

Minutes of the 2009 NSS Vertical Section General Meeting July 23, 2009

The 2009 NSS Vertical Section meeting was held Thursday, July 23, 2009 at the Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas. Executive Board members present were Chair Dick Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boehle, At-Large Executive Members Miriam Cuddington, Terry Mitchell, and Bill Boehle (proxy for Brice Williams), Bruce Smith (proxy for Nylon Highway Editor Tim White), Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Terry Clark, Education/Training Coordinator Bruce Smith, and Contest Coordinator Bill Cuddington. Approximately 14 additional Vertical Section members were in attendance.

- I. **Meeting opened at 9:03 AM by Chair Dick Mitchell.**
Announcements - Welcome to everyone who came. Introduced EC members present and announced proxies. We are on a tight schedule and will try to quickly get through the meeting.
- II. **Minutes of the Last Meeting** - were published on the website and there were no amendments or changes. Minutes were accepted as published.
- III. **Officer Reports:**
 - o **Secretary's Report** - Bill Boehle. See attached. Accepted as presented.
 - o **Treasurer's Report** - Bill Boehle. See attached. No further discussion. Accepted as presented.
 - o **VS Symbolic Items** - Bill Boehle. See Treasurer's Report for sales numbers.
 - o **Nylon Highway Editor's Report:** -
Information from Tim White (not present). Tim has a question to the membership: Where should the Nylon Highway be headed? What would you like to see in future issues? Gary Storricks asked where were the printed issues he had paid for. Some of the issues that he had received only came after he inquired as to their whereabouts and Bill Boehle had followed up with Tim. It was explained that each January a list was sent to Tim for the issues that needed to be printed and mailed. Some members also think they had paid for a particular year only to find out that their paid subscription for the annual volume had run out in an earlier year. The EC agrees that paid annual volumes need to be mailed in a timely manner and will look into this as an action item. Other items a member raised as something they would like to see in the Nylon Highway were for more collaborative articles such as Section research projects on topics like the ergonomics of the Frog or Ropewalker systems. Such collaborative articles would present more diverse opinions and points of view than a single author article. Terry Clark stated that there are some ideas being developed for studies of this kind. Dick Mitchell requested that if any person or group has an idea for a project or for some type of original research that the Section should pursue that they should contact someone on the EC to volunteer to do the study or at least enable the EC to find someone who would be interested in doing the project.
- IV. **Committee Reports:**
 - o **By-Laws Committee:** Terry Mitchell & Bill Boehle -
Several amendments and additions were adopted in the previous year.
 1. Bill Boehle reported that the Section's fiscal year specified in Section 8 of the bylaws was changed to end on June 30 rather than May 31. This was done to aid our required annual filings of form 990-N with the IRS. This amendment was adopted on December 10, 2008.

2. In September 2008 an Awards Guidelines Committee was formed to establish a set of guidelines for Service Awards. The committee developed and presented a proposal for the EC to consider. After discussion and some modification, a new Section 5 Paragraph F and Section 7 of the bylaws was adopted on January 2, 2009.
3. Bill Boehle and Terry Mitchell have also been working on a bylaw addition addressing parliamentary procedure and the conduct of e-meetings by the EC. Since the EC has been conducting more business via email, the bylaws needed to be updated to address how these meetings should take place. This amendment was adopted on July 19, 2009.

All these are documented in various Section and EC minutes that have been, or will be, published in the Nylon Highway.

- **Contest Committee:** Bill Cuddington -
Thanks to PMI for donating 1200 feet of rope for the climbing contest. We were able to cut it up into three 300 foot and two 150 foot lengths for prizes. Thanks to Bill Stephens and Gonzo Guano Gear for contributing a lot of prizes to the contest. In addition, there was an anonymous donor who also contributed a lot of prizes to the contest. Thanks to all who help during the vertical contest. We had a lot of new people help out this year. We can always use more help. Without help it would be impossible to run the contest. We appreciate any help from section members and others with timing, pulling rope, running the rack (the raketees), etc. We also had the first Father/Son side-by-side climb with Ed and Ray Sira. This year we had 60 climbers with the participation of many of the international cavers. Several world records were set. Awards will be given out later today after the training class (workshop). Next year we will be going back to a day and a half for the contest.
- **Vertical Workshop Committee:** Terry Clark -
Last year we had 9 students. This year we have a full course of 35. Terry wants to recognize and thank the instructors who help him and Lynn run the vertical workshop. Thanks to PMI, Gonzo Guano Gear, and On Rope 1 for their support of the vertical workshop.
- **Education Committee:** Bruce Smith -
We had a lot of goals that we wanted to achieve this year. We completed the Intermediate Course and wanted to make it available via download for no charge on the website. We achieved that goal just two weeks ago. The changes to the Basic Training Course that were discussed last year have been incorporated and a new and improved version is now also available on the website. This includes the instructor's card for overcoming obstacles and dealing with blowouts. Without the printing and mailing being necessary, we elected to also make this material available for no charge. In keeping with our education mission, we feel it is more important to get the information out than to make a few dollars for the Section. Thanks to Tim White, Gary Bush, and Dick Mitchell for making this happen and getting both training courses completed and on the website.
- **Rebelay Course / "Dial In Your Gear" Session:** Gary Bush and John Woods -
This year there were less people who showed up for the rope course, but they were busy throughout the day. As in the past, John spent a lot of time with people setting up and adjusting their gear. It was well received by all who participated. This year we replaced our 10 year old ropes with new 9mm rope.

- **Web Page:** Gary Bush, webmaster -
Gary noted that we will be putting up a photo gallery on the website where we can display photos from past events. If anyone has photos of past meetings, contests, or other events, they should send them to Gary Bush to be included. Please identify dates, locations and people, if possible. If people would like other things on the website, send Gary an email and we will see what can be done. It was suggested that we could send out a request for ideas and suggestions for website content and Nylon Highway articles via the Section listserv.
- **Awards Committee:** Dick Mitchell -
This is a new committee. This arose out of a desire to recognize and thank those individuals who have served the Vertical Section since 1972 as officers, at-large board members, committee chairs, and Nylon Highway editors. This was long overdue. The awards consist of a letter accompanied by a plaque. This task is complete with a few exceptions to be presented today. Today's honorees are: Miriam Cuddington, Gary Bush, Bruce Smith, Bill Cuddington, and Kirk MacGregor (expected, but not present). Much tears and applause followed each presentation. Bruce Smith commented on how the awards were presented to the honorees (in most cases) in front of their peers. Feedback from this initiative has been very positive.

V. **Old Business:**

- Ernie Coffman asked if we had ever received any information on the whereabouts of the old Nylon Highway editor who stole funds from the Section. Bruce Smith related that his NSS life membership was revoked, but that none of our funds was recovered.

VI. **New Business:**

- The EC asked the question "How do we increase our membership and improve the communication and involvement of younger cavers? Our membership is aging. Elaine Hackerman suggested articles spotlighting younger vertical cavers in the Nylon Highway or the NSS News. John Woods suggested that creating a spotlight on a younger vertical caver would be quicker and easier if placed on the Section website. Dick Mitchell pointed out that we just had a short article on the Vertical Section in the current issue of the NSS News. It was also suggested that a discussion thread could be started on CaveChat somehow featuring younger vertical cavers. Tim White is the moderator of the OnRope forum on CaveChat. He needs to be informed of this need and may be able to steer some discussion on getting more younger vertical cavers involved with the Section. Workshop participants receive memberships in the Section as part of their registration. We need to keep these people involved. All Section members need to promote the benefits of being a member of the Vertical Section back in their grottoes. There are a lot more vertical cavers out there than are members of the Vertical Section. We need to seek them out through multiple approaches. Send us any ideas you may have.
- A question was asked if an attorney has ever reviewed our waiver for the contest or workshop. It has been in use for a long time. It was pointed out that any waiver doesn't mean squat, but that it is better that one be used to at least indicate that the person was warned and had some idea about any potential dangers.

VII. **Elections:**

- **Secretary/Treasurer** (1-year term) - Bill Boehle was nominated and reelected by acclamation.
- **Editor** (1-year term) - Tim White was nominated and reelected by acclamation.
- **At-Large Board Members** (2-year term, 2 to be elected) - Miriam Cuddington and Rory Tinston were nominated. A ballot of the section members present was not necessary. Miriam Cuddington and Rory Tinston were elected by acclamation. [Note: Current At-Large members Dick Mitchell and Terry Mitchell have 1 year remaining in their terms.]

VIII. **Motion to Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made and carried. Time of adjournment was approximately 10:14 AM.

[Additional note: Subsequent to the Meeting, the Board Members elected Dick Mitchell as Chair. The three appointed members were re-appointed to serve for another year. They are:

- Contest Committee - Bill Cuddington
- Vertical Techniques Workshop Committee - Terry Clark (Assistant: Lynn Fielding)
- Education Committee - Bruce Smith]

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle

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**NSS VERTICAL SECTION
SECRETARY'S REPORT
JULY, 2009
By Bill Boehle**

Number of Members (current/just expired) 177
Number of Members Current as of 2009	..... 168
Number of Subscribers Current as of 2009	..... 7
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for 2009	..... 13
Number of Complementary Subscriptions	..... 3

YEARS PAID:	MEMBER	SUBSCRIBER	ANNUAL VOLUME
Comps	--	--	3
2009	13	1	7
2010	7	1	3
2011	1	0	0
2012	0	0	0
2013	127	4	0
<u>2014</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
2009 TOTALS:	168	7	13
Expired 2008:	9	3	
TOTALS:	177		

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**NSS VERTICAL SECTION
TREASURER'S REPORT**

JULY, 2009

By Bill Boehle

INCOME:

New Memberships, Subscriptions, & Renewals	\$ 9.00
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales	.....	\$ 40.00
2008 Convention Workshop Registrations	.....	\$ 325.00
Vertical Training Course Sales	.....	\$ 0.00
Symbolic Item Sales	.....	\$ 221.00
Nylon Highway Back Issue Sales	.....	\$ 11.50
Shipping/Postage Charges	.....	\$ 2.00
Donations	.....	\$ 18.00
Bank Interest (GMAC) Aug. 2008 - June 2009	.....	\$ 383.20
TOTAL INCOME		\$1,009.70

EXPENSES:

Shipping/Postage Costs	.....	\$ 0.00
North Carolina Corporate Filing Fees (Bill Bussey)	.....	\$ 10.00
2008 VTW Transportation Subsidy (Terry Clark)	.....	\$ 237.00
2008 Climbing Contest prizes	.....	\$ 180.45
Vertical Workshop & Reblay Course Supplies/Expenses	.....	\$ 150.02
NH Annual Volume Production & Mailing Costs	.....	\$ 36.34
Symbolic Items Restocking (T-shirts, Sweats)	.....	\$ 0.00
VS Recognition Awards Production & Shipping	.....	\$ 2377.13
Vertical Training Course Mailing Costs (billed by Tim White)	.....	\$ 0.00
Climbing Contest Record Boards (deposit)	.....	\$ 280.00
Printing - Climbing Contest Certificates	.....	\$ 0.00
Photocopying for 2008 NSS Convention paperwork	.....	\$ 25.41
Petty Cash for postage	.....	\$ 0.76
Training/Education Committee Printing Costs	.....	\$ 371.45
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$3,668.56

ACCOUNT BALANCES: (as of 6/30/2009)

TD Bank (NJ)	.....	\$2,515.87
GMAC	.....	\$9,768.36

BALANCE ON HAND: **\$12,284.23**