

WHAT IS SOUTH CENTRAL ANYWAY? And how does it work?

By: Jim Rutledge, 47th President of SCABB

Have you ever been to AABB? Yes, that's right, AABB not the American Association of Blood Banks. That's what it used to be called before it got so big and a lot more than just "America" was attending. It's so big in fact that those who are new to blood banking and transfusion medicine can feel lost at its annual meeting, intimidated by complex-sounding workshops, and more than a little overwhelmed by it all.

That's where SCABB comes in, or the South Central Association of Blood Banks as many of us would rather refer to our organization. Ok, we're not tiny, that's for sure. And *South Central* is a little bit of a stretch when you remember that Arizona and Nevada are included along with seven other states. But still, we're smaller than AABB so that members can be more comfortable, and the Association can more quickly respond to individual and institutional needs. We're certainly much less overwhelming.

History

On December 7, 1947, delegates from 31 Texas cities representing hospitals and blood banks that were actively engaged in the recruiting, collecting, processing, testing, and transfusing of blood, met in Dallas, Texas. As a result of that meeting, the Texas Association of Blood Banks was formed. Its goal was to provide blood in the safest and most effective manner to the patient.

Although hospital transfusion services were active, blood banking itself was in its very infancy back then.

In 1958, the TABB opened its doors to neighboring states. Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Oklahoma joined with Texas, and a new name was born – the South Central Association of Blood Banks (SCABB). The Association was chartered as a non-profit in the State of Texas, a charter that remains in effect to this day.

Over the years, Arizona, Colorado and Utah subsequently joined South Central, forming a union of nine states. Utah eventually dropped out but, as I mentioned earlier, Nevada has now joined in.

Assuming that elementary math is part of your skill-set, you can now figure out why South Central is celebrating its 50th year in 2008.

Management

In the early days, the affairs of the Association were easily managed by volunteer members, but eventually that became impossible. Now the Association retains the services of Strat-e-gy Association and Event Management to manage, on a daily basis, the business affairs of the Association.

Duties include but are not limited to handling the financial accounts of the Association and preparing monthly financial and operational reports; assisting in the preparation of the annual budget; membership registration and dues collection; maintaining the Association's records including membership data; responding to membership inquiries; assisting in the promotion of the Association; directing the planning of the annual meeting; reporting to the board of directors on such matters as insurance, finances, IRS regulations, association legal issues and membership status; publishing the Association's newsletter PULSE 4-6 times per year.

Structure

The South Central Association of Blood Banks operates under Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws that are the formal reference for Association structure and can be found in the Member section of the Website at <http://www.scabb.org/pdfs/06-scabb-bylaws.pdf>.

Elective positions and committee work are conducted by members who volunteer their time with no compensation. This unique spirit of volunteerism is essential to South Central's continuation as a regional leader in blood banking and related transfusion services.

The Board of Directors is headed by an annually elected President, President Elect, Vice President and Secretary. The elected Treasurer fills a three-year term, and is joined by the Immediate Past President to complete the Association's Executive Committee. Previous presidents are known as "has-beens," a status I hold with great pride.

There are five District Directors who are part of the full Board. Each is elected to a two-year term and represents Regions as follows: District I – Texas; District II – Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, Nevada, New Mexico; District III – Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi; District-at-Large – members residing elsewhere.

Lest you think there is a misprint in the previous sentence, let me clarify that there are indeed two District I positions. Texas is big, remember?

Committees

Two "standing" committees are specified by the bylaws. They are the Finance Committee, which proposes the annual budget and advises the board, and the Membership Committee, which develops ways to recruit and retain individual and institutional members. Twelve "special" committees ensure that the mission of SCABB is fulfilled. They are the Administrative Program Committee, Awards Committee, Bylaws, Donor Recruitment and Collections, Exhibits, Fundraising, Information Technology, Local Arrangements, Nominating, Planning, Protégé/Mentorship, Publications, and the Technical/Scientific Program Committee.

As you can tell, in order to make sure that South Central meets its commitment to the membership, a great many volunteers are needed. If you're reading this and not already on one or two committees, please consider getting involved. For details on the purpose and charge of each of these committees, check the Association's website at <http://www.scabb.org/comtechairs.htm>.

Mission:

And why is all this important? It has to do with fulfilling the Mission of the South Central Association of Blood Banks – to provide opportunities for members to enhance their abilities to deliver quality blood services. That's what South Central has been doing for the last 50 years, filling that the gap between your daily job and the immensity of the AABB.



SOUTH CENTRAL
Association of Blood Banks