Journal of
RANGE MANAGEMENT
Volume 14, Number 6
November, 1961

Editorial
INCREASING SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Much is said and written each year about the need for more members, especially rancher members, in the American Society of Range Management. Each new Society President and in turn each Section Chairman, appoints a membership committee and instructs it to get new members. These committees dutifully talk to their Society and Section memberships and print written pleas in the Journal of Range Management and Section newsletters for new members. But, nothing ever happens! A significant number of new members just doesn't materialize. Wonder why?

Since the first big push for members, 1948 through the early 50's, increases in Society membership have been very small. Annually we pick up the new range graduates after they find employment and a few foreign students who, at best, are only mildly active for a year or two. Total membership was around 3000 five years ago and it is still about the same today.

The membership simply isn't increasing significantly and I think it is because we do not work hard enough at the job. It doesn't do any good to talk to the membership because everyone in it already belongs. There are no potential new members there. And the newsletter and Journal articles are read only by members—no potential there either. The fact is we talk and write only to ourselves! So—I'm doing the same thing, but maybe someone who reads this will become unhappy enough to listen to the following suggestions.

Someone has to do a little missionary work—sell the Society—if substatntial increases in membership are ever to be realized. Do you ever see anyone get on his feet at a meeting of ranchers and tell of the American Society of Range Management—what it stands for, what it does and what it can do for ranchers and other administrators of range lands? Do you ever hear anyone, any ASRM member, tell ranchers and stockmen that the American Society of Range Management publishes the Journal of Range Management, the only Journal of its kind in the world—the only professional Journal devoted entirely to range management and improvement? Do you ever see an advertisement or announcement in a livestock paper or journal concerning the American Society of Range Management or the Journal of Range Management? Of course not! The only announcement of the Journal of Range Management is in Herbage Abstracts. How many ranchers ever see that?

Members of ASRM, we are talking to ourselves on this membership thing. If we desire new members and we've got to have them to keep this thing going, someone is going to have to go out and get them.

We've a little money saved — what say we spend some of it for an increase in Society membership? Let's send the President or the President-elect or the Executive Secretary to the American National Livestock Association Convention and the National Woolgrower's Convention and perhaps the national meeting of the Soil Conservation Districts Association and the Farm Bureau Federation and have him man a booth in the convention headquarters of each and perhaps even make a speech on the program. These groups will go along — all we have to do is ask them. Let's tell some of these fellows that we want for members in ASRM something about the outfit — what it has done and what it is going to do. Some of them might join-up! It's a cinch they won't as long as they don't know anything about the American Society of Range Management.

Now, let's spend a little more of that saved-up money and ask John Chohlis to carry a half page layout about the American Society of Range Management in his monthly Western Livestock Journal. It wouldn't hurt to have such a spread in some livestock magazine every month. There are many good trade journals, The American Hereford Journal, The Cattleman and the National Woolgrower just to name a few. It isn't difficult to prepare such material in suitable form. I can do it and will if Doc Young and John Clouston will tell me to go ahead and will put up the money.

Well, this is the way I size-up this membership business. I wish I were wrong but I don't think I am. The Society and every Section is going to have to change tactics — get out and beat the bushes — if they want new members. E. J. WOOLFOLK