



North American Basque Organizations, Inc.

HIZKETA

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Negua 2007 Winter

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Volume 18:1



Essay Contest: Where should NABO be headed?



NABO is sponsoring an essay contest with a \$100 award for the single best entry. The point of reference for the essay is the following quotation: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Pr 29:18) As NABO prepares its four year plan, it is endeavoring to develop specific programs, but to serve a constructive purpose these programs/events should be to realize objectives in pursuit of a larger purpose.

The Basque Government recently released an introductory DVD entitled "Euskaldunak." Well written and produced, the program makes use of a metaphor: *estropadak* or the rowing boats of about a dozen men. The rowers look behind them as they row forward to make the point that Basque society keeps an eye on its past while it moves forward. Whereas the slogan "moving forward" can be very appealing, it by itself doesn't really give one much direction. From a starting point, forward can be in any one of 360 degrees of direction. When a team is rowing out into the sea, it's advisable that they have a direction to point their boat. If the people on the boat don't have a good idea where they are going, they might well just row out into nothing and ... we know how that ends. The point, therefore, is to examine in what direction should we--the Basques--point our boat? Go to the NABO website for more details.



NABO President's Message

NABO set an ambitious agenda for our last gathering in Nevada, and as we look back it's clear that we have taken some bold initial steps as a federation. A generation ago NABO was founded by many of the same people who were instrumental in forming their own local clubs, and since then NABO has endeavored to sustain those initiatives. Today, however, we confront new challenges and opportunities as new generations of Basque-Americans come into their own. That is why we are looking to not only sustain what we have, but also to explore some new initiatives that might serve to keep our youth more closely identified with their Basque heritage.

We can all learn from others and accordingly, we look forward to hosting a presentation by the federation of Basque organizations in Argentina (FEVA) at our next meeting as we continue our efforts to learn from one another about how to better take advantage of our combined resources. NABO is pursuing several worthwhile endeavors that aim to not only sustain our previously successful programs (e.g., Udaleku) but to also initiate some new ventures to address other needs (e.g., Gaztealdi). Thanks to the contributions of dedicated volunteers, we look forward to making 2007 another successful year. Urte berri on izan!

Mary Gaztambide

NABO President



Summit of Canada, Mexico & US delegations

A generation ago NABO began with the hope that someday a federation would embrace Basque organizations throughout North America--the name United States Basque Organizations was purposely not chosen. The weekend in Nevada was a significant step in that direction. Representatives from the clubs in Canada (Jean Claude Elissalde from Montreal, and Elena Sommer & Jon Laurenz from Vancouver), Mexico (Eduardo Ormaechea & his wife Miren Jauregi from the club in Mexico City) met with NABO representatives to look into the possibility of doing some things

together in the future. By design, there were no fixed initiatives decided (the first step was to just get acquainted) and now delegates will return to their communities to continue the discussions. There are some tentative plans to get together again this coming year to strengthen our relationships and get to know more people from these communities. The hope is that one day we can join together in some mutually beneficial endeavors. A follow-up is hopefully in the works. FMI visit www.naBASQUE.org



Dance-plus
workshop

First NABO Youth Facilitator meeting

NABO was pleased to have counted representatives from 15 different organizations that took part in our inaugural "get-acquainted" and brainstorming workshop for club youth facilitators. This is encouraging because our future viability as a Basque-American community is mostly dependent upon our ability to effectively transmit a sense of Basque identity to younger generations. The topics of discussion included the definition of youth, a presentation on the recently available book "Jokua eta Jolasa" that collects ways of educating children in things Basque via games and contests, as well as an open forum for raising issues of mutual concern to youth facilitators. Whereas dance remains a central element in connecting with Basque youth, the workshop explored other viable alternatives. After some open discussions, each facilitator endeavored to identify an item or two that they were going to try and use upon their return home. Furthermore, NABO is now poised to inaugurate Gaztealdi will be held the summer of 2007 for Basque young adults ages 16-20. This is a crucial age where many make their choice to identify with being Basque. Details will be forthcoming. There is also a plan to arrange a follow-up workshop for facilitators. The hope is to stay connected to share ideas about how to best keep young people involved. FMI visit www.naBASQUE.org



2007 last full time year for Aita Martxel Tillous

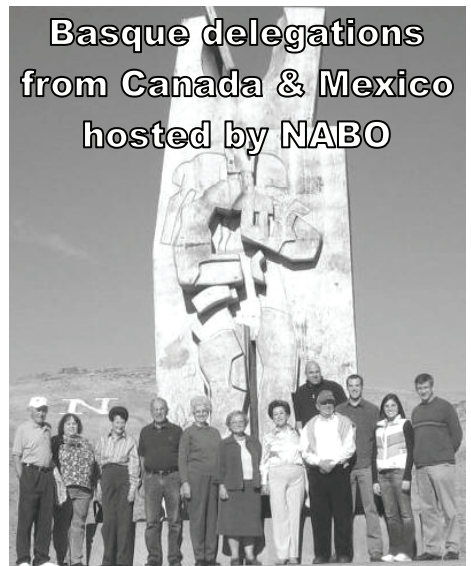
It is not likely that another will be sent: what will happen? You can find out more at our NABO website.

Basque Dance as Pesticide? An Open Inquiry



NABO is now in the business of education, to the extent that education holds the key to keeping people better informed and thus hopefully more closely identified with their Basque identity. NABO inaugurated its first college

Basque delegations from Canada & Mexico hosted by NABO



lecture series that featured Juan Antonio Urbeltz, a leading voice in the world of Basque folk dance. Mr. Urbeltz spoke at three US universities: the University of Nevada, Reno; California State University, Bakersfield and Boise State University. The talks began with an overview of his work across four decades, and then he spoke about his current revolutionary theory as to the origins of some Basque folk dances. His theory goes to one of the two categories of Basque dance: the ritual/religious dances (the second category is recreational/social dances). The prevailing paradigm revolved around the theme of these dances deriving from fertility rituals of magic. They were based on magical rituals, Urbeltz agrees, but the magic was not to bring the good (in this case fertility) but to ward off the bad (specifically the infestation of insects) which pre-moderns were largely helpless against. Special thanks to Lisa Corcostegui, Ph.D. for her assistance. FMI visit www.naBASQUE.org



NABO's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats

We have had many a meeting in NABO, but our last one in Gardnerville back in October was unique in several ways. For starters, delegates had previously agreed to alter the usual format to allow for some new items. This included the use of a timer for the first time, and this helped to remind people about how long they were speaking. The central feature, however, was a keynote presentation to delegates by Dr. Gloria Totoricaguena, Director of the Center for Basque Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno that had everyone talking afterwards--and that was the point. She challenged delegates to re-think what we were doing individually (in our clubs) as well as collectively on the NABO level. Her ideas then sparked a post-lunch open forum where for a couple of hours delegates shared various ideas from which several initiatives emerged. It was spontaneous, but it was clear that there are plenty of people who are committed to trying to do things well when it comes to keeping Basque culture alive.

We can all learn from others, and that is the lesson that NABO is taking to heart with some new initiatives. There have been a good many academic studies about the Basques, specifically how we have gone about maintaining our ethnicity. Our aim is to put some of this research and information to work for us. Dr. Totoricaguena gave us much food for thought, including the concept of SWOT analysis: identify the strength,

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weakness, opportunity and threat. That is what a group of volunteers is now at work doing that NABO delegates will examine at the Feb. meeting. Stay tuned!



Nor-zer garen: Who & what are we?

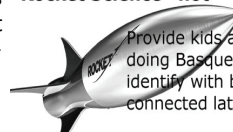
"Nor" in Basque means who; "zer" means what. NABO was founded as a federation of Basque entities that endeavor to promote Basque culture. For NABO to be worthwhile, we need to find out more about who and what we are; what are our needs & aspirations, etc.

NABO counts nearly three dozen member organizations but we lack an updated base of information about who and what we are. That is why NABO is commencing an effort to compile information about our Basque clubs & communities. This effort to compile this data is necessary for at least three reasons: we need this information to assist with the publication of a book on the history of NABO that is forthcoming; second the Basque Government is oftentimes blind when they are endeavoring to allocate financial assistance to entities of which they have only sketchy knowledge; and third, if NABO is going to better serve its members--we too need to better know who and what we are. Accordingly, NABO is commencing an effort to acquire this information so that together we might be able to provide mutual support.

The founding of NABO reaches to a meeting of Basque-Americans in Reno, Nevada back in March of 1973. The point of the meeting was a questionable proposal, especially considering Basque history. This group hoped to forge a federation and create a network within the larger Basque community of the United States. The Basque country, or "Euskal Herria," had never been "Zazpiak-Bat" (the seven provinces are one) representing a unified, self-conscious political community. Euskal Herria most often referred to just the local region. Basques from Bizkaia in the South, for example, had little interaction with Basques in the northern province of Zuberoa.

This detachment was reflected in the Basque communities of the United States. Basques of Bizkaian descent in parts of Idaho and Nevada interacted little with the Basques of California which were largely northern or "French Basque." Thus when delegates from the Basque clubs of Los Banos and San Francisco, California; Boise and Emmett, Idaho; Elko, Ely and Reno, Nevada; and Ontario, Oregon gathered together, they were well aware that there was little if any communication among the various Basque clubs of the American West. They were attempting to cross the divide--real and imagined--between Basque-Americans, and their venture remained uncertain. Would "French"

Rocket Science--not



Provide kids a fun, educational atmosphere doing Basque things and they will positively identify with being Basque and stay connected later in life.



Basques and "Spanish" Basques join a federation to work together? Would individual clubs set aside competition in an effort to preserve and promote their shared heritage? Now three plus decades and counting, the answer remains a resounding yes!

While we sure would like to see the number of members in local clubs grow, we nevertheless need to learn more about the people who are already there. Our Basque-American community might well be growing, but we need to guard against it just growing in breadth and not depth. An earlier reference to this cited the book title of years ago "Chorizo, Beans and other things." It was a collection of poems with some illustrations, but the title aptly captured the challenge confronting our evolving Basque-American community. We have it quite clear what chorizo and beans are (even though we might argue over the preferred recipe), but what about the "other things?" This is now NABO's focus. Whereas recreation is of course essential so that people enjoy themselves at Basque events, we also need to provide substance as well because a culture endures only if one generation succeeds in transmitting key elements to the next.



"Day of Basque" will be celebrated Feb. 17th in San Francisco

Once again NABO will be assembling Euskara instructors who have stepped up to teach Basque in their local communities to participate in a workshop. This is part of our ongoing effort to promote the learning and usage of Euskara. For more information go our NABO website at www.nabasque.org



Euskal Telebista's Top five Basque Songs

The Basque television and radio network EITB (Euskal Irratia/Telebista) asked various people and they came up with a ranking of the overall favorite songs that were then broadcast on television. While no one survey is definitive, this provides at least the basis for a lively debate to commence.

From a selection of 66 songs, their top five songs were:

1. Xalbadorren Heriotzean
2. Lau Teilatu
3. Eperra
4. Erribera
5. Txoria Txori ("Hegoak")