Publicity and Training

This section addresses what has been missing ever since the KWVA DB System was made available to Chapters and Departments.

It addresses: 1) making the Chapters and Departments properly aware of the System, and 2) providing needed DB System training.

Awareness, AKA Publicity

I am not sure when I first became aware of the DB system. But, I am sure that since then I have received absolutely no training on how to use it. I'm not aware of any effort by the Association to train Chapter of Department leaders.

I have been attending Department of Florida (DFL) Council and Annual Meetings since May 2007; the only training session provided at these meetings was one I presented at an Annual Member Meeting in Crystal River in 2012!

The only context the DB has been mentioned at these meetings has been in having Chapters ensure that they are compliant with some not well elucidated requirement that Chapters do not understand well. Normally, Mr. Feaster hands out printed reports to all Chapters present, which he uses to ask Chapters to research some problem and to get it corrected.

While I do believe most Chapters are aware of the KWVA DB, I know they do not know how to use it very well, if at all! And, not infrequently, they just shrug it off, and decide to hell with it!

On the publicity question, I thought that Graybeards might contain some significant insight. So, I searched 7,234 pages of Graybeards from 2000 to mid-2015 for several words.

"KWVA Database" was found 11 times, and "membership database" occurred 7 times in this near-fifteen year period.

None of the 18 combined references was in association with explaining how to use the System; most were buried in the Business Section of Graybeards, and addressed compliance. Mr. Feaster explained compliance requirements on pg. 14 of the May-June 2008 Graybeards; I do not recall ever seeing this article although I was using the System by then.

This is not really a very significant campaign to publicize the DB.

It may be that no one recognized the ability of the KWVA DB System to meet operational needs at either Chapter or Department levels. If true, then it is time to begin now to make it serve all KWVA entities.

It would be extremely beneficial to educate Chapters and Departments on how the system could help them better manage their specific information and improve their ability to communicate with their members. Major benefit would accrue, not to Chapters and Department, but to the Association because users would ensure information in KWVA DB is complete!

Training

In the above research on the KWVA DB System, I also looked for "training" in various configurations and combinations, e.g., KWVA Database Training-0 results; Database Training-0 results; database training-0 results; and simply "training" which yielded 982 results; none of these contained a relationship to the KWVA DB.

I looked for "user manual" which yielded one (1) result in the July - August 2014 Graybeards. This was an AD for my Association Membership Database (MDB) User Manual, that I had submitted to Mr. Sharp on my own. See right.

I am not certain how many Chapter and Department members who access the DB looked at this manual; I have received a spattering of feedback, all of whom said they found the online manual helpful.

Association Membership Database (MDB) User Manual Operational On DoF Website

An interactive User Manual giving precise detailed instructions on how Chapter and Department officials can better use the KWVA Association Membership DB (a.k.a. Master Database) is now operational by clicking on the bottom brown button on the left menu at the DoF website, www.dfl.kwva.org.

The site has five web pages, one for each chapter, and includes sections or chapters on the following: Cover, Introduction, Chapter Access to MDB, Department Access to MDB, Excel & CSV Output, and Copy & Paste Output. One additional page encompassing System Needs to make it more usable is planned. When completed it will be added to the site.

The site itself is open to everyone, but the Database requires a User Name and Password to access (a section on how to obtain a User Name and Password is covered in the page entitled Chapter Access).

All Chapter and Department officials are encouraged to use the Manual. Feedback at the above email is encouraged.

Tom J. Thiel, KWVA Department of Florida, DoF Secretary, kwvathiel@gmail.com, 352-408-6612

I seem to remember Mr. Feaster referring to this user manual; but am unable to locate the specific reference, even with electronic searching.

A physical or printed training book could be of significant benefit.

Some reported printing my online manual. It was not prepared to serve as a printed manual, and I therefore do not think it reasonable to print it directly from the website.

But, it should be easily converted to a printed manual, I think. I might do that.

It would be good to have someone evaluate it first, but I know of no one who could do that (from a Chapter and/or Department view).

It would be extremely beneficial to train Chapters and Departments on how the KWVA DB system could help them better manage their specific information and to improve their ability to communicate with their members. Chapters and Department would, therefore, gain because they could use it better, but the major benefits would accrue to the Association!

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