

2009 IGRA Annual Convention
Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel, Toronto, Ontario
Growth & Planning Committee Report
November 15, 2009

The IGRA Growth & Planning Committee met from 3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Friday, November 13, in the High Park I meeting room. There were 12 participants present representing 11 associations in addition to the committee chairman. One was a first time convention participant.

The meeting began with introductions a brief history of the past roles and responsibilities of the Growth & Planning committee. We discussed an advanced standing rules proposal to limit rodeos to one per weekend. The committee members expressed opinions, both pro and con, with respect to the proposal. Having more than one rodeo per weekend may place great stress on our contestant, volunteer, officials and spectator pools. However, climate and scheduling issues, especially other calendar restrictions under consideration at this convention, mean that our full rodeo calendar cannot be reasonably accommodated if there is a limit of one rodeo per weekend. Additionally, such a limit would impair future rodeo growth. Although there was a general consensus recognizing the strength of both arguments for and against an increased restriction, the committee voted 10 to 1 against imposing any further limitation at this time. They chose to stand by the limit of no more than two rodeos per weekend, those being restricted to at least 500 miles (804 km) apart.

The committee discussed concepts of growth for our individual associations, particularly member recruitment and retention. We asked chancellor Jeffrey Neal to investigate adding a resource (either a seminar or part of a seminar) at IGRA University to assist in the development of practices that expand our organizations. Possible best practices in this area include:

- Use access to and participation in University to expand our leadership teams (CCGRA)
- Make our associations about more than rodeo; hold regular (monthly) social and events, big and small; look outside of our central cities to expand these possibilities (ARGRA)
- Develop traveling rodeo arena and chute crews as a means to growth connectios within our associations and to assist others (CCGRA)
- Focus on who our members are and what they get or expect out of gay rodeo; why we do what we do? (charity, community, competition, other?) (ILGRA)
- Find ways to introduce new participants to a higher level of involvement; give them new experiences (SCCGRA)
- Establish various levels of membership to lessen quorum problems (NGRA)
- Recruit younger participants in bars and elsewhere; increase our exposure, especially our outreach to women (GSGRA)
- Use existing resources to increase our outreach; examples include bulletin boards at a community center, distinctive chuck wagon booth and public calf roping opportunities at pride events; placing organizational information listings in gay press directories (SCCGRA)
- Find other groups to connect with, particularly sports groups; develop a mentoring program for contestants to share there skills and experiences (CGRA)

- Find occasions (other than rodeo) to expand our outreach to media outlets; try to focus on the multiple dimensions (not just the high profile aspects) of IGRA; be protective in limiting who represents us in interactions with the media (NGRA/ARGRA)
- Involve our charity partners in our events and make a dedicated effort to become more involved in theirs; coordinate activities with other IGRA associations (SCCGRA/CCGRA)
- Hold meet and greet or community events that are not just pleas for funds; we need to be careful not to make everything we do be about requesting money from others (SCCGRA)

We hope that by documenting these ideas that more organizations may be prompted to give something new a try in order to increase the growth of gay rodeo.

I want to thank all members of the committee for their serious and thoughtful contributions to our deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Lentz
 Growth & Planning Committee Chairman
gmlentz@yahoo.com

Meeting Attendees (✓ indicates voting member):

Name	Assn		Name	Assn	
Janie Van Santen	ARGRA	✓	Mark Larson	NSGRA	✓
Wes Wilkinson	SCCGRA	✓	John Stortz	CCGRA	✓
Elizabeth Anderson	GSGRA		Michael Lackey	TGRA	✓
Chris Keene	GSGRA	✓	Taylor Spangle	SMRA	✓
Steven Guidry	CGRA	✓	*Hardy Mullannix	HSRA	✓
Patrick Terry	ILGRA	✓	Jeffrey Neal	NGRA	✓
*first time participant					