4, 2024)

Introduction

As SPAAMFAA and its chapters move forward preserving the history of American fire apparatus, recruiting new members, keeping the membership active and interested, maintaining contact across the country becomes a primary concern.

The National body meets twice a year, winter and summer. The winter meeting/conference (annual meeting) is held in February. The summer meeting/muster can be held at any time during the summer months, typically when the host chapter holds their annual muster.

Over the years, the location of these meetings has been altered and changed. Syracuse had been the designated winter meeting location until 1993. The summer meeting and muster was also conducted in Syracuse every third year. The National Board has changed these policies to allow all chapters to bid on all winter and summer meetings.

By hosting a National event, SPAAMFAA members from outside your chapter/locale have the opportunity to:

- See the sights in your area (we are a history-oriented group).
- Attend educational seminars based on your local experiences.
- See and photograph apparatus manufacturers that may not be in their home area.
- Renew friendships and start new friendships.

Initially, the idea of hosting a National Event in your area can be overwhelming and seemingly impossible. But this does not have to be the case. This publication was put together to serve as a reference for the chapters to use in hosting a winter or summer event. The publication was intended to be a guide or reference for the chapters and is not intended to dictate what can or cannot be done.

Chairman David C. Buskey and his committee put the original manual together. They pooled their knowledge and experiences to help and encourage other chapters. As SPAAMFAA has evolved over the years, it was decided that it was time to update and re-issue the Muster manual.

This updating is an endeavor to help the individual chapters call on the experiences of others so they will have a successful Convention. This manual will also help eliminate the need for a chapter to feel they must reinvent the wheel as they go forward with their planning.

This updated publication will include many of the initial thoughts and will also include revisions and new procedures that have evolved over the years.

The chapter should have had several local musters prior to attempting to host a national event. It is through working out past problems that your national event will run smoother. Remember that no two musters are exactly the same, so try to predict problems and possible solutions beforehand. While the national muster will be larger with attendance and number of rigs, you should attempt to run your local muster the same as you would a national event (planning, committees, etc.). This will help you spot problems and give you time to formulate solutions.

It is also very helpful if members of your chapter have attended a national to get an idea of the types of accommodations, programs, etc. that are involved. However, it is important to remember that this is YOUR show -- National wants you to be comfortable with it. One of the main reasons for traveling to different areas of the country for a National is to gain an insight into how your chapter runs a muster--no two areas are alike. Do not feel you must match or "go one better" than the previous national. **THIS IS NOT A CONTEST!** SPAAMFAA does not want you to change your style for them.

Because it is a national, you can expect up to a 50%-75% increase in apparatus, flea market vendors and spectators. Prepare for this in your plans.

Objectives of this manual

To prepare a Manual/Guide that will go into detail on every aspect of hosting a National Muster/Convention and/or Winter meeting.

This manual will:

- (1) Include examples of muster events conducted by chapters.
- (2) Outline the expectations of the twice-yearly meetings.
- (3) Outline the financial obligations of the Chapters and National.
- (4) Provide contact information for the SPAAMFAA National Convention Chairman and SPAAMFAA Executive Secretary.

The initial Manual/Guide was an extensive effort by the following:
David C. Buskey, Ronald A. Czapfick & Tim W. Elder, Charles M. Harrington, Thomas G. Buckle, Peter DeSafvo, Keith F. Franz, Nancy D. Howe, Robert Kuryck & Ken Peterson, Robert N. Potter, Ralph McKittrick, Raymond H. Pitts, George A. Valranee, and Robert L. Ward.

This revision was updated with input from Bob Straw and Matt Simek.

SPAAMFAA National Conference Chairman:

Richard A. Quetta
495 Woodward Road
North Providence, RI 02904
Cell: (401) 474-0690
email: richaq1@verizon.net

SPAAMFAA Executive Secretary:

Bill Blunden
PO Box 296
Carthage, NY 13619
(315) 783-2324
email: billblunden@gmail.com

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Submitting a bid for a National Event

SPAAMFAA has two (2) national events per year.

The winter meeting/conference should be held in late January or February.

The summer meeting/muster can be held at any time during the summer months, generally to coincide with the chapter's regular annual muster.

The national events are awarded by the SPAAMFAA board during its regular board meetings. The meetings/conventions are typically awarded several years in advance. Future events are listed in regular SPAAMFAA publications.

When a chapter wishes to host either a winter or summer event, a letter should be sent to the national convention coordinator. The letter should state a date(s) for their proposed event, location and a brief description of their plans. As the actual event might be several years away, specific details are not necessary at that time.

The meeting-muster manual will assist you in planning such an event. Not only is the chapter a 'host', but you will also have the opportunity to show off your area, as well as foster the gathering of society members and provide an educational opportunity for the public to see and appreciate antique fire apparatus.

SPAAMFAA members enjoy visiting various parts of the country. We look forward to receiving your chapter's bid to host a national event.

Richard A. Quetta,

National Conference Chairman

Planning and Forming a Muster Committee

The central person on your Muster Committee is the **Muster Chairperson** or **Muster Master**. This person must be:

- A coordinator, someone able to keep track of the many items on the agenda and is able to delegate them for a successful Convention.
- Detail-oriented, someone who never "misses a thing."
- Problem solver, someone who thinks quickly and can think "outside the box."
- Dispute settler, someone who can successfully mediate problems between all people involved in the Convention.
- Public relations person, someone with contacts with local media.
- Politician
- Human relations person & etc.

In other words, a jack-of-all-trades, as well as a master of many. This person should be directly involved in selecting the key members of the Muster Committee since he/she must work closely with these people throughout the year(s) prior to the National. All members of the central committee should be aware from the start that all items **MUST** be cleared with the Muster Chairperson. He/she must be the "central clearing house" for all plans.

The committee that has run your last two or three musters should be the one to run your National, however, do not turn away new offers of help. In addition to your Muster Chairman your central committee have members that will assume these functions:

- Registration
- Tours
- Hotel
- Banquet
- Muster site
- Parking (spectator and apparatus)
- Flea Market
- Judging, Contests and Awards
- Safety
- Food
- Chapter Wares
- Family Activities

(You may find that some of these positions will overlap and one person may chair more than one committee.)

Each of these chairpersons needs a committee. While you're planning and formatting stages can be done by a handful of people, the actual event will require many helping hands to be successful. Starts getting these people involved early, however, do not overburden sub-committee members in the planning stages or you will risk "burn-out".

As part of your planning, you might have a brief questionnaire for muster participants (both apparatus owners and flea market vendors) and one for committee members to be filled out on Muster Day for each of two or three musters prior to National. This should include questions that will point out areas that need improvement, as well as recommendations for improvement, and space for additional comments. Explain to those who you wish to complete these forms that you are seeking out possible problem areas in preparation for National. It will help to get returns if they know why they are being asked to fill it out. Do not make the questionnaire too long or people won't want to be bothered filling it out. It will then be the responsibility of the central committee to review the questionnaire and closely examine all comments with a view to solutions.

Once you have your plan set in place, stick to it. Unnecessary last-minute changes will be confusing and there will not be time to test them. However, if there must be a last-minute change, make the change equal to or better than what it is replacing. Also, be certain all key persons know of the change and the reasons for it. This will avoid unnecessary confusion, and speculation or rumors as to why.

You do not want surprises at National. All plans and back-up (contingency) plans must be spelled out in black and white on paper. Each area of the National must have a contingency plan.

For example, if the hot-dog vendor does not show up on Muster morning. You should already have members assigned to go to the local supermarket to purchase supplies (with a list prepared ahead of time) and others assigned to bring camping stoves to heat the hot dogs. You must have not only backup plans, but also an "understudy" for each of your key people. You never know when illness or an accident will prevent a person from being present on Muster Day. It is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared.

Another important area to be considered in planning is to involve entire families in your planning. Key committee members must have the support and help of their spouses, or possibly face trouble on the home front. You do not want to lose a key committee member just before National because he/she has been issued an ultimatum at home! Some Chapters have a family picnic get-together

just prior to the event with their key people to do a walk-through of all aspects of the event. This gathering is also used as a fun time for each key person's family so that all feel appreciated and involved. Family participation is also beneficial to the fellowship and interest in your Chapter.

Chapter Willingness to Host a National

Regardless of how many or how few members are involved in the actual planning stage of hosting a National, it is still an entire Chapter's project. It is therefore essential that the entire Chapter support this project.

There are several points that can be made when encouraging your Chapter to bid for a National:

- An opportunity to showcase local apparatus to National members.
- An opportunity to bring business into your local community.
- An opportunity to rejuvenate a Chapter.

In presenting the idea of hosting a National to your Chapter, you should be prepared to field "doomsday" members who will present stumbling blocks, such as:

We can't afford it.

You build up your treasury by having various fundraisers beginning at least two years before you host the National.

We don't have enough help.

This will encourage more Chapter participation and family involvement in demonstrating pride in your Chapter and local area. There are also many local fire companies and other groups who participate in your Muster who would be very likely willing to help if asked. Ask a nearby SPAAMFAA Chapter for help, most will have members there anyway and will have a good idea of what you need.

Our muster site is too small.

Make modifications to accommodate a Muster at least twice as large as usual or begin a search for another location. Many areas have various parks, office park complexes, malls, etc. that all have a water source.

We don't have a convention hotel.

Shop around. Hotels and motels that can accommodate a large group are around, but you must make the effort to locate them.

If you have done your homework and have your facts and figures ready, you will be able to answer most of their questions immediately. Careful planning on your part will bring most "doomsday" members around. Of course, there will always be the few who will never be convinced, even after you host a successful National!

The Chapter that hosts a National will also receive National coverage in Engine! Engine! (E!E!) to help generate interest among SPAAMFAA members to attend their event.

Generally, the E!E! coverage for a Summer Convention will be in the First Quarter issue and the Winter Convention coverage will be in the Third Quarter issue.

The E!E! editor will contact your chapter to ask for articles and photos about:

- Any interesting rig(s) in your chapter.
- An unusual local rig that will photograph very well for a cover shot.
- A fire museum your tours will visit.
- A local fire department that your tours will visit that has a long history.

National hosts will be featured on the cover and/or center color pages of the E!E! muster issue.

The Chapter should have had several local musters prior to attempting a National. It is through working out past problems that your National will run smoother. However, remember that no two musters are exactly the same, so try to predict problems and possible solutions beforehand. You should plan to run the muster prior to National as you would the National. This will help you spot problems and give you time to formulate solutions.

It is also very helpful if members of your Chapter attend a National to get an idea of the types of accommodations, programs, etc. that are involved. However, it is important to remember that this is YOUR show -- National wants you to be comfortable with it. One of the main reasons for traveling to different areas of the country for National is to gain an insight into how other Chapters runs a muster, no two areas are alike!

Do not feel you must match or "go one better" than the previous National. **THIS**

IS NOT A CONTEST! SPAAMFAA does not want you to change your style for them. However, remember that because it is a National, you can expect a 50 to 75% increase in apparatus, flea market vendors and spectators. Prepare for this in your plans.

Financing and Budget for a National Convention & Muster

To be successful in hosting a National, you must have control over all areas and do it in a manner that will cover the costs and show at least a small profit for the Chapter in the end. If your Chapter loses money, it will be difficult to convince them to host another National in the future. The members of the Chapter will point accusing fingers at everyone and everything but themselves.

The Chapter needs to set up a realistic budget to prepare for National. There should be no unexpected expenses. Many Chapters view every area that has a cost involved; determine the cost and apply a "user fee" to it. For example, muster registration has costs that include printing and mailing of fliers, cost of participation awards, etc. To recover a portion of the costs in this are many Chapters charge a registration fee to apparatus. However, it should be noted that there are also Chapters who do not charge a registration fee, because the apparatus owners have already paid their "dues" through the restoration, upkeep, insurance, travel costs, etc. of their apparatus.

One area that is almost 100% profit is that of the Flea Market. The main cost involved here is that of postage. However, do not price your spaces so high that you discourage participation. A good rule of thumb is to charge the same amount you charged the previous year or no more than a \$5 or \$10 increase.

If your committee chooses to offer trophies, then with the help of your membership, you can solicit both individual and business sponsorship of the trophies. Determine the cost of each trophy presented and set your sponsorship rates accordingly. You must also remember on Muster Day to acknowledge the sponsors. Some Chapters place the name of the sponsor on the trophy itself. Others post a large sign detailing sponsors, print a special newsletter, listing sponsors or announce the sponsors when handing out the awards. You must also remember to send a thank you note to each sponsor in which you invite them to your muster. If there is an entrance fee to the muster site, try to arrange for one or two free passes for each sponsor.

Another area of potential profit on Muster Day is that of the food stand, provided the Chapter controls it. The Chapter should also explore the possibility of

donations of food items from local supermarkets in lieu of a cash donation for trophies. If your Chapter has never handled the food service, do not choose to make the National your first attempt in this area. Before you opt to handle the food, be certain you have sufficient people to handle the cooking and serving, food stands are a very labor-intensive endeavor. Nothing will send muster attendees off to find a local convenience store faster than facing very long food lines on a hot day. Look at the option of Food Trucks or vendors for food. This option requires less personnel, and you can be profitable at the same time.

A final area of profit is that of chapter wares. People from outside your area will be looking for items that are unique to your area, different, etc. The Chapter should plan a specific fundraiser for each year prior to the National, with the profits dedicated to the Muster Fund. In addition to selling these items at your own muster, utilize your members who set up spaces at other muster flea markets to sell your Chapter wares. Also, investigate the possibility of setting up a Chapter table at the firematic events of other Chapters (often there will be no charge for a fellow Chapter provided they are only selling Chapter items), if you have members willing to travel to the event.

It should also be noted that another possible source of revenue utilized by some Chapters is that of a raffle or a 50/50 held on Muster Day. However, you must be careful of local and/or state laws regarding this type of undertaking. Also, if you are holding a raffle, try to obtain items which will appeal to the people attending your Muster. Be sure to display the items in the area where you are selling the raffle tickets. Try to assign people who are hustlers (but in a nice fashion) to sell the tickets. Also, if your prizes are donated, be sure to give public credit to the donors.

All expenses paid out by your Treasurer that are related to the Muster should be clearly marked in order to prepare a true profit/loss statement after the Muster. By doing this, you will be able to determine areas of loss and decide how to correct this in future Musters.

As a Host Chapter, you should also be aware that SPAAMFAA will cover some of the expenses involved with the Convention segment. These include:

- (1) The expense of hospitality room following the SPAAMFAA General Membership Meeting, NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000.00.
- (2) Printing and mailing costs of Convention/Muster literature. The insert that will go into Engine! Engine! has a limit of 8 pages.
- (3) Cost of name tag holder sleeves, NOT TO EXCEED \$150.00. Lanyards will be supplied by SPAAMFAA.
- (4) Costs of SEMINAR speakers, NOT TO EXCEED \$200.00 per conference.

- (5) Convention booklet and cost of printing workshop materials, NOT TO EXCEED \$100.00.
- (6) Meeting rooms (if hotel does not provide them free of charge), NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000.00.
- (7) The Board luncheon, NOT TO EXCEED \$500.00.
- (8) An optional, nominal Registration Fee is used by some chapters to help offset costs. This fee is to be used by the Chapter for whatever purpose they see fit.

You should discuss any questions you have on this subject with the National Conference Chairman.

Once again, the main key here is to set up a budget that is realistic and possible. This must be set up at least two years prior to National so you have time to sufficiently finance the National. Remember, there will be expenses to be paid before you begin to earn a profit. The **SAMPLE BUDGET** on the next page will serve as a good example.

SPAAMFAA National Summer Convention
Budget

Expenses			Description	Revenue		(must sell)	
Amount	Quantity	Subtotal		Amount	Quantity	Subtotal	Break-even point
		\$0.00	Convention Registration Fee	\$15.00	150	\$2,250.00	no minimum
		\$0.00	Flea Market Vendor Fee	\$20.00	20	\$400.00	no minimum
\$3.18	100	(\$318.00)	Challenge Coin individual sales	\$10.00	100	\$1,000.00	31.8 coins
\$10.00	100	(\$1,000.00)	T-shirt	\$20.00	100	\$2,000.00	50 t-shirts
\$1,032.00	1	(\$1,032.00)	Bus Trip #1 (per 56 pass bus)*	\$34.00	30	\$1,030.20	30.3 passengers
\$1,152.00	1	(\$1,152.00)	Bus Trip #2 (per 56 pass bus)*	\$30.00	38	\$1,152.00	38.4 passengers
\$642.00	1	(\$642.00)	Bus Trip #3 (per 24 pass bus)	\$35.00	18	\$630.00	18 passengers
\$1,032.00	1	(\$1,032.00)	Fire Houses Bus Trip (per 56 pass bus)*	\$30.00	34	\$1,032.00	34.4 passengers
\$642.00	1	(\$642.00)	Bus Trip #4 (per 24 pass bus)	\$35.00	18	\$630.00	18 passengers
\$39.00	75	(\$2,925.00)	Banquet	\$40.00	75	\$3,000.00	no minimum
\$1,000.00	1	(\$1,000.00)	Parking Lot Security			\$0.00	
\$300.00	1	(\$300.00)	Convention Programs			\$0.00	
\$100.00	1	(\$100.00)	Hotel Signs			\$0.00	
\$800.00	1	(\$800.00)	Hospitality			\$0.00	
\$200.00	1	(\$200.00)	Snacks/drinks for MSH and HR Tour			\$0.00	
		\$0.00					
		\$0.00				\$0.00	
		\$0.00				\$0.00	
		\$0.00				\$0.00	
		\$0.00				\$0.00	
		\$0.00				\$0.00	
		(\$11,143.00)				\$13,124.20	

*lunch is not included in these figures

LOCAL CHAPTER EXPENSES

Hosting a winter or summer meeting should not be seen as a moneymaker for the chapter. The charges for registration should be minimal. Likewise, the charges to attend tours, banquet or other planned events should be reasonable. High priced events and costs may tend not to attract the membership from attending. Certainly, there are costs associated in hosting the winter/summer meetings (food service, banquet, bus transportation, incidentals, etc.).

Once you have established the cost of an item (banquet, bus tours, cost of admission) it would not be unreasonable to add a dollar or two to the cost to help defray other expenses. It is not the intent of National for the chapter to lose money, but at the same time, a huge profit is frowned upon.

The local host chapter may expect the following unfunded expense areas:

- Publicity.
- Invited guests.
- Security for apparatus (at hotel and muster site).
- Insurance.
- Local permits (e.g. parade).
- Security deposits (usually refunded at end of event if no damage).

The local host chapter may receive money from the following sources:

- Sale of merchandise (t-shirts, mugs, mouse pads & etc.).
- Proceeds from any raffles or 50/50 drawings.
- Proceeds from convention/souvenir program.
- Flea market vendor fees.
- Muster site food sales (either from chapter run stands or negotiated percentage from outside food vendor).
- Other.

It's the Little Things...

- Name tags
 - Have someone double-check the spelling of ALL names on the nametags you generate against the original registration. Nothing ruins a registrant's day faster than having his or her name spelled incorrectly on the tag everyone **will** see.
 - It is helpful to have the individual's name stand out by using bold type and a large font.
 - Try to include at least the registrant's state on the tag.
 - If possible, put the Chapter affiliation on the tag.
- Hotel Lobby- when choosing a host hotel, make sure the lobby area can accommodate a large gathering. Many attendees like to spend time in the lobby area meeting others and renewing friendships. A large area makes this possible.
- Large bulletin board- this should be located in a prominent place in the registration area. Postings can include the events/times/locations of events; notices of changes that may occur; any additional information that needs to be relayed; post messages and pages.
- Informational material to have available at the registration area
 - Maps to nearby restaurants (fast food and casual).
 - Maps to grocery stores.
 - Maps to shopping centers or shopping malls.
 - Maps to gas stations.
 - Local sites of interest not on your tours.
- When you see something that has worked in the past at other conventions and you like the idea feel free to use it.
- Recognition of sponsors- If your chapter has sought sponsors to defray expenses; a plaque or certificate honoring their contribution is appropriate.
- Chapter hospitality- Have all host chapter members make a special effort to meet and thank those who are attending. A "THANKS FOR COMING" will be appreciated. Many attending will be from various parts of the country and have made an effort to attend your convention. A special thanks should be given to those individuals who have brought apparatus. As you know a real effort in time and money had been made to bring

apparatus to your event.

- During the convention post an accurate itinerary (11 X 17 is a good size) for all to see. Print some smaller ones to keep in the registration area to pass out as well.

Registration Flyer

In July of 2009, the SPAAMFAA National Board decided to start putting the registration flyers in the National publication, Engine! Engine! (E!E!).

By using this method of distribution, the membership will receive the material and can review it as soon E!E! is delivered. SPAAMFAA will pay the cost of printing and mailing using their bulk-mailing permit. The printing and mailing cost in the past has been one initially borne by the hosting chapter. Reimbursement had been made upon submission of the receipts to SPAAMFAA. By changing this procedure, several thousand dollars are saved in postage alone. There will be additional savings by printing the flyer at the same time as the other publication.

This procedure will require, however, that the material to be forwarded to the editor months earlier than in the past. Depending on the date(s) chosen for the winter/summer meeting, it is recommended that the material be included in a mailing at least four to five months prior to the event. Currently, the planning is to put the registration for the Winter Convention in the Third Quarter E!E! and the Summer Convention in the First Quarter E!E! The host chapter should work with the E!E! Editor, so that the camera-ready material can be reviewed, edited and forwarded to the printer to be included in the normal mailing of E!E!

It is strongly suggested that a future convention NOT be promoted through social media or any other means prior to completion of a current convention. The intention here is for a future convention to not take away hotel rooms, tours, etc. from a current one.

The registration flyer should be as detailed as possible as to the various events, tours, banquet, seminars and other events. This is your opportunity to "sell" your event and to attract as many registrants as possible.

Certain events (Membership meeting, Muster, Banquet) are routine events for all winter and summer meetings. You are essentially inviting out of town guests to your area and this is your opportunity to show off your area, much the same as you would if you had houseguests from out of town.

The flyer should outline your event and include:

- Hotel information:

- Name of hotel and address.
- If this hotel is part of a large chain, the toll-free phone number.
- Local phone number.
- Room rate negotiated and phrase needed to get the special rate i.e. SPAAMFAA if needed.
- Hotel website address.
- Be sure you make registration direct, not through a third party.
- Proposed itinerary
- Information concerning your tours (where, when & how long).
- Banquet information
- Seminars & Special activities
- Contact information for the registrar should anyone has any questions or specials needs that must be addressed beforehand.

You should provide driving Instructions to your host hotel and muster site as well as provide your local airport name, train depot for those traveling from out of town.

The actual registration form that gets sent back to you can be a separate sheet or set-up to be torn from the flyer. This registration form should include:

- Registrant's name
- Registrant's address
- Registrant's phone number
- Registrant's e-mail address
- Registrant's Chapter affiliation (if any).
- Name(s) to be used on the name badge(s)
- Tau.rs and cost per person/ticket.
- Banquet cost per person and food choice if needed.
- Apparatus registration for muster day, include spots for
 - Make, model & year.
 - Type (ladder, pumper, squad & etc.).
 - Drafting?
 - Cost per vehicle to register.
 - Insurance information
- Any other activities and costs per person/ticket.
- Chapter wares (e.g. t-shirts) that can be pre-ordered.
- Flea market registration, include spots for
 - Size of space(s).
 - Cost per space(s).
 - Any rules (e.g. time to open, time to close, vehicles in space & etc.)
 - Place for registrant to sign acknowledging the above rules.
- Total cost of event for registrant
- Payments accepted (e.g. checks, money orders & etc.)
- Address for forms to be mailed to for registration.
- Pre-registration deadline.

Tips:

- Have someone proofread the flyer. Ideally, someone outside your organization that will not have been sitting in on your planning meetings and will have a very objective eye.
- Have someone call ALL phone numbers listed to make sure they are correct.

Meeting, Workshops, Board, Membership Meeting Rooms

In your negotiations with the Convention hotel, you will need to arrange for several meeting rooms as well as a location for Convention/Muster Registration.

When negotiating with the hotel, you should be able to obtain a free hotel room for each 20-25 rooms booked for your convention. Utilize these rooms for your Convention Chairperson, Muster Chairperson, Chapter President, as a place to store materials (i.e. projectors, VCR's, etc.), or simply as a room where your workers can slip away for some peace and relaxation (a "crash" room). You should also be able to negotiate for the meeting rooms required for SPAAMFAA to conduct business.

If at all possible, your registration area should be in the hotel lobby and near the area you are utilizing for meetings.

Located at the registration area should be a section for Chapter displays. You will need to contact all SPAAMFAA Chapters beforehand to extend an invitation to set up a Chapter display. You should request they notify you at least a month in advance if they plan to set a display up so you will know how many tables will be needed. Be sure to inform them of the size of the table beforehand. But, be prepared to have a few extras for last minute Chapter decisions to set up displays. Your hotel should provide the tables, provided you have made prior arrangements.

Most of the rooms below will need drinks and snacks included as part of the set-up. You will need to check with your hotel on arranging for these. Most hotels will not permit you to bring these items in from the outside and you will have to order them from the hotel.

A meeting room will be needed for the Election Committee for counting of the ballots on Tuesday night at the Winter Conference. The National Board of Trustees will need a meeting room on Wednesday. This should be set up with tables in a "U shape" or a square shape so the members of the Board may face each other during the meeting. Check with the Executive Secretary or the National Conference Chairman to see the number of seats needed. Be certain the room can accommodate the people who will be attending. You will also need to have a group of chairs set off to the side for Chapter representatives. The Executive Secretary or the National Conference Chairman will be able to tell you the number required. You should arrange with the hotel to have coffee, tea, soda and ice water available for this meeting. This meeting is typically going to start at 1 p.m. on Wednesday and will last several hours.

You will need a meeting room for the National Chapter Meeting (formerly the National Membership Advisory Committee Meeting). This meeting is to be held Friday evening. This room will need a table set up in the front for the National Officers to conduct the meeting. It should be noted that members who have passed during the year will be memorialized at this meeting. The balance of the room should be set up with chairs for the membership that attends. Plan to have pitchers of ice water and glasses available at this location. You must be certain this room can accommodate at least 200-seated people.

The next area you will need to make arrangements for is that of seminars/workshops. If you wish to decide the topics and obtain speakers for these workshops, you may do so. However, they are the responsibility of SPAAMFAA and the National Conference Chairman will make all the arrangements if you wish. Most Conventions usually host two (2) workshops. These should be held back-to-back or on different evenings rather than at the same time so people can attend both. Be certain to verify with your speaker beforehand if specific projection equipment is needed, microphones, etc. These are usually held on the day before your Muster. SPAAMFAA will assist with any photocopying costs to the Chapter. Again, be certain to have a room that can accommodate at least 200seated people.

The final room needed is the Hospitality Room. This room is usually supplied with soft drinks, ice water and snacks. Some Chapters also include beer; this decision will be up to each individual Chapter. You can also arrange for a cash bar to be set up in this area in the evening. This room is usually opened on Thursday evening (for early arrivals) and is open each evening of the convention.

Arrangements should also be made to have this room open during the day as a meeting area for attendees who do not wish to attend other activities.

Arrangements should also be made to have a TV with overhead slide projector and a screen available in this room or preferably in another room nearby, as there may be attendees who will bring slides and/or videos to share with others.

HOTEL

The hotel which serves as your Convention Center can make or break your Convention. It is important to choose a hotel that is of sufficient size and can provide you with multi-services. Choosing a hotel can be made much easier for the selection committee with the help of the local tourism bureau. For instance, a city's travel and convention bureau can be a great help, not only in identifying potential hotels geared specifically to a convention like ours, but also to transportation companies for bus tours, food service companies, local sights to see, areas of special interest, and contacts for other special services, such as towing companies that can handle large trucks and trailers.

Canvas your Chapter membership to see if you have members who have professional experience in the field of travel arrangements or convention site arrangements. Most of us are experienced only in making personal arrangements for one room at a time. You will need to negotiate with hotel management for various rooms, fees, etc. If you have someone experienced in this field, utilize their expertise.

In selecting your hotel, an effort should be made to select one close to your Muster site, if possible. You should be aware that you will have attendees who will arrive by bus, train or airplane and may not have a vehicle at their disposal. ' If your Muster site is not within walking distance, you may want to locate members with vans for transportation to and from the Muster site, provide local bus schedules (if appropriate), or arrange for bus transportation. Another idea would be to have a bulletin board located in a central meeting area of the hotel where attendees could post notices stating they are seeking to car- pool to the Muster site.

If your hotel is not close to the local airport, bus station or train station, check to see if the hotel will provide shuttle service to and from these locations. If it does, mention this fact in your convention literature and how to arrange for this service. If they do not provide this service, perhaps there are members of your organization who would be willing to provide transportation. If not, determine the best way to get to the hotel from the local airport, bus station or train station and print this information in your literature.

There should be only one or two Chapter members in direct contact with the hotel. If you have a Convention Chairperson, this person will handle reserving space for Convention related matters, i.e., Meeting rooms, Chapter display area, hospitality room, etc. The Convention Chairperson will sign the final contract. If you do not have a Convention Chairperson, this responsibility will fall to your Muster Chairperson or Chapter President. A second person that will have direct contact with the hotel will be the Banquet Chairperson (if the banquet is to be held at the Convention Hotel).

Past experience has shown other Chapters that it is advisable to have the Convention Chairperson also serve as the Banquet Chairperson if it is to be held at the Convention hotel. Then, you will have only one person in direct contact with the hotel. (Remember the old saying that "too many cooks spoil the pot!")

One specific directive should be followed in reviewing the final contract - everything must be spelled out clearly in black and white. Do not depend on verbal agreements. Remember that management can change. What one management verbally promises, the next management may not be prepared to deliver. However, if it is in a signed contract, it will be honored. Even an item as small as an extension cord for a projector could be a problem. Remember to spell it out!

Also, the contract needs to specify cancellation agreements and policy, i.e. number of blocked rooms, number of banquet guests, etc., and all penalties and dates associated with cancellation.

You should also make arrangements to advertise (with posters or banners) that this is the SPAAMFAA Convention location in the main lobby of the hotel. Remember, convention participants can arrive early in the morning or late at night. There should also be official "Greeters" from either the Chapter or SPAAMFAA from approximately 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

This section is designed to assist you and your Chapter to know the type of arrangements that are necessary for a Convention site.

Rooms and Reservations

Your Convention Headquarters Hotel should be of sufficient size to accommodate 100 to 150 rooms (note, for a Winter Meeting, plan on 50 to 100 rooms, unless

you are located in a warm area such as Florida), however, when negotiating with the hotel, be conservative with your numbers. By doing this, you will be a hero to the hotel when the actual reservations are greater than your original estimate.

Due to the number of rooms that will be utilized by the attendees, you should be able to negotiate a price that is lower than the normal price charged to the general public. Be certain the rate you have negotiated is the lowest possible rate (unless someone belongs to a special discount plan). There have been instances where a chapter thought they had negotiated the lowest rate until they found out that people who reserved rooms without mentioning the Convention received a lower rate.

Make arrangements to have a reserve or block placed on 75 to 100 rooms (35 to 70 for a Winter Meeting) until approximately one month prior to your convention. Attendees will typically check in Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. As the national board meeting is held on Wednesday, the board members (totally 15-20) will check in on Tuesday.

When negotiating room rates, the host hotel should be asked for the special rates for convention registrants be extended for three days before, and three days after the official convention dates. This allows for guests who may want to arrive early or stay late to do things outside of the convention plan.

In your Convention literature be sure to specify when the special rate expires for early registration and any special rates negotiated may not be available after that date. Be sure to include the hotel phone number in your convention literature. If there is an "800" number for the hotel, be certain to include it. However, remember that the special Convention rates you have negotiated for rooms with a national chain hotel may only be available when calling directly to your specific hotel. If this is the case, be certain to state it in your registration literature and include that specific hotel's phone number and address. Also, advise registrants to specifically state they are with the SPAAMFAA (name of local chapter) Convention. If the hotel wants to use another phrase (e.g. Antique fire truck club) be sure to include that in the convention literature as well.

Ask the hotel if one person will be responsible for all reservations (usually, in larger hotel chains this will be a marketing person and probably the person with whom you negotiated your rate). To verify that the hotel is handling the reservations correctly, the Hotel Chairperson can call the hotel reservations desk, both during the business day and during the evening and ask questions about

the convention and reservations, pretending to be a potential client.

Individuals attending your event should make hotel reservations, your chapter does not need to get involved in the reservation process once the hotel and rates are announced. Attendees should register directly with the Hotel, not by third parties (e.g., Expedia, Hotel.com, etc).

The Hotel Chairperson should maintain contact with the hotel reservation department to verify that reservations are going smoothly. This person should also decide with the hotel for referrals to a nearby facility (preferably of equal or greater quality) should they be unable to accommodate everyone. Your Convention hotel may be able to make arrangements with another location for the same price. The Hotel Chairperson should also prepare a list for all chapter membership of other nearby hotels/motels and telephone numbers as people may contact the chapter members for this information.

Check with your Convention hotel to see if you can obtain a printout of their guest roster for the dates of your Convention (the hotel might not be able to give you a printout due to privacy of guests, but if you have maintained good relations with the management, they might permit you to view the list of guests, which can serve the same purpose). You can then review the list to check if there are any SPAAMFAA members who did not receive the discount room rate. This will also demonstrate to the hotel that you are on top of your convention and will assist you in knowing how many are attending. It is also helpful to know the number of rooms taken by participants when requesting various services at no charge. One special note -- if you book 3/4 or more of the hotel, they will usually treat your organization and its requests like royalty.

In addition to room reservations, you will need to find out from the hotel if RVs will be permitted to park overnight in the hotel parking lot. If special permission will be required to do this or if the hotel does not have facilities to permit this, indicate such on your Convention literature. You should also have a list of local campsites that are available.

Convention Registration

The Registration Chairperson needs to establish a workable, uncomplicated system for recording registrations both prior to Muster Day and on Muster Day. This person needs to record all registrations on a weekly basis prior to the Muster and daily the week before the Muster and must also provide the Muster Chairperson with an updated listing of pre-registrations either weekly or biweekly.

The registration form itself should contain all the information needed to place the

rig in its proper categories for judging and awards (i.e., trucked or driven make, year, pumping or static display, etc.). (Note: several examples of registration forms appear in the appendices.)

Remember that this form is to be mailed back to you, so be careful that information needed by the participant, such as directions or times, is not located' on the back of the form.

You should have these completed forms easily accessible on Muster Day so they can be referred to if an entrant questions items such as distance, category assignment, etc. By referring to the original registration form you can show why a rig was or was not placed in a specific category.

The registration committee on Muster Day should consist of three or four people as well as several runners (especially if you are having a motorcade). On the day of the Muster, it is the responsibility of the Registration Chairperson to see that the participants are properly registered and directed to the proper staging area. If there is to be a motorcade, he/she must be certain it starts on time.

If we were in Utopia, everyone would be pre-registered and on time. However, since the real world is not a Utopia, you should have a system in place for registering on Muster Day. It can take from 5 to 15 minutes to register a rig, depending upon your procedure. You will need people at registration who can work quickly, efficiently and do not get flustered easily. It would not be unusual to have five or six rig owners at one time registering, each one asking questions.

The situation can become very confusing and turn into complete chaos. To avoid this, be certain you have people who know what they are doing.

Pre-registration is the key to the success of your National Convention/Muster. Those that don't want to meet your deadline date (usually two weeks before the Convention/Muster) will have to pay the penalty. If you charge a registration fee, indicate there will be an increase in the fee after the deadline date. This is for apparatus registration only. All your other reservations (banquet, bus tours, etc.) should be considered filled at the deadline date.

Prior to Muster Day, all registration packets for pre-registered rigs should be prepared and all window cards filled out. Each should be assigned a registration number. They can then be filed alphabetically or numerically. There should be a copy of the master registration list for each person at registration. When a pre-registered owner appears, it will be a simple matter to give him/her the proper registration packet and window card. If there were any questions on the entry, a note should be stapled to the registration packet or written on the side of the envelope, so the registrar knows to obtain the information. Do not rely on

memory. In the case of a National or if it is an unusually a large muster, you should have one or two people who have sole responsibility for pre-registered rigs. They should be set up separate from the non-registered section. Each area should be clearly marked.

Once an owner has been checked in at the registration table, he/she should be directed where to place their rig. Some Chapters have offered to hand out registration packets, participation awards, etc. at the convention site prior to the Muster. This is not a good idea since there is occasionally someone who registers a rig, but does not bring it. Be certain the rig being registered is present. However, it would be a good idea to have a person at the convention registration that can handle the pre-registering paperwork. This will help save time at the muster site.

If a rig is not pre-registered, they will have to fill out the registration form on Muster Day. You should have sufficient registration packets prepared for late registrations. Each new registrant must be assigned a number and placed on the master listing. The master list is a very important document. With this list, you can cross check that each rig has been judged.

If a motorcade is included in your plans, it is the responsibility of the Registration Chairperson to be certain that it starts off on time. Do not wait for people who are still being registered. Remember that you have a time schedule to adhere to and that there are people waiting at the Muster site.

Once the motorcade has left, registration (with reduced numbers) should plan to remain open for latecomers. There should also be a person located at the Muster site who can register anyone who shows up there after the motorcade. This person(s) should be prepared to give a report to the Registration Chairperson when he/she arrives at the Muster site. While waiting at the official registration location, the Registration Chairperson can verify that all new registrants are listed on the master list and remove those who did not show up. At this time, you can also determine several awards -- longest distance, oldest, hard luck & etc. The master list along with the previously mentioned award lists will be given to the Muster Chairperson.

All pre-registered apparatus should receive a confirmation letter (or e-mail). In this letter, you should state the date, time and location of the Muster. Also enclose any rules and regulations you expect the apparatus owner to observe. Indicate if there is an entrance fee to the general public to the Muster site. If

there is one, you will need to inform apparatus owners how many free passes will be available with the apparatus and where they should be

obtained. If passes are involved, it is recommended that they not be mailed in advance. Have the passes with the registration packet. There are some people who will register a rig, never intending to bring it, just to get the passes. By handing out the passes at the Muster registration, this will be avoided.

Tips:

- Nowadays most chapters will have someone computer savvy enough to • create spreadsheets for the Registration people to use. **But keep the original registrations forms at the registration desk.** No matter how thorough your registrar is, a registrant will question something they wanted (or didn't want), whether they added their spouse's name to the form (or if they did not) if the spouse does not have a nametag & etc. Keeping the originals in 3-ring binders by registration number is an easy way to both store and also look a registration up quickly.

Banquet Facilities

Whenever possible, you should try to have the banquet at your Headquarters Hotel. If there is not a banquet facility available at the hotel, you will have to make provisions for transportation to the banquet location. Also, if you do not have a separate Banquet Chairperson, it will be the responsibility of the Convention Chairperson to make the banquet arrangements.

The banquet is usually held on Saturday night.

The Banquet Chairperson is responsible for setting the menu, maintaining contact with the caterers, reporting the final number attending and checking on the setup of the banquet room. No other Chapter member should be in contact with the caterer. This is very important to avoid mix-ups.

Included in the Convention registration form sent to SPAAMFAA members should be an area to make reservations for the banquet. Be sure to specify a deadline date for reservations on the registration form. If you have a choice of meal, this should also be indicated on the form.

Know ahead of time how many can be accommodated comfortably in your banquet room. If there are still seats available at the start of the Convention, notify your registration people that they can still sign up "X" amount of people for the banquet. Once the banquet is filled, be certain the registration people are aware of that fact.

The menu is your decision. Some Chapters have had regular sit-down meals, while others have had a smorgasbord served buffet style. If you decide to go with the buffet style, you will need to assign a person to indicate tables to go up to the buffet table. You do not want everyone going at once! Often, the caterer may have a person to do this. If you have a sit-down meal, there should be at least two choices for the main entree. These choices should be indicated on your registration form, as your caterer will need to know the number of each to be prepared.

Also, due to many dietary restrictions today, check with your caterer in reference to handling special requests. If they can do this, indicate such on your registration form.

In deciding on the setup of the banquet room, remember to have a head table at which will be seated the President of your Chapter (and possibly other Chapter Officers), the National President and the National Convention Coordinator (and other National Officers if room permits). You may also wish to reserve several tables in the front for the National officers and Chapter officers not seated at the head table. Also, don't forget that officers will probably have a spouse or guest with them. You may also wish to have a table chart at Convention registration for people to reserve tables. By doing this, you will save time in people searching for seats at the banquet.

Following the banquet, the Chapter may present awards and trophies. You should make certain that the trophy ceremony moves along quickly (allow no more than 30 minutes) and is without "inside" jokes. Remember, there are people from outside your area present and they will not understand "inside" jokes. Be sure to recognize your chapter workers as well. Allow a spot for the National organization to speak too.

Many Chapters also have a dinner scheduled for Friday night. This would also be the responsibility of the Banquet Chairperson. Usually, this is a very informal affair that is in the form of an outdoor barbecue. No head table is needed for this. If your Chapter decides to have such a function, you will again need to follow the registration steps mentioned above for the formal banquet.

It is highly suggested that the hosting Club keep an accurate list of names of those purchasing tickets for the banquet along with the names of any spouse/guests for whom they have purchased tickets.

It is also suggested that you have a representative from your organization available to check off the names as each person enters the dining area. Some chapters issue tickets that are collected at the door to the banquet room.

A hand stamp can be used to allow participants to exit and re-enter the banquet room without difficulty.

Tips:

Physically go to all venues and have a face-to-face meeting about the event/tour coming to their facility.

SEMINARS-EDUCATION

SPAAMFAA is chartered as an educational organization in the State of New York. As an educational organization, SPAAMFAA requires a minimum of two (2) educational seminars at each of its meetings. These seminars should focus on historic preservation of fire equipment, safety issues or administrative issues. There is no limit on the maximum number of seminars to be held. However, care should be taken to make sure there are no conflicts with other events. Seminars should not be held at the same time as bus tours or SPAAMFAA meetings. Historically, every-one will go on the bus tours and will not attend seminars when they are in conflict.

Examples of historic preservation seminars include subjects such as: maintenance, lubricants, painting, gold leafing, restoration, pump repair, etc. Safety seminars can include subjects such as: muster safety, pump operations, ladder operations, DOT safety inspections, tire-brake repairs. Administrative seminars involve topics to help chapters operate efficiently. Topics include website issues, social media use, newsletters, liability, insurance, etc. Typically, administrative seminars work best at the winter meeting where more chapter officials attend.

Many chapters have members or have access to local people who can present material as noted above. Typically, the seminars should be at least one hour in length.

In order to facilitate these seminars, the SPAAMFAA Education Committee will coordinate seminars with the local chapter. If the chapter is unable to include local speakers/presenters, SPAAMFAA Educational committee will

provide same. Occasionally, SPAAMFAA will have important safety seminars which it will sponsor.

It is important to plan for the seminars. Special audio-visual equipment may be needed. AV equipment may be available through the hotel but watch out for rental charges. AV equipment may be borrowed or rented separate from the hotel. The Chapter may be able to provide its own AV equipment, including the PA system, professional-level video projector borrowed from a local fire department. This can save hundreds of dollars by not using the hotel's systems, if the hotel permits outside equipment. Be sure to ALWAYS check out all systems days in advance to make sure the equipment can be easily connected with the right cables and connectors, as these often change with new models of projectors, amplifiers, computers, microphones, and related equipment. You might also consider having a local High School video your Seminars and post them on Social Media. The Education Committee has a limited **annual** budget of \$400.00 per year, (\$200.00 per conference) for seminar expenses that meet the criteria. The *suggested* stipend for the presenters is one night's lodging and two banquet tickets. The noted budget is a combined amount for all seminar speakers.

Banquet speakers are not considered as a seminar and are not covered by the seminar funding. Please contact the Education for further information.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

While your program and events are primarily directed toward the membership, many members do tend to travel with their families.

Special events and tours for the wives should be considered as well. Programs such as these may influence increased attendance.

The same can be applied to attending children as well. Suggestions have been made to allow children to attend the tours for 1/2 price. This could be taken into account depending on the tours, seats available, etc.

A further nice touch is to have a children's program at the time of the farewell banquet. A quasi-babysitting, pizza party, games would occupy the kids, while the parents attend the banquet.

We are striving to make our organization "Family friendly".

Bus Tours

Part of your Convention may include bus tours consider tours to:

- Fire engine manufacturers (if there is one nearby).
- Local shopping centers.
- Local fire departments.
- Museums.
- Large collections of antique vehicles (cars, trucks, trains or airplanes).
- Local tourist spot (e.g. in Indianapolis a trip to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway is always popular).
- Prominent architectural buildings.
- A mix of the above.

These tours are usually arranged for Thursday and Friday before your Muster. Reservations must be made in advance. Specify in your Convention literature a deadline date for reservations. The charge to each person should cover the costs involved. If a tour lasts all day, make arrangements to either provide a lunch or make a stop where there are restaurants available. This too must be mentioned in the Convention registration. It is very important that such tours include reasonable rest room stops along the way for longer tours, especially if the bus does not have such onboard facilities. This is especially important for older members. Also, each bus should have a supply of bottled water for guests along the way.

It is the responsibility of the Convention Chairperson (or his/her Committee Chairperson) to make the arrangements for bus tours. Remember that even if there is a specific Committee for this, in the end, it is still the responsibility of the Convention Chairperson.

In your Convention literature you should give a description of what the trip will be and the cost per person. There should be a section of your registration form for registering. Also, notify your Convention registration people if seats still remain on the bus so they can sign up additional people.

Consider using tour buses before school buses. The tour buses are more comfortable for a long day of riding and usually have more room between seats, again for the comfort of those riding.

There should be one person on each bus that is in charge. For lack of a better

term call them Bus Monitors, a Bus Monitor should:

- Carry a list from registration of all tour participants.
- Have good directions for the bus driver.
- Introduce themselves to their bus riders.
- Make all announcements using the public address (PA) system on the bus (if the PA system does not work the messages must be announced in the front and the center of the bus).
- Count the number of people on his/her bus. Count before you leave the hotel and again after EVERY stop. This will help avoid leaving anyone behind.
- Announce (using the PA system) how much time will be spent at each stop or what time everyone should get back on the bus.
- Have either a two-way radio or cell phone access to contact the Muster Chairperson should a need arise.

Tips:

- Physically go to all venues and have a face-to-face meeting about the event/tour coming to their facility.
- Have someone physically drive the route the bus will take to a venue, they should be:
 - Looking for areas that a bus might have a hard time getting through.
 - Getting an accurate idea of how long it takes to drive to a venue.
 - Finding a safe place to unload and load passengers once on site.
- If space limitations prevent multiple busses from following the same schedule, this information should be explained in the information sheet. For example:
 - 9 Due to limited space at location #1, Bus A will be traveling from location #1 to location #2, and Bus B will be traveling from location #2 to location #1. If you are traveling with a group, please ensure your entire group is on the same bus. Also announce this on the bus, before the buses leave the hotel.

Proposed Itinerary

In recent years, the winter/summer meetings have followed the following format.

Wednesday

9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. SPAAMFAA Board meeting.
11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. SPAAMFAA Board luncheon
1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. SPAAMFAA Board meeting.
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Registration open.
4:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Hospitality Room open (Headquarters hotel).

Thursday

8:00 a.m. Bus leaves for tour from Headquarters hotel.
11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration open.
12:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Hospitality Room open (Headquarters hotel).
8:00 p.m. Seminars.

Friday July 17, 2009

8:00 a.m. Bus leaves for tour from Headquarters hotel.
11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registration open.
12:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Hospitality Room open (Headquarters hotel).
8:00 p.m. SPAAMFAA Membership meeting.
After SPAAMFAA Membership meeting, seminars

Saturday July 18, 2009

7:00 a.m. Flea Market set-up.
8:00 a.m. Registration opens at Muster site.
8:00 a.m. Flea Market opens.
10:00 a.m. Welcoming ceremonies for muster.
3:00 p.m. Muster ends.
4:00 p.m. Flea market closed.
7:00 p.m. Banquet starts.

An official schedule should be posted in the Headquarters Hotel lobby with up-to-date times and any last-minute changes.

Public Relations

Local government

This is an area that is very important. You want the local government to be on your side.

It is advisable to have contacts within both the local and county governing bodies. You need to make an effort to solicit their good will. This good will can assist you in obtaining permits, gaining police security, etc.

Be sure to inform the local powers what will be occurring. Point out that this brings business into the community in the form of hotel rooms, restaurant use, etc. Invite the mayor, a commissioner, etc. to attend the Muster. Invite them to your banquet (but, be aware that they will not expect to pay for their meal). Ask them to say a few words of welcome to the community at the Muster or banquet.

A little public relations work beforehand can pay off tenfold when you run into a stumbling block on obtaining a permit or have another problem, such as obtaining a public address system for the Muster.

News Media -- Local, State & Regional

The press and TV can be very helpful in advertising your Muster. You should have a prepared news release ready to send out to various news media. Check with local, county, regional and state public event calendars to determine when you must submit information on your muster to have it included. Some of these may require advance notice of one year. Most of these represent free advertising for you.

All calls for information from the news media should be referred to the Muster Chairperson or designated PIO. If one person handles all the information, it will eliminate confusion. This procedure should be followed on Muster Day also. All workers on Muster Day should know where to direct members of the press. If the press gathers information from Chapter members who are not fully knowledgeable about your event, incorrect information can end up in print.

If you should decide to take an ad out in the local newspapers just prior to the event, try listing it in the sports section. If we face reality, most firefighters and members of our hobby are males and a majority of males usually do read the sports section of the newspaper. (Women who are reading this guide should not

take offense at this statement as a woman has pointed it out.)
Contact local TV and radio stations to inform them of the Muster. Point out that

individuals as well as fire companies attend the event from your local area. In the case of the National, also point out that there will be entries from around the country. Offer to make a local reporter a "firefighter" for a day and give him/her a ride on a rig or a taste of one of the contests, such as a barrel fight or bucket brigade. Also point out that the event is an educational and historic event, as well as being family oriented.

Tips:

- Be sure to include announcements in local firefighting publications, both career and volunteer.
- Have a chapter member that is also a member of AAA send a short description to AAA's magazine *Home & Away*. It will be published in the *Home & Away* for your region and drive AAA members to your event. This needs to be done six months ahead of your convention.
- If a local fire department is involved in your convention, approach their PIO for help in this area. This individual will likely have several contacts in the media you can use to get your message out.

Muster Security and Parking

Security on the grounds of the Muster site can best be achieved by having uniformed officers from the local police department patrolling the grounds. This will curtail most incidents of malicious mischief.

Vendors must be responsible for their own security of their items on display.

At the Muster site, the apparatus owner should provide their own security person to stay with his/her equipment at all times. Muster personnel should also be on the lookout for any suspicious situations during the muster. Any questionable activity spotted should be reported to the command post immediately so it can be dealt with quickly.

The only movement of apparatus should be going to contests or pumping and returning to their static display location.

All flea market vendors should be told that they are not permitted to remove their vehicles before a specific time.

Areas for spectators to park should be clearly marked, and only authorized

vehicles should be on the Muster grounds.

All flea market vendors should have a pass to enter the grounds.

Photography of Apparatus:

The photographing of rigs at musters is very popular. You might want to work with a photographer to set-up spots for rig to be photographed. Block this area off with cones and try to work out a driving lane to and from the muster site for rigs to travel.

Some SPAAMFAA members are photographers who will travel to and attend musters for the opportunity to photograph fire apparatus. These photographers often support local chapter and national publications with photos for articles, features and for websites which benefit our collective interests. The photos also serve another purpose, which is to document the history of fire apparatus and the various events sponsored by SPAAMFAA or its chapters. A photographer friendly event will enrich the experience for more of the attendees who come to the muster.

This section provides some guidance on how to support the photography activity at a national or chapter event. The first and foremost concern is safety as safety should be our first thought. The choosing of a specific location for photos will help minimize movement of vehicles. Photography should occur with a focus on safety of the vehicle, the attendees, and the photographers. Second, we must be mindful of the apparatus owner and their wishes, so photography is not mandatory but provides an opportunity for the apparatus owner to opt for having a photo taken of their apparatus. The following suggestions are a summary of ideas from various photographers and coordinators who have implemented photography at their events. Safety committees should be informed of the photography plans ahead of the event.

Considerations:

The apparatus photographers' preference is to take a wedge or $\frac{3}{4}$ shot where the front and side of the rig will be in the sun with the shadow being casted behind the vehicle. The pump panel will dictate if the left or right side will be photographed. The desired photo is to have the pump panel visible in the photo for apparatus with pump panels located on the sides of the apparatus. The photographers will also want to photograph the apparatus one at a time.

Fixed Site / Photo Pit:

The photos can be taken at either a specific location or locations planned away from the main apparatus display area or as part of a photo lane as the vehicle moves into the muster site. If a separate location will be used, a safe lane

should be available to move the apparatus. Another concern regarding location is that the location should be an area without shadows from trees, buildings, or other vehicles. It is preferable that the location has a neutral background with minimal clutter. Consider the location of the sun during the day as the sun will move from morning to afternoon. If a specific location is chosen, keep it clear and prevent the area from being used for parking of rigs or other vehicles.

Photo Lane / Line-up:

It is also possible to set-up the photo opportunity as part of a photo lane where the vehicles traverse the lane on the way into the muster site. Like with a static location, the site should be clear of shadows and allow for the front and sides of the rig to be in the sun. It is preferred that guides or captains be chosen to manage the movement and flow of the vehicles through the photo lane. A time limit must be established to ensure that the vehicles flow smoothly and to prevent any back-ups of vehicles in or out of the photo lane. Traffic flow needs to be monitored and controlled. Guides or captains may also need to manage photographers to prevent the photo line from coming to a halt.

Muster Site Considerations:

There are many casual photographers who like to take photos once the apparatus is on display at the muster site. With the fact that many people have a camera with them whenever they carry a phone, photography has gotten more common for many people who would not call themselves photographers. Some considerations for how to arrange the muster site would be to park the vehicles facing compass heading south. This will allow the nose of the vehicle to be in the sun all day. If space permits, encourage maintaining a vehicle width minimum between vehicles. This also allows for some space for movement of people and visibility of all sides of the apparatus on display. Think about your muster site and what the shadows look like during the event.

Other Considerations:

When in doubt about photos, ask questions. There are several apparatus photographers involved at the National and Local Chapter levels. They are willing to offer advice and assistance to help your event be a success. It is also helpful to have an individual collecting basic apparatus information or have that information included on the registration form for the vehicles at the event.

The most common information sought by photographers are the following:

- Make/Model
- Year
- Serial Number / Shop Number
- Pump Capacity / Tank Capacity
- Aerial Length
- Where it served

Photographers can also be asked to provide copies of the images to your club. Provide a contact point and address and request a disk or flash drive be sent to your chapter. Photography provides a benefit to the group and hopefully these suggestions will help future events embrace this part of the hobby which is enjoyed by so many SPAAMFAA members.

Muster Site

The Muster site is one of the main ingredients for a successful Muster. Your program on Muster Day must be geared to what can and can't be done at the site.

The first order of business is properly securing a site. Proper permits must be secured to use the facilities involved. Also, note that if any contracts are signed in reference to the site, you must include a copy of the contract with your SPAAMFAA insurance application. Since many of the sites utilized are public property, you will need approval of the proper government authority.

In obtaining this approval, you will need to explain precisely what a Muster involves and what activities will be taking place. You will need to specifically clear with the governing body of the site that you can have a flea market, food vendors, etc. at the site. Explain the nature of vehicles that will be participating in the event. Remember some parks may have underground sprinkler systems, which a heavy truck can damage. You do not want to find out on Muster Day that you are in violation of an ordinance and have to shut down part of your Muster. For the SPAAMFAA insurance policy, find out specifically what government agency, corporation, etc. needs to be listed on the policy.

Easy access to the source of water is a definite plus to apparatus participants. The participants should not have to travel over any rough terrain that might cause damage to the apparatus. It is much safer to operate on level, solid ground. Another safety feature on Muster Day would be to position your apparatus so that it does not have to move again.

Since many of our apparatus have a nasty habit of leaking oil and such, especially when pumping, try to be sure there are drip pans or oil collection agents (such as oil dry or oil pads) available to prevent environmental problems.

You should also have an alternative muster site and plans on tap as a backup. Most will question this but let us say that the night before the muster a violent storm sweeps through the area and knocks down a number of trees at your park. If you are unable to get the trees cleared in time for the Muster, you must have a contingency plan. Remember, almost all Musters (and especially the National) go on - Rain or Shine. Be prepared to operate your show in the rain if Mother Nature does not cooperate with you.

Parades

Parades, cavalcades or movement of rigs is always a nice touch.

Whether around the muster site, to the muster site from the host hotel, or an event from the muster site through an adjacent town returning to the muster site.

Advanced arrangements will need to be made with your local police department or town. If a parade, per se, there may be certain fees involved (permits, police coverage, etc.). If you are simply driving in mass and observed all traffic rules (stopping at signals), a permit will probably not be necessary. Use of lights and sirens are probably not appropriate unless a parade.

Parade and motorcade routes must be charted in advance, and all participants be given advance notice of the route and any legal requirements for how to operate their vehicles during the event. It is often a nice touch to select, a "Grand Marshal" for the parade, someone who has been instrumental in making the event a special one. The Grand Marshal can ride in the lead vehicle and be identified as such through appropriate signage or announcements.

HINT

In the 'line up', older apparatus should be place in front to set the pace. Older apparatus may have a problem with overheating.

Muster

SPAAMFAA apparatus musters began in 1968. Today they serve as a place to showcase your "pride and joy", a place to have safe fun with your vehicle and a family day. One important factor to keep in mind is that this is your Muster. National does not want you to change it for them. The Convention portion of the weekend is in addition to your Muster. Obviously, however, you will need to prepare for additional entries, flea market vendors and spectators.

The Muster Chairperson and his/her committee members are the key to a successful event. The Muster Chairperson must be a sincere, honest individual who can weigh both sides of a dispute with an open mind. This is not the place or time to "get even" with people and/or groups. This person must have pride in the Muster produced, loyalty to the Chapter and dedication, and needs to be the

type of person who follows through on any problems to the end, regardless of the final outcome.

It is very helpful if the Muster Chairperson owns apparatus (but not an absolute necessity). Many of us have been to Musters where we felt cheated, ignored, etc. If this has been experienced by the Muster Chairperson" he/she will know how to take special care to prevent others from leaving your Muster with this feeling. Very often, it only takes a small personal touch, such as a smile at registration a Chapter official who goes around to all apparatus owners and flea market vendors to say, "thank you for attending", etc. -- to make people feel they were appreciated.

The Muster Chairperson should give serious consideration to using a week of vacation time to prepare for National. There will always be last minute details to cove and arrangements to review. It is also helpful if the spouse is interested in the hobby.

The Muster Committee members usually head up specific areas, such as flea market, contests, etc. Each of these, in turn, have a committee they work with. However, the Muster Chairperson must be aware of all activities of each committee and be responsible for solving problems the committee cannot. It is essential that everyone knows what the Muster Chairperson expects in each area. It is a good idea to write out the responsibilities of each committee rules, regulations, time schedules, etc. In this manner they each know what direction their group should take.

The main thing to remember when hosting a National is that everything will be bigger - by as much as 50 to 75%. You must be prepared with extra food, judges, apparatus parking, people, etc.

This section is designed to assist you in planning for a National Muster, developing a workable timeline and covering all "bases."

Judges

Your Chapter should have an established system for judging apparatus. Included in this system should be a definite judging form for your judges to utilize when judging an apparatus.

You should also provide a copy of this form to all entrants so they will know what the judges will be looking for when examining an apparatus. You also need to specify if the owner needs to be with the apparatus when it is being judged. If it is not necessary for the owner to be present, but if you allow points for the engine, notify your owners that at least one side of their hood must be left in a raised position. Judges should never try to open a hood.

Your judging staff should work in teams, with at least two (2) or three (3) in each team.

Each team will be responsible for a specific category of apparatus -- i.e. 1940's fire company owned apparatus. Try to give each team an equal number of apparatus to judge. Each team should turn in only one sheet for each apparatus. These sheets should also be made available to apparatus owners after the muster if requested. In this manner, owners can see where they lost points and can strive to improve in the future. However, due to the amount of work necessary on Muster Day, it is recommended that any owner requesting his/her judging form should do so in writing after the Muster. Forms should be kept for one (1) or two (2) weeks after the Muster to honor such requests.

Your judging staff should be familiar with the judging form they are to utilize. It is a good idea to have a meeting of the judging staff before the Muster to review your Chapter's rules and regulations. One Chapter hosts a picnic for the judges and their families at which the head judge reviews the form and they try judging several pieces of apparatus using the judging forms.

At the muster, all judging forms should be returned to the Judging Chairperson or Head Judge at a central location. The Judging Chairperson will then verify that each piece of apparatus has been judged by checking against the master registration list. Once the judging forms begin coming in the Judging Chairperson can begin the process of determining awards.

The methods utilized for determining awards vary from Chapter to Chapter.

However, if you utilize a group to make the determination, don't make the group too large. A very large group will usually require more time to come to a decision. Always keep in mind your time frame for the awards ceremony. If you utilize a computer system to determine awards, be certain beforehand that the program does what you want and remember to have a backup copy (preferably written) in case of a "crash" of your computer program.

It is also important to remember that with a National, there will be more apparatus than normal and you may need to increase the number of judges. If you are using some judges who are new to your system, place them with an experienced team.

One item you should try to observe is how many trophies each apparatus is being awarded. You should try to spread out your awards if at all possible. For example, if your Best of Show is a 1948 Mack pumper, try to give the Best Appearing Mack and the Best Appearing 1940's awards to other apparatus. The more people you send home with an award, the better your return will be next year.

Most Chapters hand out some form of a participation award. Each apparatus, which attends, receives one. If you wish to eliminate competition and therefore judging, each piece of apparatus could go home with a Participation award.

In the appendices, you will find copies of judging forms utilized by several of the Chapters c1s well as one developed by SPAAMFAA. In addition to these, there is a set of instructions given to judges in preparation for judging by one of the Chapters.

First Aid Station

While we all hope that no accidents occur, you must be prepared. Ideally, you should have a local ambulance or medical team stand by at the Muster site. If this is not possible, arrange to have several of your members who have training take care of a first aid station.

If you do not have a rescue squad with an ambulance at the site, the Chapter will need to have a well-stocked first aid kit on hand. There will always be minor injuries that require band-aids or some burn cream.

You should be prepared for the minor injuries on site, but keep a cell phone or means to call for an ambulance at the first aid station for more serious emergencies.

Flea Market

Your flea market registration fee is 100% profit since there are no costs involved to the Chapter. If at all possible, centralize the flea market in an area where the spectators will be most comfortable. The flea market should be located in a grassy area with shade trees or in a building or parking garage, if possible. It should also be near where the apparatus are parked.

In your registration literature, spell out the size of the space and if the vendor can keep a vehicle on the grounds. If vehicles can remain on the grounds, be very clear that it must be able to fit into the space they have purchased for the day. In your publicity and on the registration form be very clear that this is a firematic flea market. Be aware that you will be contacted by craft people and others who want to rent space. This should be avoided. If you are not certain about a vendor, you can provide a space on the registration form requesting the type of merchandise being sold.

Your spaces should be clearly marked to avoid confusion. It is also a good idea to set up a few extra spaces in case you have non-registered vendors show up or a vendor needs additional space. However, as with the apparatus, you may want to charge an additional fee for those who do not register by your deadline.

Your method of assignment should be the same you have used in the past. Some Chapters assign spaces as people register others assign spaces as they arrive at the Muster site.

You will need a Flea Market Chairperson who does not get flustered easily. Flea market vendors are notorious for complaining about everything and anything. Be prepared to be able to prove that the space is the size you advertised as some will swear it is smaller.

You should have an established policy (in writing) in reference to refunds for cancellation. Most Chapters establish a date approximately two (2) weeks before the Muster for cancellation. You do not want vendors requesting a refund because it happened to rain on Muster Day and they decided to stay home.

You should send a confirmation letter (or e-mail) which includes any rules and regulations when a vendor registration is received. Examples of this will be found in the appendices.

Food at Muster Site

The Chapter can handle the food at the Muster site if it has done so in the past. However, if you have never handled the food, do not try to do it for the first time at National. Before you handle the food service, be certain that you have sufficient people to handle the cooking and serving. Careful attention should also be paid to the prices charged -- no one wants to pay \$3.00 for a hot dog! And, of utmost importance is quality. Do not decide to buy the cheaper brand of an item to make more profit without first verifying it is of the same quality as the higher priced name brand. How do you verify the quality? Try serving it at a meeting to get an opinion from your Chapter members. The Chapter will also need to be certain they have proper refrigeration for perishable items. Remember, the weather can be hot and since you are outside, food can spoil very quickly.

The profit made from the food stand will help to pay the expenses of the Muster: This will be especially true if you try to obtain donations from local food suppliers (such as supermarkets) as trophy sponsors.

You will need to check with the local regulations in reference to whether you can legally have a food stand run by the Chapter. There may be various licenses needed as well as various health code requirements to be met.

The Food Chairperson is responsible for ordering all items and seeing to it that all food and materials needed to run the food stand are at the Muster site on Muster Day. This includes tables, stoves, pots and pans, water, the food itself, condiments, food tickets and the necessary people to run it. The food stand can require at least a dozen full-time people to keep it in operation. There also must

be relief offered for the workers. Family involvement in this area works out very well. For instance, the man in the family can do the hot stove work, Mom can work the counter and the children can work with the sodas. The family atmosphere helps make the work seem like fun as each family member works side by side.

If the rules of the Muster site do not permit you to have a stand on the site, there are alternatives to selling the food other than the stand method such as walking vendors. However, you will still need to get legal clearance for collection of sales tax (if applicable), health badges, etc. You will also need food liability insurance to protect your Chapter.

The food stand should be away from the flea market area. It should be located near your base of operations and your Chapter wares stand. If possible, it should be in a shaded area and should have overhead covering to protect it from rain. For the convenience of the people and to increase the profit of the food stand, it is recommended that four lines should be in operation. Two lines for the sodas and two lines for the food. This helps to make for shorter lines and faster service. These lines should be properly identified at the food stand for the convenience of your customers.

The food should be sold by ticket only. Money should not be exchanged at the food table.

Prior to the Muster, the Muster Chairperson will give complimentary food tickets to various people who are working the Muster such as judges and ambulance personnel. You may also want to give some to local dignitaries and news media people. If these people are given tickets, no one will think these people are being treated differently.

Food tickets should be purchased at a booth next to the food stand, or at an RV parked next to the food stand. The use of an RV will help to provide additional security for the money.

You need to have your choices and prices clearly marked. The Chapter Treasurer will be responsible for providing sufficient change to start the day. At the end of the day, all money, with an accurate count, should be turned over to the Treasurer.

If you do not do your own food service, it may be possible to charge a fee (usually a percentage of the sales) to outside vendors for the privilege of selling food at the Muster. If outside vendors are utilized, you will need to verify that they have the proper local licenses required.

Comfort Facilities

If there are not public comfort facilities located at your Muster site, you will need to make arrangements to rent at least four portable toilets. If there are public comfort facilities located at the site, be certain that they are open early. If at all possible, arrange to have a representative of your Chapter obtain a key prior to the Muster.

If portable facilities are being rented (or supplied by a government entity), be certain they are delivered to the site the day before the event. Find out who is handling the contract for the portable toilets and specify the location of each facility with the company that has the contract. It is also a good idea to physically check that they were delivered and properly placed prior to the start of your Muster. A portable toilet provider should be asked how many are typically needed for your estimated crowd size, and consider their professional opinion – one portable toilet for X number of people expected to attend.

Tips:

- If renting portable toilets, ask for an emergency telephone number to reach the company in case of a problem. Remember, many will not be open for regular business on weekends.
- You will want someone to check that the facilities are clean and there are sufficient paper supplies every hour.
- If renting portable toilets, have them placed in shady areas if at all possible.

Communication and Command Post

Your communication center should be located at the command post. If the Muster Chairperson is not located at the command post, he/she should be in radio contact with the command post at all times during the Muster.

A public address system is used to advise people of the events as they occur during the Muster and for any other informative messages. It should not be used constantly, or it will not be an effective communication tool. If you do use it constantly, it could create a carnival atmosphere and people will stop listening. The public address system should be located at the command post (which should be identified for spectators).

You should be in radio contact with your key personnel during the day. If your Chapter does not own portable radios, check with your local county emergency communications center, local fire companies or rescue squads to see if you can

borrow radios. Another idea would be to check with your membership to see if they own portable radios that are of the same frequency or contact a local amateur radio club. In all, you will probably need between 4 and 8 radios. These should be returned to the command post when each person is finished. For example, when the Registration Chairperson is finished, any radios located at registration should be returned. The Contest Committee, etc. can then use these. The Muster Chairperson should have a radio all day and there should be one located at the command post at all times. The use of radios will save you many steps during the day.

Tips:

- In this day and age cell phones are prevalent and carried by a large percentage of our members. In lieu of radios carry a phone number list for all Muster Committee members.

Contests

There are many different contests that are run at musters around the country. If you have never tried a particular contest before, do not attempt it for the first time at National. Once again, you do not have to do everything that a previous Chapter has done for a National. You will find some examples of contest rules in the Appendices.

The contests you hold should be geared to the facilities at the Muster site and available time. Be careful in planning contests to make sure there is sufficient time to complete all contests.) All contests should be run with the safety of the participants, as well as the spectators, in mind. Be certain that spectators are kept at a safe distance from the contest. Also, be certain that the contestants are aware of all rules and regulations beforehand. Your Safety Officer and his/her assistants should be present in the area of the contests.

Any contest conducted must previously have been tested in order to eliminate any errors or unfair practices between the teams. It is advisable to have all events free of human judgment to eliminate human errors. An easy way to do this is to have all events timed and have two timekeepers for each event. When a contest requires the use of water from an engine, the same engine should be used for every contest throughout the day to ensure equal pressure for each person/team. If a contest requires nozzles, hose, Indian tanks, etc., they should be provided by the Chapter to ensure that they are the same. Also, be very careful that the hose being used has been tested. The same is true for ladders.

At the muster site, the Registration Chairperson will give the teams and their names to the Contest Chairperson. The teams should be posted in order of participation at the contest area. The results of the contests should also be posted.

All contest start times should be announced from the PA system located at the command post. All contest items, such as nozzles, etc., should be kept together by the Contest Chairperson and returned to him/her after the contest. The final results of each contest should be reported to the Muster Chairperson in written form.

It should also be noted here that some Chapters no longer host a first water contest. It has been found that many people in an effort to win this contest are pushing their engines beyond their endurance. One of our purposes is the preservation of the antique engines. Also, this can tend to be a very dangerous contest. One inexperienced pump operator, in an effort to be the fastest, straddled the hose as he was putting the pump in gear. Luckily the pump did not engage.

If you do not already run a contest for children, you should give it serious consideration. Since our hobby is a family one, many children attend our musters. Many Chapters have built a small house with fake flames on top (connected with piano hinges). The children (under supervision) have to knock the flames down with a booster line. The children enjoy themselves and usually all are winners. Each contestant is given a small item such as a plastic helmet or a badge.

One final note is in reference to steamers. If you plan to have a steamer contest according to the SPAAMFAA insurance policy, you must first clear it with the insurance company. In fact, if you plan to have a steamer in operation at your muster, you must notify the insurance company. You will also need to verify that the operator has the proper license.

Apparatus Storage and Security

The most ideal storage for apparatus is a secured building, as opposed to a parking lot or fenced-in area out in the open. However, not every area has a building large enough to store apparatus for several nights (remember that some apparatus owners will be arriving on Thursday and not leaving until Sunday).

If utilizing a secured building, the Chapter should consider using some of their own members as security, even if the building provides security. There should be no fire buffing permitted in the building. Entrance should be restricted to apparatus owners and their helpers.

If utilizing a parking lot or fenced-in area, be certain to have security, especially" during the night. Establish a time after which no one is allowed to enter the area, including apparatus owners.

Awards

The awards that are given at a muster vary from Chapter to Chapter. However, there is one item that is followed by all -- the decisions of the judges is final. If you have questions on an award, they should be settled prior to your award ceremony.

If you normally hand out your awards at the muster site, follow this procedure with the National. However, if you always have a banquet the night of the muster and hand out awards there, follow this procedure. Do not change for National. However, do not make the awards ceremony too long. Also, allow time for people to go home and get changed and put their trucks away.

A specific time should be scheduled for your award ceremony and this time should be adhered to as closely as possible. However, when setting your time schedule, remember that with a National Muster, there will be an increased number of apparatus to be judged. Be certain to give your judging staff sufficient time to do their job. Also, since there will be an increase in numbers, if you do not normally verify that each truck has been judged, it might be wise to do so with the National Muster. It is a simple matter to check off each rig on the master registration list as the judging sheets are returned.

Also, remember to acknowledge your trophy sponsors. Place the name of the sponsor on the front of the trophy, post a large sign detailing sponsors, print a special newsletter, listing sponsors, or announce the sponsors when handing out the awards.

Since there will be an increase in the number of entrants, you may want to consider increasing the number of awards presented. This would be especially true if you normally have a small muster.

Remember that SPAAMFAA will donate \$25 (per year) to any Chapter who makes a request (in writing) to the SPAAMFAA Treasurer.

Parking

Vehicle parking at the Convention hotel is very important. Remember that some people will be arriving in vans and trucks (especially in the case of people who plan to participate in the flea market). If your hotel utilizes a parking garage, these vehicles may not be able to fit in the garage. If this is the case, you must be prepared to indicate where they can park their vehicle. If street parking is not permitted overnight, be sure that the people attending are aware of this. You do not want a conventioneer going out in the morning to find that their vehicle has been towed away! Any parking restrictions should be explained to people in your

Convention registration form and again when they arrive at the Convention registration in the hotel.

You also need to be prepared for the parking of rigs, many of which will arrive on a flatbed truck or truck and trailer. If you have a separate area (secured) for the parking of these vehicles, be certain that the hotel people (at the hotel registration desk) are aware of the location. If rigs are being parked in the hotel parking lot, you must discuss security with the hotel management. If there is to be a security guard on duty at night, announce this fact both in the registration form and again when people with rigs arrive at Convention registration.

Setting a time after which people will not be permitted to be around the rigs is a good idea. Post a notice at the Convention registration area in reference to the curfew as well.

If you have arranged for the rigs to be parked in a secured area that is not located at the hotel, remember you will need to provide transportation to and from that area.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is one of the most important people on the Muster grounds.

This person, along with any assistants, has the responsibility of determining the operator's familiarity with the pump and its capabilities, the serviceability of hose and couplings, security of deck guns and nozzles, contest participant's pump pressure limits, and any other safety criteria that is determined necessary to the safe operation of the event.

The Safety Officer has the absolute, last word command of the Muster grounds and will not be overruled by officers or judges in relation to his/her duties.

It is the Safety Officer's duty to ascertain that safe conditions exist in all contests, not only in relation to equipment, but also in relation to participants and spectators. Contests will commence only when the Safety Officer is satisfied all conditions are safe and they may be stopped by the Safety Officer at any point at his/her discretion if contest conditions do not remain as safe as when started. The Safety Officer has the power to deny participation to any unit, crew or person not meeting his/her safety criteria. The Safety Officer also has the duty and responsibility to stop any unsafe activity taking place at any location on the Muster grounds. Copies of safety rules and regulations from SPAAMFAA and several Chapters are located in the appendices.

Also located at the registration area should be a section for Chapter displays. You

will need to contact all SPAAMFAA Chapters beforehand to extend an invitation to set up a Chapter display. You may request they notify you if they plan to set one up so you will know how many tables to set up. Be sure to inform them of the size of the table beforehand. But, be prepared to have a few extras for last minute Chapter decisions to set up displays. Your hotel will provide the tables, provided you have made prior arrangements.

Another good idea that has been utilized in the registration area is to have a "message/announcement" board. Conventioneers can leave messages here for others and you can post the daily schedule as well as any changes.

Each person registering for the Convention will be given a name badge to wear at the registration table displaying each person's name, Chapter affiliation and hometown. SPAAMFAA will provide the lanyards for the conference. The chapter will purchase the plastic holders for the nametags and be reimbursed after the conference to do this.

Wares and Souvenirs

Your Chapter should have a separate area set aside for the sale of Chapter wares and Muster souvenirs.

Most Chapters provide T- shirts and/or golf shirts. Golf shirts have proven to be a good item, especially if it also has a pocket. Various projects have been used to earn money for the Chapter. Among these are mugs, cup plates, stuffed animals, hats, muster ribbons, model trucks, etc.

You should have a separate committee to research ideas and costs for potential items. This committee should report back to the Chapter for discussion and a vote on what items should be purchased. Also feel free to contact other Chapters who have hosted a National in recent years for ideas on what they sold and the quantities they were able to sell.

REGISTRATION-FLYER MAILING NEW PROCEDURE

The mailing to the SPAAMFAA membership has been changed. The new procedure will be more cost effective and will not create the need for the hosting chapter to provide the funds upfront for printing and postage.

The flyer/registration material will now be included in the publication(s) ENJINE! ENJINE! or SILVER TRUMPET.

Depending on the date(s) chosen for the winter/summer meeting, it is recommended that the material be included in a mailing at least four(4) to five(5) months prior to the event. The host chapter should work with and co-ordinate the inclusion material with the editors, so that the camera-ready material can be re-viewed, edited and forwarded to the printer and included in the normal mailing of the publication.

By using this method of distribution, the membership will receive the material and probably review it as soon as the publication is delivered. National will pay the cost of printing and mailing using our bulk mailing permit(less expensive). The printing and mailing cost in the past has been one initially born by the hosting chapter. Reimbursement had been made upon submission of the receipts. By changing this procedure, several thousand dollars are saved in postage alone.

This procedure will require, however, that the material be forwarded to the editor months earlier than in the past.

Water Supply

Your water supply should be adequate for the Muster activities -- contests, pumping, etc.

If you do not have a natural water supply available, you will need to make arrangements for the use of portable tanks. Most Chapters do not own portable tanks, however, if you check with some local fire companies, you may be able to borrow them. Another item used for some contests are old heating oil tanks that have been laid on their side and the top side cut out. However, you must be very careful to clean out all oil residue beforehand. You should also bolt old hose over any cut edges for safety reasons.

The access to your water supply should be from a hard road or solid ground. You do not want to have to arrange to tow a truck out at the end of the show. You " should also inform the apparatus owners how many lengths of hard suction are required to reach the water source especially if it is more than the amount usually carried on an engine (usually 20' or 2 sleeves of hard suction).

You must also be aware of the type of water source you have -- fresh or salt. If you have salt water, you will want to warn the pump operators beforehand. If it is salt water, you should try to make arrangements with the city to utilize a fire hydrant that is near the muster site to flush out the pumps at the end of the day.

SPAAMFAA Muster Safety Guidelines

General Objectives

The intent of these guidelines is to provide a framework to make a muster as safe as possible for both muster participants and spectators. This is a performance-based program that shall also address local conditions and activities to comply with the objectives of these Muster Safety Guidelines.

1. Safety Committee

The local chapter for each muster or event shall appoint a Safety Officer and Safety Committee. Each Safety Officer will be qualified to perform his duties as a result of training and/or fire service experience. The members of the Safety Committee **should wear** identification to make them recognizable at the muster. The number of members shall be adequate to perform the required duties based on the number of participants and spectators expected to attend the muster. **It is recommended that there be a minimum of one safety officer for each 20 pieces of apparatus expected.**

2. Authority of the Safety Committee

The Safety Committee and its Safety Officer shall have the final judgment as to whether or not to permit any activity at the muster and to order a stop to such actions as may reasonably prevent dangerous situation. Typical emergency actions might include an order to bed all aerial devices upon the appearance of a storm to reduce the danger from wind or lightning. It is the responsibility of the local chapter to appoint qualified persons to the safety committee and then support them and the decisions that they make.

3. Conformance with Accepted Fire Ground Practices

A positive working relationship with local fire departments is of great value to any local chapter and under no circumstance should activity be permitted at a muster that conflicts with accepted local fire department safety practices (if local practices are more restrictive).

4. Responsibilities of Apparatus Owners

The owners and crews of each piece of apparatus have primary responsibility for safety since the Safety Officer and/or safety committee cannot be expected to monitor all apparatus and activities that are going on simultaneously during a muster.

Apparatus owners and operators are also expected to have more in depth knowledge of the operation of their own apparatus and equipment than the Safety officer since there is a very wide variety of fire apparatus. Operating procedures will vary between apparatus manufacturers and will also depend on the date of manufacture of the apparatus. Some apparatus may have been modified by their Fire Departments while in service resulting in unique operating procedures. Because of these many variables, apparatus owners and operators are expected to use caution and good judgment in operating their rigs in accordance within manufacturers recommendations while following muster guidelines.

5. Requirements to Participate

Each participant **shall** be required to sign a registration form in which among other things, establishes vehicle liability insurance, an acknowledgement that the Safety Rules have been received and are understood, and agrees to follow the requests made by the Safety Committee. Each piece of apparatus should be provided with a registration placard identifying the owner/operator. The placard should be conspicuously posted or attached to the apparatus at all times so the owner/operator can be readily contacted if needed (for example, the vehicle is leaking gas). Placards are available from the *Executive Secretary* of SPAAMFAA at no charge.

6. Apparatus on Static Display or Pumping

Any parked apparatus shall have the wheels chocked fore and aft to prevent accidental movement in any direction. The vehicle shall be closely supervised to protect the vehicle from its admirers and its admirers from the vehicle. Remember children stick their fingers in the most unusual places including mechanical siren ports. Consideration should be given to disconnection of the battery to prevent the accidental operation of sirens or the starting of the engine while on Static Display. If the vehicle is key equipped, keys shall be removed.

7. **Operating Apparatus - See Form SP-04 (Handout) SPAAMFAA'S Minimum Safety Rules for Apparatus Operation**
8. **Backing and Moving Apparatus on Muster Site**

An adequate number of guides shall be used to clear the right of way, alert the driver of obstacles, and guide him to park.

No vehicle will be backed without the assistance of a "lookout" person watching the area behind the vehicle.
9. **Parades**

In parades containing a mix of marching units, horse drawn units and motorized units, attention shall be paid to the arrangement of the parade to protect the non-motorized units from the motorized units. For the safety of those riding the vehicles in the parade, everyone shall be inside the body of the vehicle (cab, hose body). **Only adults may ride on the tail and running boards.** For the safety of those watching the parade, vehicle speeds shall not exceed 20 MPH and no stunt driving of fire apparatus shall be permitted. The throwing of candy or trinkets that encourage children to run into the street should not be permitted. **"Candy and trinkets" are permitted, but must be distributed by walkers on each side of the rig - not thrown from the rig.**
10. **Warning Devices**

The operation of warning lights, sirens, bells, and air horns shall be permitted in parades and at the muster so long as the operation does not violate local ordinances. Special attention must be paid to the possibility of disturbing church services, hospital patients, or even late sleeping local residents. Particular consideration shall be given to the effect of warning device on any horses in the parade.
11. **Games and Competitions**

All games and competitions shall be conducted under written rules that are understood and agreed to by the participants. These rules shall include specific provisions to protect the safety of both the participants and the spectators.
12. **Emergency Vehicles**

At many musters there will be a mix of privately and publicly owned "out-of-service" rigs and "in-service" emergency vehicles. The muster site should be arranged to permit emergency vehicles to respond from the site if necessary and for emergency vehicles to move about the site should there be a fire or medical emergency at the muster.
13. **Fire Protection**

Every motorized fire apparatus shall have *available* an operable fire extinguisher having a minimum rating of **10BC**. This should be verified as part of the registration process. Consideration should be given to ways to prevent the leakage of gasoline from the carburetors of apparatus with gravity feed fuel systems. No refueling of apparatus on muster site should be permitted without Safety Officer's approval. *Non-motorized apparatus is exempt from the fire extinguisher requirement.*
14. **Emergency Medical Service**

A means of providing EMS, should it be needed, shall be prearranged.
15. **Communication Link**

A cellular telephone, two-way radio or other link shall be available to the Safety Committee to call for outside assistance. The Safety Committee should take full advantage of radio communications to function as a Safety team. **The Safety team should have emergency phone numbers.**
16. **Unusual Apparatus, Events and Demonstrations**

Operating aerial devices, pumpers, steam pumpers and the like add greatly to the appeal of musters but may require special attention by the Safety Committee. Such issues as aerial limits, operator certification, backup water supply, and compliance with boiler codes must be addressed. The Safety Committee shall be alert to situations having unusual risk factors and shall take actions that may be reasonably required to protect spectators and participants. Examples of such actions might include requiring evidence of recent hydrostatic testing of high-pressure tanks or boilers.

SPAAMFAA Safety Guidelines Checklist

Pre-Event safety items to consider

1. Safety Officer name:
2. Are Assistant Safety Officers needed? Do they have assigned duties?
3. Can the site or facility handle the anticipated number of people or apparatus safely?
4. Does your State or locality require EMS on site?
5. Does the site layout permit easy access by Emergency Vehicles?
6. Local Police - and Emergency - _ telephone number besides 911
7. Upon approach of severe weather, how will instructions be given?
8. Is an evacuation plan written in order to seek shelter? Who has it on site?
9. Does the registration procedure determine the owners have vehicle liability insurance?
10. Are there sufficient copies of the muster safety rules to give each apparatus operator and/or team?
11. Do the Safety people have means of identification? (Same color vest, shirts, cap)
12. Are Radios needed for safety officers?
13. Do the safety rules handout identify the safety officials?
14. Do the written safety rules address:
 - A. All special events and demonstrations.
 - B. Separation distance for spectators. M
 - C. Movement of apparatus. M
 - D. Possession of an operable fire extinguisher. M
 - E. Use of wheel chocks. M
 - F. Operation of handlines. M
 - G. Maximum pumping pressure. M
 - H. Operation of aerial devices. M
 - I. Use of alcoholic beverages
 - J. Speed of apparatus in a parade.
 - K. Use of warnings light and sirens in a parade.
 - L. Throwing of candy or trinkets from apparatus
 - M. Mix of apparatus, marching and equestrian units in a parade
 - N. Protective equipment to be worn in competitions.
 - O. Legal age of vehicle operator. M

Note: "M" Mandatory items on Participant's Handout must be complied with.

**The SPAAMFAA Safety Committee recommends the use of
this checklist before every event.**

For Steam Fire Engine Operations, see Minimum Safety Rules-Form
SP-05 For Pump & Aerial Device Operation, see Minimum Safety
Rules-Form SP-04

Checklist & Handouts may be photocopied.

SPAAMFAA's Minimum Safety Guidelines **for Apparatus Operation**

GENERAL

1. Always be conscious of other apparatus and most importantly, people around your apparatus and **ALWAYS THINK SAFETY. Each owner and/or operator has primary responsibility for his vehicles safety.** *The operator should not use a cell phone, consume alcohol or use other mind-altering substances when driving or operating the apparatus.*
2. The operator is responsible to have proper knowledge and experience in the operation of the unit including all of the "manufacturers" safety requirements.
3. Attention to safety should make musters more fun for everyone. *When backing or moving apparatus, an adequate number of guides shall be used to clear the right of way, alert drivers of obstacles, and guide him to park. **No vehicle will be backed without assistance.*** Please volunteer to help other participants if it appears they need a hand. Also, everyone must observe the instructions given by the muster safety officer and safety committee members. Safety officials should be wearing identification and do not hesitate to report any unsafe conditions you observe to them.
4. Any apparatus that is *on display*, pumping, being supplied by a pumper, or has its aerial raised, shall have its brakes set, rear wheels chocked *fore & aft* with suitable wheel chocks and shall be continuously attended by an adult capable of operating the apparatus while the aerial is raised and/or the pump is in operation. *"Exception" Aerials that are properly locked in place with engine shut down, may be left unattended as long as the operator remains on the muster grounds. This pertains to aerials displaying the Flag.*

Suitable wheel chocks are defined as two, commercially made, truck wheel chocks or wood blocks that are at least 5" tall by 5" long by 8" wide. Vehicles with 16" or smaller tires may use 4"X4" blocks of wood at least 6" wide. The wood blocks may be beveled.

5. No person under the legal age for the state (Province) in which an apparatus is being operated shall operate said apparatus and no person without a valid driver's license shall drive or tiller any apparatus.
6. Each motorized apparatus shall have readily available, a modern type fire extinguisher with a minimum *rating* of 10 BC that is in a serviceable condition.

PUMPING

7. *Rear Wheels chocked, fore & aft*, No pump shall operate at pressure greater than 70 psi unless authorized by a Safety Officer. All gate valves shall be opened and closed slowly to minimize water hammer. In rare instances where higher pressures are required such as raising water towers, the owner shall certify that the hoses have been subjected to a pressure test of 125% of the required operating pressure within the previous 12 months.
8. Hand held lines shall not be permitted except for contests (such as waterwall) or demonstrations which have been approved by the safety officers. When approved for use they shall be manned by an adequate number of personnel to safely control the line. Booster lines are not covered by this rule and may be hand held.
9. Master stream devices shall be properly secured to prevent accidental movement. Master stream devices that are not mounted to the apparatus shall be staked down or chained/tied to a substantial object in front of the master stream device. When this is not possible, the hose shall be looped in front and the gun and tied/chained to the hose. Deluge guns must not be operated past any safety stops. No person shall be allowed to run their hands through the stream.
10. All hoses must be in good condition without leaks and couplings must be used with proper thread.

LADDER OPERATIONS/AERIALS

11. Aerial devices are defined to include all Aerial Ladders, Aerial scopes, Ladder Trucks, Tower Ladders, Snorkels, Squirts and Water Towers
12. Aerial devices shall not be raised *within 30 feet of power lines and may not be extended more than 60% of the total height of the aerial*.
13. Aerial apparatus must have ALL stabilizers on stable ground, have suitable ground pads under them, be properly set and locked in accordance with the manufacturer specifications. If it is a Tractor Trailer unit it should be jacked-knifed in accordance with manufacture's specifications, if required by the manufacturer.
14. No Aerial device may be raised without a Safety Officer overseeing the raising of said device and should not be raised if the wind is over 15 MPH. If wind speed increases to more than 15 MPH aerial devices should be lowered. Aerials may not be raised and/or should be lowered immediately if there is potential for lightning storms.
15. If a water pipe is used it may not be above the bed section, only one hose line may run up the ladder, it may not flow more than 50% of its rated capacity and a shut off must be available at the base of the ladder.
16. No aerial device may be operated *until the Safety Officer looks at the condition of the ladder, general condition of vehicle, hydraulic lines, cables, etc.* Aerial device may be operated off the

side and may not be operated at any elevation lower than 75 degrees to the turntable. Except for approved aerial arches. Recommend the perimeter area of extension be kept clear of people and no one shall stand under the aerial device.

17. No person shall climb any aerial device on the event site *except the owner or the official event photographer with a safety belt.*
18. These rules apply to all antique apparatus participating in a muster. Modern in-service fire apparatus owned and operated by a governmental agency such as a Municipal, Volunteer or Regional Fire Department/Company does not fall under rules #13-16. ***All General and Pumping Rules still apply.***

SPAAMFAA Minimum Rules for Steamer Operation

1. Rules governing the operation of steam boilers and their engines follow common sense and the laws of the states. Note: Most state level governments have a boiler certification program to cover stationary and portable boilers that are not inspected by insurance companies.
2. Some states and municipalities require a license for the operator as well.
3. All boilers operated at SPAAMFAA or Chapter meets where SPAAMFAA insurance is in effect, must comply with the code of the higher jurisdiction and must show a current certificate of boiler inspection to the muster authorities and maintain a copy of the certificate on site.
4. There is to be one person in charge at all times. This must be a trained (licensed if required) steam engine operator.
5. The unit must have an operational sealed safety valve.
6. The steamer must be positioned on stable ground or hard surface, and if deemed necessary, supports will be placed under the wheels to prevent sinking should the ground become saturated.
7. Participation in any contest or event wherein speed is required in getting up steam from a cold boiler or first water trial is *strictly forbidden* due to the stress placed upon the equipment.
8. Motor muster rules as stipulated by the muster authorities shall include but are not limited to: Pump pressure **not to exceed 70 PSI** at the pump; all nozzle devices to be tied down and wheels chocked.
9. Ropes or suitable barricades are to be situated so as to keep spectators away from the engine by at least **15 feet** prior to lighting the fire and must be maintained until the fire is out.
10. The Operator of the steamer shall be prepared to drop the fire at a moment's notice: Tools including appropriate hoe, pricker and long and short handled shovels are required.
11. It is required that an independent source of water at a pressure greater than the lifting pressure of the safety valve be connected and charged before the fire is lit and maintained until the

fire is dropped. There must be a check valve at the entry point on the steamer to prevent boiler water from backing up into this water supply. Note: This supply may be a garden hose on house pressure, or a line from a motor pumping car.

12. It is recommended that where brackish water is being pumped, only fresh water be supplied to the steamer. Note: Brackish and salt water should **not** be introduced into the boiler lest foaming occur.
13. Common sense demands that care be taken in operating those devices that could shower spectators with water, soot, embers, steam or hot water.
14. Reports of accidents of even the most minor degree should be reported on the **SPAAMFAA Post Event Report** and sent to the Safety Committee Chairman and the Executive Secretary.

Form-SP-05

Revised: September, 2015

Form SP-06

Revised: September, 2015

SPAAMFAA Safety Post Event Report

Use this form to report:

Event Complete with No Reported Accident or Injury_____, Accident_____, Injury_____,
Suggestion_____

Date of Report: _____

SPAAMFAA Chapter sponsoring event:_____

Date of Event: _____ Location of Event:_____

Event Chairman or contact person:_____ Phone_ Address: _____

Safety Officer Name:_____

Phone _____ Address:_____

List the name of the Departments and all Emergency units who responded to this accident. Unit:

_____ Phone:_____ Address:_____

Unit:_____ Phone:_____ Address:_____

Name and Address of Witnesses.

Name:_____ Phone:_____ Address:_____ Name: Phone:_____

Attach a detail description of what occurred. Include sketches and photos if possible.

For suggestions, attach a separate document or use the back of this form. Please include your name and contact information.

Submitted by: Name_____

Signature_____

Date:_____

Note: Send or email copy to:

1. Executive Secretary, Bill Blunden, PO Box 296, Carthage, NY 13619 or email to:
billblunden@gmail.com
2. SPAAMFAA National Safety Chairman, Thomas Herman, 10719 River Rd. Chesterfield, VA, 23838
or email to tom-herman@att.net

IT'S THE "LITTLE" THINGS THAT MAKE A CONVENTION GREAT

NAME TAGS: It is very helpful to have the individuals name **STAND OUT** in bold/large letters. This makes it easier for others to see your name and know who you are.

HOTEL LOBBY: When choosing a host hotel, make sure the lobby area can accommodate a large gathering. Many attendees like to spend time in the lobby area meeting others and renewing friendships. A large area makes this possible.

RECOGNITION OF SPONSORS: If your chapter has sought sponsors to defray expenses, a plaque or certificate honoring their contribution is appropriate.

CHAPTER HOSPITALITY: Have all host chapter members make a special effort to meet and thank those who are attending. A "THANKS FOR COMING" will be appreciated. Many attending will be from various parts of the country and have made an effort to attend your convention/meeting. A special thanks should be given to those individuals who have brought apparatus. In most cases a real effort had been made to bring apparatus, not to mention the expense incurred in doing so.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL: Have available at the registration area, material to 'aid' your guests(attendees). This information should include sites not included on your arranged tours which may be of interest, location and directions of shopping centers, stores, etc. A listing (with directions) of area restaurants. A local area road map would be quite beneficial if one is available of your area.

LARGE BULLETIN BOARD: This should be located in a prominent place in the registration area. Postings can include the events/times/locations of events; notices of changes that may occur; any additional information that needs to be relayed; post messages and pages.

When you see something that has worked in the past at other conventions-meetings-musters, use it. If a particular item or thing did not work well-change or modify it. In looking back at other meetings you went to, what stood out? What was it that made you glad that you attended?

POST EVENT REPORT

After the convention is finished, all information relative to the conference should be documented and saved. This includes hotel room nights, number of bus tour attendees, banquet attendance, etc. This valuable information will be useful for chapters looking to host future conferences. The post-event report below should be filled out and submitted to the National Convention Chairman within 30 days after the conference.

SPAAMFAA National Conference Post-Event Report

Chapter: _____ Dates: _____

Host Hotel Name & Location: _____

Members Registered: (for week): _____ # T-Shirts Sold: _____

Hotel Room Occupancy: ____M ____T ____W ____TH ____F ____SAT ____SUN____

Bus Trip #1 (Wed) – Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

Bus Trip #2 (Wed) – Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

Seminar #1 (Wed) - Subject: _____ Attendance _____

Seminar #2 (Wed) - Subject: _____ Attendance _____

Hospitality Room (Wed) Est. Attendance: _____

Bus Trip #1 (Thur) - Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

Bus Trip #2 (Thur) - Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

Seminar #1 (Thur) - Subject: _____ Attendance _____

Seminar #2 (Thur) - Subject: _____ Attendance _____

Hospitality Room (Thur) Est. Attendance: _____

Bus Trip #1 (Fri) - Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

Bus Trip #2 (Fri) - Destination: _____ Attendance: _____

General Membership Meeting (Fri): Est. Attendance _____

Hospitality Room (Fri) Est. Attendance: _____

Est. Muster Attendance: _____ # Apparatus: _____ # Trailers: _____ # Vendors: _____

Banquet Attendance: _____

Please complete within 30 days of Muster/Conference and forward copies to:

Bill Blunden, Executive Secretary billblunden@gmail.com

Richard Quetta, National Conference Chairman richag1@verizon.net