



The Local Network

Volume 20, Number 4

2010



Unique Antique Car Museum
Marmarth, North Dakota

North Dakota Heritage Center Expansion

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Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations

What is StEPs?

StEPs is a voluntary assessment program for small- and mid-sized history organizations. The program, created by AASLH with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, encourages awareness and achievement of national standards. Organizations that

enroll in this self-paced, self-study program use assessment questions and performance indicators (basic, good, better) to rate their policies and practices in six standards sections. Participating organizations can clearly identify their strengths and areas needing improvement, and begin taking steps to plan for positive change.

How will this program benefit my organization?

StEPs offers:

- **Increased credibility** with funders, your community, and shareholders
- **Education and awareness of standards** for staff and volunteers, members of your governing authority, and your community
- **A valuable opportunity to make the case for improvement** to shareholders for staffing, training, materials, and equipment
- **Improved policies and practices** based on national standards
- **Clear direction** for future improvement
- **Meaningful progress** - identify, articulate, and measure your organization's accomplishments
- **Easier and more meaningful long-range and budget planning**
- **Preparation for participation in other programs** including AAM's Museum Assessment and Accreditation programs.

How much does StEPs cost and how do we enroll?

Enrollment is \$150 for AASLH institutional members and \$250 for non-members—this includes a one-year institutional membership. The enrollment fee is a **one-time payment** no matter if it takes your

organization two years or ten years to earn the certificates (all organizations must maintain an active AASLH institutional membership to be eligible for the Bronze, Silver, and Gold certificates).

What do we receive for the fee?

- **StEPs workbook** to help your organization assess operations, policies, and procedures and track progress
- **Active enrollment status** for as long as it takes your organization to complete the six sections (whether it takes two or ten years to work your way through the six sections, you pay the enrollment fee only once)
- **Certificates** for each of the six self-study sections your organization successfully passes
- **National recognition** on AASLH's website for certifications earned
- **Notification of your organization's enrollment** to service providers in your area (i.e., state and regional museum associations and field service offices) so they may offer assistance, workshop invitations, mentoring groups, etc., depending on their schedule of programs and services
- **Discounts on AASLH workshops and technical leaflets** to help staff and volunteers of your organization gain skills and knowledge
- **Window decal** indicating your organization's participation in the program
- **Access to the password-protected StEPs website** for news, additional resources, and discussion forums.

Who created the StEPs program?

AASLH has worked since 2005 to develop **StEPs** with the help of more than 130 people including museums and historic house staff and volunteers; staff from state, regional, and national associations and field service programs; consultants; and representatives of museum studies and public history programs. 47 small-and mid-sized sites across the country piloted the program.

Whom should I contact for more information about the StEPs program?

Contact Cherie Cook, AASLH senior program manager, at 573-893-5164 or at cook@aslh.org.



Bridges Across North Dakota

Hardcover. 155 pages. 11.5"x11.5"

This beautiful, full-color, coffee-table book features the Liberty Memorial Bridge, Four Bears Bridge, Rainbow Arch Bridge, and 55 other historic bridges across North Dakota.

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Credit: Photograph by Brian Austin

Due to the winter weather a symbolic groundbreaking for the \$52 million expansion project was held November 23 inside the North Dakota Heritage Center. Turning the soil are (l to r) former Governors Ed Schafer and Allen Olson, SHSND Director Merl Paaverud, SHSND Foundation Executive Director Virginia Nelsen, SHSND Foundation Development Director Marlo Sveen (without shovel), SHSND Foundation President Jon McMillan, Governor John Hoeven, former Governor William Guy, former First Lady Grace Link, and State Historical Board President Chester E. Nelson, Jr.

Construction Begins on \$52 Million North Dakota Heritage Center Expansion Project

Construction is now underway on the \$52 million North Dakota Heritage Center expansion project following groundbreaking ceremonies November 23 in the Heritage Center's Russell Reid Auditorium.

The 97,000-square-foot addition, which nearly doubles the size of the Heritage Center, will include new exhibit galleries, interactive exhibits, a 60-seat theater, a cafeteria and outdoor patio, a new glass entrance of the building's east side, and additional parking, and renovate existing portions of the facility.

The 2009 Legislative Assembly authorized \$51.7 million for the expansion of the exhibits and collections spaces of

the North Dakota Heritage Center. Of this, \$39.7 million in state funds was appropriated. The remaining funds are being raised by the State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation from other sources.

Merl Paaverud, director of the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND) said the expansion should be completed by 2014, in time for the 125th anniversary of North Dakota statehood.

For images and information about the expansion project, visit the State Historical Society's website at www.history.nd.gov.

