

Now for what I am calling “Our Year of Renewal”.

Forgive me, but in advance, you must know that this is necessarily personal. In order to tell the story, it will be necessary to refer to myself as that was the way it was: moving onward! The concepts from which I operate have already been put forth.

I was hired into the NC SAA in 1972 as an Area Director. Shortly after my hiring, I was approached by Senior Administration of the Department and told that there was something that needed attention and I was told that I would also be administering the licensing law of for-profit Proprietary Schools until something else could be worked out. I was given no additional pay, no job description, no oversight, and no resources, including financial, with which to accomplish this “short term until something else could be worked out” project! (This “short term” lasted eighteen years.)

The first woman to be hired into a professional staff position in an SAA, I was unwelcome in either the State or the Federal arenas. My hiring was on the cusp of the so-called feminist movement and I was only one of four women in an Agency employing over 500 persons at the Professional level and the first to be hired by an SAA. So I figured if I was unpopular before even starting, there would be nothing unexpected if I voiced my opinions about how things were being done and could be done better. I was elected to my first office in NASAA in 1978. I was elected NASAA President in 1981/'82 after having served two terms in each of the lesser offices. Spotlight and rejection was on me from day one.

So getting involved in any endeavour to learn more about the licensing process and oversight and what really needed to be done was not high on my list, especially since it was “temporary”. However, there was a citizen population out there expecting things from me whether or not I was paid to do them and I was determined to be a good and perfect public servant, to set a good example for both women and men. I began to try to self-prepare, as time permitted, to equip myself to do the job. It is a very much longer story than that but that is enough to set the stage for what followed.

The split from NASAA was followed by high enthusiasm for the different organization of the States’ Administrators and Supervisors of the for-profit schools and the conveners gave it a grand and careful start. However, the practices of the NASAA, over the long haul, did not serve the interests of the different Association. There was no unifying object, such as the identified special population to be served and the federal contract to which all were bound. Instead, there were 50 States’ constitutions to be considered! The Administrative codes for multiple in-state boards and commissions, as well as the encroachment inroads of the Feds into States Rights.

After 14 years and 10 Presidents, NASASPS, had lost or not achieved its initial objectives. I had been to only one meeting, the one day fly-in to New York City, called by President Libby Huggins from Florida, in 1985.

Most of the discussion, at that meeting, was about what to do to re-energize the Association. Attendance was low. Morale was low. Turnover among the States' Regulators was high. Harsh criticisms flowed seemingly from everywhere that we collectively were not doing our jobs, etc. No model and no real job description existed and no one seemed to know how to get one. The original borrowed NASAA organizational structure did not seem to serve the purpose. Too many Officers, Vice Presidents, Committees, Committee Chairs. Lots of observations and complaints but no proposed solutions offered. Controversy over who would serve the Presidency and why. I was ready to slip quietly away as I could see that there would be no innovations or insights gained that merited my staying any longer. I had stacked up my things and was waiting for the session to end and planned to quietly get on my way as I had two full time jobs to do waiting for me back at the office.

When the session broke up and I was gathering my things to leave, Andrew Gasperez from Louisiana, approached and asked if he could speak with me. We left the meeting room and sat outside on a sofa and he explained to me the dilemma. He, as Chair of the NASASPS nominating committee, and the others who were members of the Nominating Committee, had a decision to make. They could recommend or offer a resolution that the Association be dissolved and take forward no slate, or they could find a presidential candidate who might bring them out of the indifference and inaction posture to which it had sunk following the initial enthusiasm and energy. He told me that they would support and cooperate with me at every turn and asked my consent to be nominated for NASASPS President. I asked him what they wanted me to do. He said they did not know but whatever I thought might save the Association and uplift them into a functioning practice at least resembling professionals. With everything in me screaming "NO" I said I would try.

To be candid, it was an absolute joy to work with the Group. Everyone was appreciative, cooperative, and supportive of everything that was proposed and gave it their best shot to cooperate and help make it a success. They genuinely wanted leadership into professional insights and practices. So it began!

My first thought was to call an Executive Committee meeting and start with using consensus management premises to energize and motivate the Group. After much self examination and analysis of the reasons for the lagging enthusiasm for the Group was that no one really had a grasp of what or how. So I used a benevolent Dictator posture and began to self set some achievable goals that could hopefully result in an awakening. What was the thing that made Groups such as this one succeed? What could be done that would be stimulating, generate interest, and motivate people to come a meeting? Conclusions: First, a flow of meaningful information to the membership, on a regular basis. Second, a good solid meaningful meeting program. Third, recognition for successful superior efforts made by others along the way. Better communication lines among all factors. The first meeting after my election was entirely my own doing. If it failed no one else would need to take the blame.

I made touch with all of the elected Officers, Vice Presidents, and Committee Chairs, an awkward unwieldily structure with overlaps, and gave them a charge in writing, a measurable task, and made suggestions as to how to do it. One in particular was an Honors and Awards Committee - a concept borrowed from NASAA. I charged them to research the history and find those who really had made an extra effort to bring the Association to a respected position and to have appropriate plaques or recognitions made for each. AND to inform them of the intention to recognize them at the next meeting. Even if they had moved on to other things, bring them back to say thank you for their extraordinary efforts. They went about it with enthusiasm.

The next was to devise a program and a format that would be predictable, dependable and could be duplicated in structure meeting after meeting. At that time, airfares and hotel costs were coordinated. If one stayed over a Saturday night, good discounts for each were available. Naturally, cash strapped government entities, took advantage of this. The format went something like this. First evening, a reception to greet officers and program participants and one another with a welcome from the host city's government or other. Two consecutive all day meetings in a workshop format. Next morning, devoted to Association business. Afternoon free for exploring the area. Evening - a banquet given over to a speaker of note, awards to those who had made a recognizable contribution, election of officers, and passing of the gavel. Next morning, a breakfast between the outgoing and incoming Executive Committees. All were charged in writing with what needed to be done by each officer and Committee Chair and my assistance offered.

I asked myself why was I disappointed or perhaps indifferent about NASASPS? If it was my reaction then it was probably that of most who might have been participating and contributing and weren't. I identified the elements that I thought needed addressing. The first day of the first meeting I conducted was given over to contacts with other entities with whom we needed to interact and exchange information and who were our loudest critics. I had made a personal commitment that everything that occurred would in some way contribute to how we better could do our jobs, how we might conceive it differently or broader, and that each should leave every session with something substantive, relative. I found a young lawyer who was doing his pro bono hours by speaking to various governmental entities on "Public Officer Responsibility". We sat in stunned silence when he had finished! Then the whole assembly erupted into applause and cheering. I breathed a deep sigh of relief. We were off to a good start toward our renewal.

Next came the Federal Offices who were so critical of us. I charged each speaker or panel with giving us information about how they could help us do our jobs better. I told each that there could be no criticism - only ways they perceived that they could assist us. The Federal Trade Commission and the US Office of Education were the two headliners. (To be honest, I am doing this from memory, and don't recall who else.) At the last minute the USOE informed me that they would not be in attendance. No explanation. No substitute. No apology. I was devastated. They were the headliners - probably the real reason our meeting attendance that year had significantly improved. I

became a tsunami in DC. I contacted everyone there that I knew and requested that they either call or visit and criticize the Office or reprimand them for failure to do their job. They showed and promised me that they would never again refuse my requests! We went on to establish good cooperative relations with them, resulting in quarterly nation wide telephone conferences. One of the things that floored me was that they did not seem to know that there was more than one Policy Board or Commission in each state with some singular responsibility toward a kind of for-profit school. As a result, they were focusing only on one segment of the total population - those Schools that had come into focus because of adopting the ESC proposal. In my own state, intended to be a model, I organized the Proprietary Schools Round Table, consisting of all of the policy boards with a proprietary schools component and we had periodic teleconferences with the USOE specific to our state. I do not know or do not remember whether others states followed through or not. I suspect that some did. Others may have been forbidden by state law or policy to conduct such - another story! My state Round Table developed a brochure that each sales person was required to give to their prospect prior to any meeting with them. That was shared with others. The most common question I had asked me was how and from whom did I get permission to do these things. The answer - no-one - as the lead professional, it was my job! A surprising insight!

Following each presentation, during that first meeting of my Presidency, we went into workshop mode with the presenter for open forum. One general thing worth mentioning here is the operating structures of the Feds and the several States. The Federal Government exists by the Rule of Law. Law, Rules, Regulations, Standards, Advisories - measurables. Its focus is always enforcement of law and recrimination for short comings or errors found. In contrast, all of the States operate under their own different Constitutions - and they are NOT mini versions of the US one. State Legislations are enablers, Policy stems from the enabler, and Local Option to implementation. Flexibility is paramount to meet the needs of the citizens that each Local is charged to serve. Errors found are corrected toward improvement rather than punished.

At the end of the first day, the enthusiasm was high, we were on a roll!

The second day we went into state level concerns. I had finally persuaded a State's Attorney General, speaking from the Association of Attorneys General, to speak to us in closed session, on how we might learn to administer a law with no guidance, no job description, except the most general. This was agreed to only if we did not put it into the published program and my assurances that no one would ever contact any office but their own AG. He did give us insights as to why ours was a most difficult job. Referring to Articles I and X of the US Constitution. I used one or two of the States' Administrators who had had Proprietary Schools licensing laws in effect for a long time. It took some doing to get them to open up and share some of the problems and errors of administering a state law that accessed so many other laws both state and federal. (I'm sorry I'm not recalling the other sessions; but you get the idea.)

We ended the second day with a “Where Does the Wheel Rub” and “What Works” session of open forum. I had requested each attendee to come prepared to share how they had solved a problem - not a problem that needed to be solved BUT one that had been solved. Surprise! There was a high level of competence among us and we could be of benefit to one another in ways not previously contemplated. True, each had to be responsive to the legislative operating principles of one’s own state, but, operating procedures can be adjusted to fit principles of the state of residence. Secondly, we recognized that the Feds had no educational jurisdiction in our states. Their agreements with students in our schools were not, technically, our responsibility. They needed to ask for our help rather than demand that we enforce their laws and rules. The infamous, defunct SPRE grew out of that!

The third day morning, The Nominating Committee recommended that we continue with the same slate of officers with election by acclimation - in effect, just extending our terms for another year. That year a joint “pass the gavel meeting” was not necessary. Instead we talked about what each could do to further the gains we had achieved.

Still not ready to turn over the meetings to group decision planning until I had successfully introduced at least one session on the major issues that confronted all of us. I concentrated on those issues that would always be ongoing. Dealing with Accreditation conflicts, Student Aid, SAAs, Consumer Protection inquiries, conducting State level licensing workshops, Secretary of State Corporate Divisions, etc. Where I could find anyone among us who had done or dealt with any of these things, they were gerry mandered to at least make a presentation. In my own state, using the Proprietary Schools Round Table, we had succeeded in getting a consistent pro rata refund requirement introduced into every law that had a for-profit proprietary school component. I had my own meeting with the the Regional Accrediting Body of my Region to discuss and gain insights into the crucial issues of their resistance to accrediting for-profit Schools.

The “What Works” component continued to be asked for and the participation was high. We began to ask one another if anyone had dealt with a particular kind of situation and to be of help to one another. We were able to offer descriptions of our own efforts and suggestions that might be of benefit in the future to others. There was communication state to state after returning home.

During my continuing terms, I realized that unless I would be President forever I needed to get into developing leadership from among the members. I could observe and feel the confidence and strength that was developing within the Association as it was beginning to become its own master! I charged the Nominating Committee with obtaining a slate of officers who could do the jobs and preferably who could/would move up and bring along others. We had serious discussion about how to assess one’s experience and achievements to contribute toward meeting the current needs of the Association rather than their popularity among the members or their ethnic characteristics. I charged the incoming officers to give attention to streamlining the

Association. There were features borrowed from NASAA that were not needed and served no purpose toward advancing the different cause of NASASPS. Plus other things that needed to be acknowledged and some that needed to be abandoned that served no purpose toward our future advancement. Also, a need to define in finite terms the status of schools coming under the laws administered by the several states. i.e., For Profit only. That way there would be no overlap or encroachment and the intent of focus of everything from programs to jurisdiction clearly delineated. Members had the talent already - or they would not be in the jobs they were chosen for - and they now grasped the concepts of an effective organization and how to crystalize them and use it. As I moved on, I left with the confidence that NASASPS would continue to mature and evolve into a significant player on the field of education oversight.

The Program Committee requested of me that I would be the banquet speaker for the banquet at the end of my last term. I gave my infamous speech consisting entirely of initials and icons from government entities and affiliates. As I was finishing, Mr. Phil Roush, a member and an Education Commissioner in the State of Indiana, stepped up and asked to interrupt. Then on behalf of the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools, the Honors and Awards committee, and all of the attendees, he presented me with the first and maybe the only Distinguished Service Award bestowed by NASASPS. All other awards were suspended for that meeting. I was humbled beyond description. I also realized that our real goal had been met - the Association was now self aware and ready to govern and sustain itself!

A Very brief thumbnail sketch and some highlights of Our Year(s) of Self Renewal!

Now some of the outcomes. NASASPS became something of a model, a source for inspiration and enlightenment. I was contacted by States wanting to know how to energize a Round Table. I was told by a reporter from the BBC in England that the US Office of Education had told him that if anyone in the US could answer his question it would be the President of NASASPS. As NASASPS President, I was invited to give Congressional Committee testimony twice. I was tapped, by my presence as NASASPS President, to be a reader to the proposed regulations of the US Office of Education. Later, when the now infamous SPRE was proposed, I was brought in as an advisor to the USOE. (I did not tell them that I was no longer NASASPS president! They didn't ask. If NASASPS appeared to have a seat at the table, that was good enough for me!) I was tapped to be Deputy Director of SPRE when it happened. The following President of NASASPS, Dr. Jane Stockdale, a consummate professional, became a prominent advisor in the SPRE set up activities and was a good and effective President for us. During a part of the time of all of these activities, I was completing my Master's Degree - an MBA - with a concentration in Management. I did my thesis on Proprietary School Licensing. That is still probably in the Wake Forrest University archives. I was invited to write Friend of the Court briefs by prosecuting attorneys involved in suits with Proprietary schools in states other than my own. I was detailed for trials as an expert witness in more than one state. I was interviewed for articles in the Reader's Digest and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Gave multiple

media interviews. Always, one of my listed credentials was my extended Presidency of NASASPS. You are with me always!

(Incidentally, all of this and still doing a job that did not exist and for which I was never paid!) By the time of the end of my last year Presidency, our state legislature had acted and the adult education programs assigned to the State Department of Public Instruction were transferred to either the State board of Community Colleges or to the State University System. The Proprietary Schools went to the Community Colleges and the Veterans' Program eventually went to the University General Administration. I chose to go with the one that was paid! I finished out my last NASASPS attendance as a consultant as I was no longer a State Administrator or Supervisor!

It was an exciting time for us! We were no longer viewed as insignificant, or interlopers, or imitators! We were developing into a professional organization that could effectively get things done. I look at what we are now - and I will always think in terms of "us" and "we"! I congratulate you on what you have achieved. I am so proud to have been a part of it. I may have been the energizing catalyst but that was all you needed. Actually you yourselves were the real catalyst in first seeking help to rescue your selves from the creeping dysfunction. Thank you for the opportunity - look at what it did for me!

As a parting thought, if the concept of identifying "leveling" of skills and knowledge development could be introduced into the states licensing or acknowledgement process, based on expected outcomes and teacher specialties, accompanying textbooks and equipment, and identified on the license issued to an entity, much of the confusion about whether an entity is a University, College, or School could be by-passed. This could be accomplished by a NASASPS task force, whose task would be to identify minimum levels of achievement for each level of skill within a specialty or discipline. Much of the work is already done and research into labor laws, accreditation, ESSA, etc. might bring those forward and synthesize them into a usable measure for assigning a "level" to an entity. (i.e., Main Street Trade School/College/ University - Level One or Levels One and Two, etc.) based on what the entity has equipped and set itself up to do that can be observed and verified on site. This could serve to eliminate advertising conflicts, and give a reasonably good estimate of what a prospective student can expect, by referencing those concepts already introduced and practiced. I would recommend a NASASPS produced position statement with definitions and explanations, adopted by resolution, that entities might use to establish the entities' "bona fides". It might become a part of the licensing package given to initial inquirers and also a part of the renewal of license process for reminder.

Now a word of caution, and it is a liberty I am taking because I do not expect to ever stand before a podium again. Our Institutions in this country are in chaos. Not that that is necessarily bad but there are some rough rides ahead. When and where ever federal money flows there will be commercial opportunities created. Federal encroachment on States prerogatives is ever present. The federal government has nationalized the National Guard. Health Care has been nationalized. Education is now

being worked on and with stealth is being moved toward nationalization. (Watchword: CONSTRUCTIVE) It has been found in the Higher Education Re-authorization act, the National Defense Education act and several lesser others. Where that appears in the language of any federal law or rules or regulations, it is a “legal fiction” giving the federal government the ability to override a state’s action under their constitution and set it aside and without due process. States will be charged or intimidated with enacting strong laws and instituting equitable policies favorable toward nationalization.

Coming soon to a theatre near you Within the next decade or sooner, you will be either charged or attacked to do things differently. By 2050 the world’s population will rise by 50% to 3 Billion. Peace tends to do that! Be aware, be alert, be on guard. Don’t let your selves again become the fall guys for encroachment and failures and suppressions that will befall formalized education and private enterprise. With that, I will take my leave. God Speed and caress you.