

# *Nylon Highway* Issue #61



... especially for the Vertical Cover

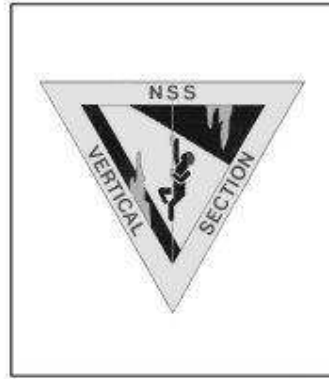
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# #61

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*Nylon Highway* Issue #61



... especially for the Vertical Cover

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Page Last Updated on February 17, 2021

# Nylon Highway

Office	2017	2018	2019
<b>Chair</b>	Terry Mitchell Springdale, AR	Gene Harrison Leesburg, VA	Gene Harrison Leesburg, VA
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Bill Boehle Ewing, NJ	Mike Rusin Cincinnati, OH	Mike Rusin Cincinnati, OH
<b>Secretary/ Treasurer</b>	Ray Sira Christiansburg, VA	Ray Sira Christiansburg, VA	Ray Sira Christiansburg, VA
<b>At-Large</b>	Mike Rusin Cincinnati, OH	Bill Boehle Ewing, NJ	Bill Boehle Ewing, NJ
<b>At-Large</b>	Gary Napper Austin, TX	Gary Napper Austin, TX	Bonny Armstrong Heber City, UT
<b>Editor</b>	Tim White Hixson, TN	Tim White Hixson, TN	--(Open)--
<b>Education Coordinator</b>	--(Open)--	--(Open)--	--(Open)--
<b>Contest Coordinator</b>	Bill Cuddington Moulton, AL	Bill Cuddington Moulton, AL	Bill Cuddington Moulton, AL
<b>VT Workshop Coordinator</b>	Kurt Waldron Owings, MD	Kurt Waldron Port Republic, MD	Kurt Waldron Port Republic, MD

Please send articles, art, exchange publications and other material for publication in the Nylon Highway to:

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2830 Olde Savannah Cove  
Suwanee, GA 30024  
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5134 Prices Fork Rd.  
Christiansburg, VA 24073  
e-mail: rsira@vt.edu

In short, if you'd like to submit something for possible publication, send it to the Editor. Otherwise, send it to the Secretary/Treasurer.

See our web page at: <http://www.caves.org/section/vertical>

ISSN

**Years 2017, 2018, & 2019  
ISSUE #61**

## INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The *Nylon Highway* is published by the Vertical Section of the National Speleological Society on a regular basis pending sufficient material. Material is posted on the Vertical Section's web site soon after being received by the Editor. A volume of all material is printed and distributed to those not having access to the electronic version on an annual basis.

It is the intent of this publication to provide a vehicle for papers on vertical work. All submitted articles containing unsafe practices will be returned to the author. Opinions expressed herein are credited to the author and do not necessarily agree with those of the Editor, the Vertical Section, its members or its Executive Committee. The reader should understand that some material presented in the *Nylon Highway* may be of an experimental nature and is presented herein for peer review. The reader should exercise good judgment and use common sense when attempting new vertical techniques or using new equipment.

**WARNING:** The reader must acknowledge that caving, climbing, mountaineering, rappelling, rescue work and other rope activities expressed in the *Nylon Highway* are inherently dangerous activities and serious injury or death could result from use and/or misuse of techniques and equipment described in this publication.

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NSS Vertical Section

Secretary's Report

05/31/2017

By Raymond Sira

Number of Current Members as of 05/31/2017.....	257
Number of Subscribers as of 05/31/2017.....	9
Number of Dropped Memberships 2016.....	7
Number of Memberships due to Drop 2017.....	26
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#60.....	4
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#61.....	3
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#62.....	1
Number of Complementary Subscriptions.....	2

<u>Member</u> <u>Exp Date</u>	<u>Members</u> <u>Members</u>	<u>Subscribers</u> <u>Subscribers</u>
2017	24	2
2018	47	1
2019	79	5
2020	41	0
2021	36	0
2022	21	1

Total Members 257

**NSS VERTICAL SECTION  
TREASURER'S REPORT (6/30/2016 to 5/31/2017)**

**By Raymond Sira**

**INCOME:**

2016 Convention Workshop Registration .....	\$950.00
Bank Interest (Ally) July 2016 – April 2017 .....	\$61.51
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales.....	<u>\$40.00</u>

**TOTAL INCOME:** **\$1,051.51**

**Expenses:**

VS Service Awards.....	\$265.36
Postage Costs .....	\$6.45
Printing Nylon Highway.....	\$00.00
NSS – website hosting fees (2016) .....	\$12.00
2016 Vertical Workshop Transportation Expense Subsidy (Kurt Waldron) .....	\$570.80
2016 Vertical Workshop (New Gear).....	\$617.16
2016 Climbing Contest Prizes .....	\$217.20
Climbing Contest Certificates (250 each Gold & Blue).....	\$55.90

**TOTAL EXPENSES:** **\$1,744.87**

**ACCOUNT BALLANCES:**

Well Fargo (Ray's account as of 05/31/2017)	\$1,391.23
ALLY Demand Notes (as of 05/31/2017)	<u>\$7,915.80</u>

**TOTAL 5/31/2017:** **\$9,307.03**

2016 Total \$10,000.39

**Symbolic Items Report (7/1/2016 to 5/31/2017) – 2017 NSS Convention**

By Bill Boehle

INCOME:

Symbolic Item Sales	385.00
Nylon Highway Back Issue Sales	20.00
Shipping/Postage Charges collected	6.80
Donations	0.00
Petty Cash used for expenses	6.80

TOTAL INCOME: \$418.60

EXPENSES:

	check	cash
Shipping/Postage Costs	6.80	0 6.80
Symbolic Items Restocking (T-shirts, sweats)	0.00	
Symbolic Items Restocking (pins)	0.00	
Climbing Contest Record Boards (updates)	0.00	
Photocopying/Supplies	0.00	0 0
Petty Cash withdrawn for expenses	0.00	
TD Bank(NJ) Paper Statement Fees (net)	4.00	

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$10.80

ACCOUNT BALANCES: (as of 5/31/2017)

TD Bank (NJ)

Opening Balance from last period:	\$2,603.98
INCOME this period:	\$418.60
EXPENSES this period:	-\$10.80
Closing Balance for this period:	<b>\$3,011.78</b>

Petty Cash for expenses on hand: \$3.31

TD Bank (NJ) and Cash on Hand: \$3,015.09

## Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting

June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Extended Stay American Hotel, Rio Rancho, New Mexico

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairman Terry Mitchell. VSEC Members present were Chairman Terry Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer Ray Sira, Member-at-Large Bill Boehle, Member at Large Mike Rusin, and Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Kurt Waldron. Also present was Webmaster-Rebelay Workshop Coordinator Gary Bush. The Chairman announced that he held proxies for absent members Miriam Cuddington and Bill Cuddington so the required quorum of 5 has been met. Editor Tim White was absent without furnishing a proxy, and the position of Education Coordinator is currently vacant.

### 2. Reports

A. **Chairman** - Terry Mitchell and Gary Bush will be meeting with the 2018 convention committee Monday at noon. Terry has a list of 2018 requirements he will present at the meeting. JSS will be using our ropes again with assistance from Kurt Waldron. Gary will pick up the contest ropes from On-Rope 1 Monday morning, and rigging will begin about 8 am. Climbing contest coordinator Bill Cuddington will not be attending this year's convention. A group effort will once again be used to organize this year's contest. All in attendance signed staff liability waivers.

B. **Secretary Treasurer** - Ray Sira distributed minutes from the 2016 Convention meetings, the Treasurers report and membership report.

C. **Symbolic Items** - Bill Boehle submitted a written report of SI income and expenses for the past year.

D. **Contest** – Bill Boehle reported the contest records board is not here this year. We have a smaller printed version. We may do poster sized paper version for next year. Bill Cuddington has donated 1 of his long racks to the Vertical Section for use at the contest. Jim Hall is bringing the contest gear but will not be able to take it back. Ray Sira suggested buying a box trailer to haul the contest and workshop gear. Bill Boehle has a few prizes left over from last year. Bill Boehle and Mike Rusin will take care of acquiring additional prizes for this year. Ray Sira has automated the certificate printing and has a printer available. It was suggested that for future conventions we move the workshop to Wednesday and have the business meeting and awards ceremony on Thursday, leaving Friday open. The EC decided to try that for next year.

E. **Awards Committee** – Ken Alwin was not present. He reported to Terry Mitchell there were no recommendations for awards. Bill Boehle suggested putting the Lifetime Achievement Award recipients on the web site.

F. **Vertical Training Committee** – Terry Mitchell reported a list of goals and objectives will be submitted at Wednesday's VTC meeting for approval. Terry has written a program of

Instruction for the Basic Vertical Training Course. Lesson plans and an instructor guide are still needed. Bonnie Armstrong has recruited Tom Evans to join the committee. Other members on the committee are Terry Mitchell, Gary Bush, Kurt Waldron, Nigel Dyson-Hudson, and Bonnie Armstrong.

G. **Rebelay Workshop** - Gary Bush. No scaffolding will be needed this year. The facilities manager is requesting that 2 slings be used at all rigging points. Staff liability waivers were distributed to those present to be signed.

H. **Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator** - Kurt Waldron. Kurt will check on the number of people signed up. A waiting list will be started at the climbing contest if needed. Kurt is looking for instructors and will put an announcement in the daily news letter. Mitchell systems need looking at. 300 feet of contest rope will go to the workshop. Kurt is trying to get our ropes on a 10 year replacement cycle. Gear is in good shape.

I. **Editor** – Tim White was not present. Terry Mitchell reported on searching for a new editor. He said there was a volunteer inquiry last December, but when he followed up on it few months later, the woman had changed her mind. He will ask for volunteers at the meeting on Wednesday.

J. **Webmaster** – Gary Bush. Previous treasurer and secretary reports have been added to the latest Nylon Highway. Membership information has been updated.

K. **Outreach** – Jon Schow was not present. Terry read a report from Jon stating the Vertical Section Facebook page has 839 likes. Nothing else to report.

3. **Old Business.** None.

4. **New Business.**

A. Approval of meeting minutes. The minutes of the VSEC meeting from 2016 were approved as posted by unanimous consent.

B. Equipment Trailer. Gary Bush will look into purchasing a box trailer for the section's gear this week.

C. Miriam Cuddington will not be running for reelection to the Executive Committee this year. Terry Mitchell will not be running for reelection next year.

5. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Sira, Vertical Section Secretary-Treasurer June 2, 2018.



## 2017 Vertical Section Business Meeting

June 21, 2017

UNM West, Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

**Call to Order:** VS Chairman Terry Mitchell called the meeting to order at 9:05 am in room 1226. The number of members present was 14.

**Approval of minutes** from last year's meeting - July 22, 2016. They were approved by unanimous consent as published.

**Announcements**—The Chairman said he would try to hold the business meeting to under one hour. After a 15 minute recess during which the Executive Committee would meet, the Vertical Session should begin about 10:15 am. He also explained that this year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Climbing Contest being held during an NSS convention, and that is the topic of the Vertical Session following this business meeting.

### 1) Officer Reports.

- a) **Chairman's Report:** Terry Mitchell. Terry said that if he is selected to continue as Chairman for the next year, it will be his last one. He has decided to step down at the end of six years in the office.
- b) **Treasurer's Report:** Ray Sira. An error was noted on the treasurer's report presented at the meeting. This has since been corrected and a revised report has been published. Total amount in the 3 VS accounts is \$13015.48. A full report will be published in the Nylon Highway.
- c) **Secretary's Report:** Ray Sira reported we have 257 members. Emails were sent out to people whose membership was due to run out. 7 were dropped due to no response. The Nylon Highway needs to be mailed to 4 subscribers.
- d) **Editor's Report:** Tim White was not present but is willing to continue as editor until a new one is found.

### 2) Committee Reports.

- a) **Climbing Contest:** Terry Mitchell reported that Bill & Miriam Cuddington were not able to attend this year's convention and are unlikely to attend next year's convention. Bill will continue to be the Contest Chairman but we are looking for someone to act as on site coordinator. Peter Hertl was asked but was unable to attend this year's convention and does not know if he will be able to attend next year. A volunteer was asked for but there was no response. There were 38 individual climbs by 28 people. That is about half of last year's number, but it is a small convention. Doug Warner (2018 Convention Chair) is working with us on coordinating facilities for the 2018 convention. It was suggested that a notice be put in the daily newsletter for people to check the bulletin board at registration for a list of names of those who will be receiving certificates at the climbing contest awards ceremony on Friday. Later in the meeting Terry read a note from Miriam Cuddington thanking us for all that we do. Terry also gave special recognition to Gary Napper for running the rack both days, for all 38 climbs with no relief.
- b) **Rebelay Workshop:** Gary Bush. We could not set up the course the way we wanted but we made it work. There were only 5 climbers this year. Gary Storricks and Terry Mitchell assisted people all day with gear tuning.
- c) **Vertical Techniques Workshop:** Kurt Waldron. 14 people have registered for the workshop with a couple of more who may attend. We are accepting walk-ins. With the small group size we may use fewer ropes.
- d) **Education:** Terry Mitchell. Terry is heading a Vertical Training Committee of 7 people. We have a list of goals and objectives to be approved by the committee at a meeting to be held at 11:00 after this

meeting. In February the Boy Scouts of America voted to use the Vertical Section's Intermediate Vertical course as one way to qualify vertical cave trip leaders. The NCRC is having problems with level 1 students showing up without the proper vertical knowledge needed for the course. Terry has written up a program of instruction (POI) in coordination with the NCRC that would fill the necessary requirements. It can be conducted over a weekend before attending an NCRC class.

- e) **Awards:** Chairman Ken Alwin was not present but Terry Mitchell reported there were no recommendations for awards.
- f) **Bylaws:** Terry Mitchell. No Bylaw changes were considered this year. Terry has a few minor changes he may look at in the coming year.
- g) **Symbolic Items:** Bill Boehle's report is included in the Treasurer's report. We had a total of \$418.60 in sales income this past year and \$10.80 in expenses. We need to restock some t-shirts and sweatshirt sizes. He will not be restocking medium sizes. It was asked if we should look into an online service for t-shirt and sweatshirt printing and ordering.
- h) **Web Page:** Gary Bush reported that the website is functional but has not had any redesign done to it. Gary Storricks ask about the Nylon Highway being hard to find. Gary Bush can put an announcement on the main page when a new issue is available. The American Caving Accidents page was hit by a web bot. Gary needs to make some changes to our web site to protect it against any similar attacks. The membership page needs to be updated. Ray will send Gary a current list after the convention
- i) **Out Reach Committee:** Terry Mitchell reported this committee was formed in 2013. So far the only thing to come out of it is the Vertical Section Facebook page. Jon Schow is the only member of the committee and has not been to a convention in a few years. He did send Terry a report stating that the Facebook page has 889 likes and he would like to start sharing stories and experiences on the page.

3) **Old Business:** None

4) **New Business:**

- a) Nigel Dyson-Hudson motioned for the Vertical Section to buy a brick at the NSS headquarters in the name of Dick Mitchell. Seconded by Jim Hall. Motion was approved unanimously.
- b) Gary Storricks motioned for the Vertical Section to buy a brick at the NSS headquarters in the name of Bob Thrun. Seconded by Bill Boehle. Motion was approved unanimously.
- c) Vance Nelson motioned that the Vertical Section nominate Mike Russin to be a fellow of the NSS. Approved with 1 abstention.
- d) Vance Nelson motioned that the Vertical Section nominate Jenny Clark to be a fellow of the NSS. Jenny declined the nomination.

5) **Elections:**

- a) **Secretary-Treasurer (1-year term):** Gary Bush nominated Ray Sira for another term. There were no other nominations. A motion was made and carried to suspend the rules, and Ray Sira was elected by unanimous consent.
- b) **Two "At-Large" Executive Committee Members (2-year terms):** Bill Boehle's and Miriam Cuddington's terms are expiring. Miriam does not wish to be nominated for another term. Gary Storricks nominated Bill Boehle. Gary Bush nominated Nigel Dyson-Hudson. Bill Boehle nominated Gary Napper. Bill Boehle and Gary Napper were elected.

c) **The Executive Committee** met briefly and reelected Terry Mitchell as Chairman. Bill Boehle was elected as Vice Chairman. Appointments made were Bill Cuddington Contest Chair, Kurt Waldron Workshop Coordinator and Tim White Editor. The Education Coordinator position will remain unfilled for now.

6) **The VS Business Meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.**

**The Vertical Session:** Terry Mitchell presented a paper by Bill Cuddington on the 50-year history of the vertical contest. Following that, several members shared stories about the contest from past conventions. A video was made of the talk and may be put online at a later date.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Sira, Vertical Section Secretary-Treasurer June 2, 2018.

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### **Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting**

June 21, 2017

UNM West, Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

A brief meeting was held by the executive committee at the end of the business meeting.

1. **Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 10:22 AM
2. **Elections:** Terry Mitchell was elected Chairman. Bill Boehle was elected Vice Chairman. Appointments made were Bill Cuddington - Contest Chair, Kurt Waldron - Workshop Coordinator and Tim White - Editor. The Education Coordinator position will remain unfilled for now.
3. **Trailer:** Terry has looked into purchasing a box trailer for hauling the Vertical Sections gear to conventions. The committee elected to have Terry Mitchell and Gary Bush spend up to \$2000 for a trailer and accessories. The committee will meet again after the awards ceremony on Thursday to discuss their findings.
4. **Meeting was adjourned at 10:37.**

June 22, 2017

A trailer was subsequently purchased for \$1691.75.

Registration and additional accessories were purchased by Gary Bush and Ray Sira for \$382.92.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Sira, Vertical Section Secretary-Treasurer June 2, 2018.

**NSS Vertical Section**

**Secretary's Report**

**06/30/2018**

**By Raymond Sira**

Number of Current Members as of 06/30/2018.....	<b>242</b>
Number of Subscribers as of 06/30/2018.....	<b>9</b>
Number of Dropped Memberships 2017.....	<b>17</b>
Number of Memberships due to Drop 2018.....	<b>48</b>
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#60.....	<b>5</b>
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#61.....	<b>3</b>
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#62.....	<b>1</b>
Number of Complementary Subscriptions.....	<b>2</b>

<u>Exp Date</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Subscribers</u>
2018	47	1
2019	78	5
2020	41	0
2021	34	0
2022	34	2

**NSS VERTICAL SECTION  
TREASURER'S REPORT (6/01/2017 to 6/30/2018)**

**By Raymond Sira**

**INCOME:**

2016 Convention Workshop Registration .....	\$525.00
Bank Interest (Ally) July 2016 – April 2017 .....	\$65.25
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales.....	\$10.00
Donation from Virginia Clark.....	<u>\$100.00</u>

**TOTAL INCOME:** **\$700.25**

**Expenses:**

Box Trailer.....	\$1,691.75
Tools for Trailer.....	\$172.03
Registration for Trailer (One time expense).....	\$160.00
Personal Property Tax for Trailer.....	\$18.20
Postage Costs .....	\$0.00
Printing Nylon Highway.....	\$00.00
New Check Printing.....	\$19.22
NSS – website hosting fees (2016) .....	\$12.00
2017 Vertical Workshop Transportation Expense Subsidy (Kurt Waldron) .....	\$250.00
2017 Vertical Workshop (Webbing & New Totes).....	\$73.45
2017 Climbing Contest Prizes .....	<u>\$126.50</u>

**TOTAL EXPENSES:** **\$2,523.15**

**ACCOUNT BALANCES:**

Well Fargo (Ray's account as of 6/30/2018)	\$1,194.83
ALLY Demand Notes (as of 6/30/2018)	<u>\$6,289.30</u>

**TOTAL 6/30/2018:** **\$7,484.13**

2017 Total \$9,307.03

**NSS Vertical Section**

**Secretary's Report**

**06/30/2018**

**By Raymond Sira**

Number of Current Members as of 06/30/2018.....	<b>242</b>
Number of Subscribers as of 06/30/2018.....	<b>9</b>
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Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#61.....	<b>3</b>
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#62.....	<b>1</b>
Number of Complementary Subscriptions.....	<b>2</b>

<u>Exp Date</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Subscribers</u>
2018	47	1
2019	78	5
2020	41	0
2021	34	0
2022	34	2

## Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting (Draft)

July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Capitol High School, Helena, Montana

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman Terry Mitchell. VSEC Members present were Chairman Terry Mitchell, Vice Chairman Bill Boehle, Secretary-Treasurer Ray Sira, Member-at-Large Mike Rusin and Member at Large Gary Napper. Also present was Webmaster-Rebelay Workshop Coordinator Gary Bush. The Chairman announced that he held proxies for absent members Tim White and Bill Cuddington so the quorum of 5 has been met. Vertical Workshop Coordinator Kurt Waldron was absent without furnishing a proxy, and the position of Education Coordinator is currently vacant.
2. **Reports**
  - A. **Chairman** – Terry Mitchell announced that he will be stepping down from the VSEC at the end of the business meeting on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018. Memorial bricks for Dick Mitchell and Bob Thrun still need to be purchased. A letter from the VS nominating Mike Rusin as an NSS Fellow also still needs to be done. Jane Mitchell will be helping out the climbing contest registration table. She also asks that Terry keep this meeting short.
  - B. **Secretary Treasurer** – Ray Sira distributed minutes from the 2017 Convention meetings as well as the Treasurers report and membership report. The Secretary's report for last year's VSEC meeting was approved by unanimous consent. Errors were found in the Treasurer's reports for the last 2 years. Those have been corrected and the new reports have been posted to the VS Yahoo group page.
  - C. **Symbolic Items** – Bill Boehle submitted a report of income and expenses for the past year. Bill is looking for someone to take over Symbolic Items position. Other options discussed were selling through an online vender or one of the vendors that come to convention. Ray Sira printed some VS logo temporary tattoos to be given away at the climbing contest.
  - D. **Awards** – Ken Alwin was not present. He reported to Terry that there have not been any recommendations for awards.
  - E. **Webmaster** – Gary Bush reported no changes to the website. He asked Ray to send him a new membership list. The NSS may discontinue web hosting for Grottos and Sections in the future. Gary will keep us informed if this happens.
  - F. **Editor** – Tim White submitted a letter resigning as editor of the Nylon Highways. He also volunteered to rewrite the SRT beginners training manual.
  - G. **Climbing Contest** – Bill Cuddington is unable to attend the convention this year but has arranged for the contest ropes to be delivered. Terry will be the site manager for the contest and workshop. The gear trailer is on site at the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds will supply a lift and operator for setup. The JSS will be using our ropes on Tuesday and Bonny Armstrong will be using the ropes Thursday afternoon for a workshop on Small Party Assisted Rescue. The climbing ropes will be taken down and cut after the contest ends on Tuesday. On Rope 1 will let us

borrow their rope cutter. Bill Boehle and Mike Rusin will take care of the contest prizes. Bill has some left over from last year. Ray has a printer available and will be printing the certificates. The first place certificates will have a color VS logo. In the future we may print all of the certificates in color. A sign will be put up at registration stating that you must be in attendance at the awards ceremony to receive any prizes. Certificates and prizes not picked up at the awards ceremony will be forfeited and prizes will be awarded at the committee's discretion.

H. **Rebelay Workshop** – Gary has liability waivers. He may need 2 steel carabiners for the support ropes. The scaffolding will be delivered to the fairgrounds Monday morning. John Woods will not be attending the convention this year.

I. **Vertical Techniques Workshop** – Kurt Waldron will not be attending the convention this year. Terry will be the acting workshop coordinator. Only 9 people have signed up so far. We may only rig 1 rope for some stations. We are still looking for instructors to help.

### 3. **Old Business**

A. Ray will print a list of contest winners to be displayed at registration.

B. The space for the convention chairperson's signature will be removed from the contest certificates.

C. Bill is looking into an easier way to transport and display the contest records such as a paper poster.

D. Ray has purchased new totes for the VS gear.

E. The Vertical Workshop name will be changed to "Introduction to Vertical Techniques" starting at the 2019 convention.

F. Ken Laidlaw had volunteered to make some new 3 knot climbing systems for the workshop but we have not had any report from Ken.

G. Terry recommends having a brief VSEC debriefing after the climbing contest awards ceremony like we did last year.

### 4. **New Business**

A. Ray has volunteered to keep the equipment trailer for the next 2 years.

B. Terry has sent the 2019 convention the requirements for the 2019 convention.

C. No electronic business took place during the past year.

### 5. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM.



## NSS Vertical Section Annual Business Meeting (Draft)

August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

Capitol High School, Helena Montana

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:02 am in room 105 of Capitol High School. The number of members present was 15.
2. **Announcements:** Terry Mitchell announced the VS is a legally established corporation in the state of North Carolina and the executive committee is the board of directors. We are required to have at least one meeting per year. Planning is already underway for the 2019 NSS convention. Terry introduced the members of the executive committee.  
(<http://caves.org/section/vertical/board.html> )
3. **Approval of minutes:** Minutes from the June 21, 2017 meeting were posted on the Yahoo group page and available at the meeting. They were approved by unanimous consent as published. Minutes can be found at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/nssverticalsection/files>.
4. **Officers Reports.**
  - A. **Chairman's Report:** Terry will be stepping down at this meeting after 6 years on the executive committee. He said he will still remain an active member of the Vertical Section.
  - B. **Secretary's Report:** Ray Sira reported we have 242 members. Emails were sent to people whose membership was expiring and 17 of those were dropped after not receiving a reply. We are behind on mailing the Nylon Highway's to members who have paid for a printed copy. We may discontinue offering printed copies in the future.
  - C. **Treasurer's Report:** A trailer was purchased at the 2017 convention in New Mexico for hauling the Vertical Section's gear. Cost of the trailer, accessories and registration was \$2,041.98. Total amount in the 3 VS accounts is 10,718.97. The report will be posted to the VS Yahoo group page. Errors were found in the reports for the last 2 years. The reports have been corrected and posted to the Yahoo group page.
  - D. **Editors Report:** Terry announced Tim White is stepping down as the Nylon Highway editor. Tim feels the Nylon Highway publication is no longer relevant in the digital age. Terry noted that it would require a change to the bylaws to discontinue it. There were no volunteers for the position. An announcement will be sent out asking for volunteers.
5. **Committee Reports.**
  - A. **Climbing Contest:** Terry reported Bill and Miriam Cuddington were unable to attend this year's convention. The contest was run by committee with Terry acting as site manager. Bill did arrange for PMI to donate the ropes used for the contest and for William Shrewsbury and On Rope 1 to deliver them to the convention. 2 x 200 ft. sections of the rope will be transferred to the Vertical Workshop gear and the rest will be used for contest prizes. There were 47 individual climbers who made 67 climbs, including 1 relay team. We allowed the JSS to use our ropes on

Tuesday and also allowed Bonny Armstrong to use our ropes to teach a small party assisted rescue class on Thursday.

- B. **Rebelay Workshop:** Gary Bush reported there were 25 climbs by 19 climbers. 13 on the basic course and 12 on the intermediate course. Gene Harrison helped with set up while Terry Mitchell and Gary Storrack assisted with the training.
  - C. **Vertical Techniques Workshop:** The workshop coordinator Kurt Waldron was unable to attend the convention. Terry ran the workshop for this convention. We had 18 students and 17 instructors. The cable ladder was eliminated this year due to lack of space. One of the fairground workers tripped the fire alarm during the workshop. Gene suggested looking into the time allotted at each station.
  - D. **Education Coordinator:** Terry reported this position has been vacant since Bruce Smith stepped down a couple of years ago. There is also a vertical training committee that Terry has been heading up but it has not accomplished much this past year. Bonny Armstrong has gone through the student manual and has come up with some revisions but is not ready to present them yet. Tim White and Rick Speaect have volunteered to take on the task of updating the Basic SRT Training Manual.
  - E. **Awards:** Committee chair Ken Alwin was not present but Terry reported there were no recommendations for awards.
  - F. **Bylaws Committee:** The bylaws committee consists of Terry Mitchell and Bill Boehle. Terry reported there has been no activity during the past year.
  - G. **Symbolic Items Chairman:** Bill Boehle's report is included with the Treasurer's report and will be posted to the VS Yahoo group page. Bill is currently looking for someone to take over this position.
  - H. **Web Page:** Gary Bush reported there have been no changes to the website and no submissions of new articles for Nylon Highway's. Gary has added a PDF just this morning "Knots for Cavers" created with information from <https://www.animatedknots.com> . It can be found under training on the VS website. The list of current members needs to be updated. Ray will provide that information.
6. **Old Business.**
- A. The motion approved last year to buy a memorial brick in honor of Dick Mitchell and Bob Thrun still needs to be completed.
  - B. The motion approved last year to nominate Mike Rusin for NSS Fellow also has not been done yet. Gary Bush has agreed to work on this.
7. **New Business.**

- A. Bruce Smith motioned that the VS buy a memorial brick in honor of Kirk MacGregor. Seconded by Gary Bush. Motion was approved unanimously. Gene Harrison has volunteered to take care of this.
- B. Lee White mentioned he will be working with Tim White to rewrite the basic training course.

8. **Elections**

- A. **Secretary-Treasurer (1 year Term):** Gary Bush nominated Ray Sira for another term. There were no other nominations. A motion was made and carried to suspend the rules, and Ray Sira was elected by unanimous consent.
- B. **Two "At-Large" Executive Committee Members (2-year terms):** Current executive committee members are Terry Mitchell (Chairman), Bill Boehle (Vice Chairman), Mike Rusin (Member at large) and Gary Napper (Member at large). Terry and Mike's terms are expiring. Bruce Smith nominated Mike Rusin. Gary Bush nominated Terry Mitchell but Terry declined the nomination. Gary Bush nominated Gene Harrison. Gary Bush motion to suspend the rules, and Mike Rusin and Gene Harrison were elected by unanimous consent.

9. **The VS Business Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.**

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10. **Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting.** A brief meeting was held by the executive committee at the end of the business meeting.

- A. **Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 10:16 am.
- B. **The Executive Committee** elected Gene Harrison as Chairman. Mike Rusin was elected Vice Chairman. Appointments made were Bill Cuddington - Contest Chair and Kurt Waldron - Workshop Coordinator. The Editor and Education Coordinator positions will remain unfilled for now.
- C. **Meeting was adjourned at 10:39 am.**

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**The Vertical Session:**

- 1. Gary Bush talked about [www.animatedknots.com](http://www.animatedknots.com) and his power point presentation available on the VS website at - <http://caves.org/section/vertical/pdf/Knots%20for%20Cavers-II.pdf>
- 2. Lee White demonstrated a small roller.
- 3. Vance Nelson demonstrated a thin chest box.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Sira, Vertical Section Secretary-Treasurer January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**NSS Vertical Section**

**Secretary's Report**

**06/02/2019**

**By Raymond Sira**

Number of Current Members as of 06/01/2019.....	268
Number of Subscribers as of 06/30/2018.....	10
Number of Pending Dropped Memberships 2018.....	47
Number of Memberships due to Drop 2018.....	72
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#60.....	7
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#61.....	3
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for NH#62.....	3
Number of Complementary Subscriptions.....	2

<u>Exp Date</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Subscribers</u>
2018	46	1
2019	67	5
2020	39	0
2021	23	0
2022	48	4
2023	34	0
2024	1	0

**NSS VERTICAL SECTION  
TREASURER'S REPORT (07/01/2018 to 05/31/2019)**

**By Raymond Sira**

**INCOME:**

2018 Convention Workshop Registration .....	\$475.00
Bank Interest (Ally) July 2018 – May 2019 .....	\$91.10
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales.....	<u>\$00.00</u>

**TOTAL INCOME:** **\$566.10**

**Expenses:**

2018 Vertical Workshop Transportation Expense Subsidy (Ray Sira).....	\$528.00
3 NSS Memorial Bricks- K. Macgregor, D. Mitchell, R. Thrun.....	\$300.00
QAS for Rebelay Workshop.....	\$174.72
Personal Property Tax for Trailer.....	\$32.36
3 Bins for Trailer.....	\$29.94
4 Wheel Chocks for Trailer.....	\$14.99
Wheel Dock for Trailer.....	\$13.37
2 Jack Stands for Trailer.....	\$29.75
Hardware for mounting Jack Stands.....	\$11.73
Office Supplies.....	\$11.83
Printing Nylon Highway.....	\$0.00
NSS – website hosting fees (2018) ( <b><i>Bill not received</i></b> ).....	\$0.00
2018 Climbing Contest Prizes .....	<u>\$0.00</u>

**TOTAL EXPENSES:** **\$1,146.69**

**ACCOUNT BALANCES:**

Well Fargo (Ray's account as of 05/31/2019)	\$973.14
ALLY Demand Notes (as of 05/31/2019)	\$5,880.40
Cash on Hand	<u>\$50.00</u>

**TOTAL 05/31/2019:** **\$6,903.54**

2018 Total \$7,484.13

## Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting (Approved)

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Cookeville High School, Cookeville, TN

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by Chairman Gene Harrison. VSEC Members present were Chairman Gene Harrison, Vice Chairman Mike Rusin, Secretary-Treasurer Ray Sira and member-at-large Bill Boehle. Also present were Webmaster-Rebelay Workshop Coordinator Gary Bush along with guests Terry Mitchell, Ed Sira and Lynn Ott. The Chairman announced that proxies were held by Gary Bush for absent At-Large member Gary Napper, Mike Rusin held the proxy for absent Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Kurt Waldron and Terry Mitchell held the proxy for absent Climbing Contest Coordinator Bill Cuddington so the quorum of 5 has been met. The positions of Education Coordinator and Editor are currently vacant.
2. **Reports**
  - A. **Chairman** – Gene Harrison has sent material to Carol Tideman for inclusion in the NSS convention manual on the Vertical Sections requirements during convention. He has also reviewed and updated the VS safety procedures including adding a medical release to the child waiver. PMI wanted an official written request from the VS for the contest ropes. Gene has designed a new letterhead and drafted a letter to Peter Morgan at PMI. (Letterhead is now located on the VS Google docs drive). Gene has put together a design package for the scaffolding used for the Rebelay Workshop. Scaffolding and a lift for this year's convention will cost \$1243.00. The convention will be paying for it. The convention has always picked up this cost in the past. Bill Boehle mentioned the VS is not a 501(c)(3) as was mentioned in the letter to PMI. An equipment committee has been formed to review the gear user for the climbing contest and the Introduction to Vertical Techniques Workshop and make recommendations for any additional or replacement gear needed. Gene would like to have the climbing contest rules reviewed. Ray stated that the current rules do not require any waivers to be signed. The new convention waiver should take care of this. Tim White has put together a Basic SRT Course Instructor Lesson Plan for review by the VS training committee. Convention attendees will get a bat stamp on their name tag when they sign a liability waiver. This will allow us to know if someone has signed a waiver or not. Gene asked if the memorial bricks approved at last year's meeting had been purchased. Ray said they had. Lynn has volunteered to organize getting letters sent to nominate Mike Rusin for NSS Fellow.
  - B. **Vice Chairman** – Mike Rusin has nothing to report.
  - C. **Secretary Treasurer** – Ray Sira distributed minutes from the 2018 Convention meetings as well as the Treasurers and membership reports. Ray would like to eliminate the option for paying \$10.00 to have the Nylon Highway mailed to members. This will be brought up under new business.
  - D. **Symbolic Items** – Bill Boehle has transferred this position to Christa Hay. Christa was not able to attend this year's convention but has submitted a report.

- E. **Awards** – Ken Alwin was not present. Bruce Smith had some recommendations for Gary Bush but no action has been taken yet. Gary will talk to Ken and Bruce about the recommendations.
  - F. **Webmaster** – Gary Bush reported there was a 404 error a few months ago that erased all NSS sections web pages from the server. Gary had a back up from a year ago that was used to restore the web page. The NSS does not currently have a functional IT committee. Ray Sira mentioned he has created a Google Group for the Vertical Section Executive Committee as well as the email address [nssverticalsection@gmail.com](mailto:nssverticalsection@gmail.com) and has started storing important documents on Google Drive.
  - G. **Editor** – This position is currently vacant.
  - H. **Climbing Contest** – Bill Cuddington is unable to attend the convention this year. Terry Mitchell suggested we run the contest by committee. Ray Sira will be printing the award certificates. Bill Boehle will work on contest prizes. We need to draft volunteers to help run the contest. Gary Bush will pick up the ropes from On-Rope 1. Terry will take charge of setting up the ropes.
  - I. **Rebelay Workshop** – Gary reported the John Woods would not be attending the convention and will need help running the workshop. Gary Storrack may be able to help.
  - J. **Vertical Techniques Workshop** – Kurt Waldron will not be attending the convention this year. Terry will be the acting workshop coordinator. Mike Rusin will train as backup coordinator.
  - K. **Training Committee** – Terry Mitchell reported the training committee was mostly dormant this past year except for Tim and Lee White submitting their Basic SRT Course Instructor Lesson Plan for review. The NCRC would like to work with us on training. We need student manuals for the Vertical Techniques Workshop. The committee will try to meet Thursday afternoon. Terry asked Gene to approach Tim White about possibly becoming the VS Training Coordinator.
  - L. **Equipment Committee** – Gary Bush says an inventory has been created. We recommend having four of each climbing system. We need to document usage and condition of all gear and all gear should be marked. Terry will make an inspection form for each station to verify the rope is in good condition after the workshop.
3. **Old Business**
- A. None.
4. **New Business**
- A. Mike Rusin made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2018 VSEC and VSEC E-meeting. Gary Bush seconded the motion and all approved.
  - B. Gene Harrison made a motion to approve the new safety procedures. Gary Bush seconded the motion and all approved.
  - C. Ray Sira made a motion to approve the new letterhead. Mike Rusin seconded the motion and all approved.

- D. Ray Sira made a motion to discontinue the option to pay for the Nylon Highway publication to be mailed. Bill Boehle seconded the motion and all approved.
  - E. Ray Sira has agreed to store the equipment trailer and bring it to the 2020 West Virginia Convention.
5. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM.



## NSS Vertical Section Annual Business Meeting (Draft 2)

June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Cookeville High School, Cookeville TN

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:11am in room 222 of Cookeville High School. 22 people were present. There was a quorum.
2. **Announcements:** Ray Sira was late getting to the meeting so Mike Rusin took notes for the first 20 minutes.
3. **Officers Reports.**
  - A. **Chairman's Report:** Gene Harrison gave a summary of Sunday's Executive Committee meeting. (Minutes of this meeting will be available online). Gene thanked PMI for their donation of rope for the climbing contest and reported that he had sent PMI a letter this year requesting a donation of rope. A scaffolding design package has been created to be included in the NSS convention planning manual. It was noted that the cost of the scaffolding and lift for this year's convention cost \$1243.00. This cost was picked up by the convention as it has been in the past. The helmet waiver will be the only one required this year as all climbing participants will have signed a waiver at registration.
  - B. **Symbolic Items:** Christa Hay has taken over the symbolic items duties from Bill Boehle. Christ was unable to make the convention this year and was unable to arrange for someone to bring items to the convention but did provide a report of sales for the last year. Having one of the vendors handle distribution of the VS symbolic items is being considered
  - C. **Awards** – There has been no activity from the awards committee.
  - D. **Web Master** – Gary Bush reported the website is up and running and he is seeking input and articles for the website.
  - E. **Education Coordinator.** – Terry Mitchell announced this position is currently vacant. Terry say's the Training Committee is making slow but steady progress on updating and improving the Basic Vertical Training material. Tim White reported on the update of the existing material that he and Lee White have been working on. It was announced that there would be a presentation this afternoon at 1:00 "Intro to Alpine Vertical Caving".
  - F. **Secretary's Report:** Ray Sira reported we have 268 members although 119 of those memberships are due to expire. Ray will send notes out asking those people to please renew their membership. At the Executive Committee meeting Sunday a motion was passed to eliminate the option of paying to have the Nylon Highway mailed.
  - G. **Treasurer's Report:** Ray Sira - Total amount in the 3 VS accounts is \$10,225.38. The report will be posted online.
4. **Committee Reports.**

- A. **Climbing Contest:** Ray Sira reported we has 54 climbs by 37 individuals. Fewer than last year in Montana. We think everyone was caving this year. Bill and Miriam Cuddington were unable to attend this year's convention so the contest was run by committee. PMI donated the ropes used for the contest and William Shrewsbury of On Rope 1 delivered them to the convention.
  - B. **Rebelay Workshop:** Gary Bush reported there were 28 climbers, 14 on the basic course and 14 on the advanced course. Terry Mitchell and Bonnie Armstrong helped guiding people on the course while Gary Storricks assisted with tuning peoples gear.
  - C. **Vertical Techniques Workshop:** Terry Mitchell reported that Kurt Waldron's employer canceled his vacation this year and Terry volunteered to run the workshop with Mike Rusin assisting. 35 people preregistered but only 26 people were present at the start of the class. 1 person was added from the waiting list and a few people showed up late. Ray will contact the convention treasure to get reimbursed for the workshop. (\$875.00 was later collected).
  - D. **Equipment Committee:** Gary Bush reported that a database has been created of equipment with spaces for date acquired, inspection dates and condition. All ropes are marked with year acquired and length.
5. **Old Business.**
- A. Minutes from the August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 meeting were posted on the Yahoo group page and available at the meeting. Gary Bush motioned for the minutes to be approve. Mike Rusin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous consent as published. *(Ed. The minutes are no longer available on the Yahoo Group page. A Google Group will be created to replace the Yahoo Group in the near future).*
6. **New Business.**
- A. Bill Boehle suggested the possibility of adding different events next year to spice up the climbing contest such as timing a climber from when they start to put their gear on.
7. **Elections**
- A. **Secretary-Treasurer (1 year Term):** Terry Mitchell nominated Ray Sira for another term. There were no other nominations. A motion was made and carried to suspend the rules, and Ray Sira was elected by unanimous consent.
  - B. **Two "At-Large" Executive Committee Members (2-year terms):** Current executive committee members are Gene Harrison (Chairman), Mike Rusin (Vice Chairman), Bill Boehle (Member at large) and Gary Napper (Member at large). Bill and Gary's terms are expiring. Terry Mitchell nominated Bill Boehle and Bonny Armstrong was also nominated. There were no other nominations. Terry Mitchell's motion to suspend the rules was carried, and Bill Boehle and Bonny Armstrong were elected by unanimous consent. There are 9 positions on the Vertical Section Executive Committee. Editor and Education Coordinator are currently vacant.
8. **The VS Business Meeting adjourned at 10:03 am.**
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**Vertical Section Executive Committee Meeting.** A brief meeting was held by the executive committee at the end of the business meeting.

- A. **Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 10:15 am.
  - B. **The Executive Committee** elected Gene Harrison as Chairman and Mike Rusin as Vice Chairman. Appointments made were Bill Cuddington - Contest Chair and Kurt Waldron - Workshop Coordinator. The Editor and Education Coordinator positions will remain unfilled for now. Mike Rusin has agreed to be the backup for Kurt Waldron. (At some point the position of Editor has been changed to Website Coordinator. I'm not sure when this happened.)
  - C. Terry Mitchell representing the Equipment Committee would like to have On-Rope1 make some new rigging slings and some chest harnesses for the knots systems. A \$400.00 budget was approved for purchasing 4 chest harnesses and up to 15 rigging slings.
  - D. **Meeting was adjourned at 10:46 am.**
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**The Vertical Session:**

- 1. Ed Devine presented A Discussion of the Design and Use of Legacy Vertical Aids; Scaling Poles and "Beam Chocks".
- 2. Carroll Bassett presented Some Experiments with 3 Bar Devices, Could Less be More?
- 3. Gene Harrison presented An Improved and Reliable Webbing Seat Harness.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Sira, Vertical Section Secretary-Treasurer July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019.