

# CPR for Dying Chapters

By Marjy Leggett

*The following are ideas presented at the Leadership Training in Providence in July of 2012. All of these suggestions may not work for you, but some may help to get you started. If you have additional ideas, please send them to [MarjyL@charter.net](mailto:MarjyL@charter.net). The goal is to provide a source on line that struggling chapters can go to for help.*

So, it seems your chapter is struggling with its last breath. It's down to only a few of you left and it looks like you will never be the vibrant chapter you once were. What can you do to revitalize and energize the chapter? Here are some suggestions for keeping your chapter alive:

## Where to Start?

- Sit down with another from your chapter and have a brainstorming session
- Contact all current and former members
- Hold an emergency meeting
- Lay it all out—"Our chapter will fold if we don't recruit members."
- Chapter Chairman's Guide: 99s website/Library/Scroll to Forms, Lists, & Guides



## Location, Location, Location

- Find a meeting place
- Various peoples' homes -not recommended (Can be intimidating for new people)
- Restaurants with meeting space work well (Also hangars & FBOs) FBO is often delighted to host a meeting place for women pilots.
- Provide food
- Provide stability—same place or schedule, same time, same day
- Consider what does your chapter name convey? (Example: Santa Paula Chapter made people think they had to be from the Santa Paula Airport. Changing the name to Ventura County was much more inclusive.)



## Recruitment



- Remove barriers that were excuses not to come (By allowing husbands, women couldn't say, "I can't leave my husband." Mothers with children. Provide or share transportation for those not able to drive/fly on their own.)
- Contact past members
- Work with other aviation organizations (Example: At FAA seminars, provide cookies, then walk around asking women in attendance if they are a right seater or a left seater.)
- Partner with EAA or state pilot functions for local events
- Keep your chapter's name in the news—PR
- Contact the newspaper, radio, or TV whenever your chapter does a project such as an airmarking, compass rose, or Kids' Aviation Day
- Reach out to the community with events such as Flying Companion (Someone may know someone who would like to be a 99.)
- Work with Girl Scouts and get your name in the news

- Partner with FBOs
- Set up a scholarship fund. Many people will join just because of the scholarship opportunities.
- Be an ambassador. Promote the Ninety-Nines wherever you go. (Person in seat next to you on airline flights.)
- Wear your 99s pin. It may spark curiosity and an opportunity to talk about the 99s. (Sometimes in the strangest places, such as the doctor's office!)
- Join other organizations, such as your local EAA. Give reports on the activities your 99s chapter is doing. It may inspire some of the men to send their wives your way.
- Contact local instructors, flight schools, and FBOs. Ask them to let you know when they have a new female student pilot.
- Check out the FAA list of pilots in your area. Contact the ones that appear to be female names.
- Run a small announcement in the newspaper of an upcoming meeting. (Meeting announcements are usually free.)
- Make it easy to join. Carry applications with you when you go to meetings or to the airport.

### Organization

- Provide a speaker from outside the group (flight instructor, FAA workers, someone from aviation industry, DOT, Air Traffic Controllers, Mayor, Government agencies, Aviation Insurance Companies, maintenance shop worker, local pilots (Don Sorrels giving talk on WWII), Aviation Medical Examiners)
- Keep the topic interesting
- Everyone (spouses and friends included) should be invited to the dinner and speaker. Hold business meeting afterwards
- Always have a printed agenda
- Keep meetings short
- Look for potential 99 leaders from outside organizations. (Example: One chapter found an enthusiastic leader who had been president of a Zonta group.)
- Meet regularly (Monthly is best. Don't skip meetings.)



### Keeping up the Enthusiasm

- Drawings (example: drawing for a turkey at Thanksgiving time)
- Work on personal investment—getting people to buy into it
  - Photographer, web designer, Facebook poster, newsletter editor, Fly-out organizer, Media or Public Relations)
- Provide lots of motivational activities
- Have a positive attitude
- Motivational, enthusiastic leadership
- Have a variety of activities - Make use of free local resources
  - Museums, Tower Tours, Fly outs, picnics, glider flights
- Include husbands in the activities. They get to know other participants and want to participate even more, encouraging their wives to attend the events and meetings.
- Create a sense of community among your members
- Adopt an airport. Having a sense of purpose will help retain members.
- Bring the old (experienced) and the new together - Old charts compared with new charts.
- Retreats
- Be a mentor

- Take pictures. Post them on Facebook, your Chapter Website, mail in to 99News Magazine, build a chapter scrapbook.
- Establish a mission & goals, but keep it within the 99s mission (Examples: Scholarships, community education, Safety, Recognition, Recruitment, etc.)
- Pilots are leaders. Assign projects, jobs, & tasks to keep the members engaged.
- Make the meetings fun, Make them worthwhile (People are busy) and Never give up (It's possible for chapters down to two active members to rejuvenate themselves and once again become robust.)

### **Financial Stability**



- Sponsor a Kids' Aviation Day, charging each student \$5 to attend.
- Applebee's Pancake Fundraiser. (Also California Pizza and Panda Express have fundraiser programs for nonprofit organizations.)
- Rent chairs at airshows for two or three dollars apiece
- Regular Raffles or 50/50 Split Raffles
- Flying Companion Seminars
- Raffle for flights in special planes, i.e. Stearman, Citabria, Long Easy, Vans RV, etc.)

Marjy Leggett - [MarjyL@charter.net](mailto:MarjyL@charter.net) H: 509-547-4347 C: 509-302-9624