

Minutes – 2013 Congress of Grotto

August 8, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 1414 hrs by Chairman Bill Stringfellow. Vice-Chair Blake N. Jordan was also present.

COG Chair Bill Stringfellow welcomed attending grottos and other guests.

There were a total of 30 attendees, including both the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Dignitary Introductions:

- Wm Shrewsbury - NSS President
- Dave Luckins - NSS AVP
- Dave Haun - NSS HQ committee

COG Chair Report - Bill Stringfellow

- New format for COG website
- Plan to scan prior COG minutes for an online archive

Old Business:

- NSS President Report from 2012 COG - 2 COG related motions were passed at the Spring BOG meeting.
 - Website:
 - i) Newsletters on the Digital Archive System have 9000 pages of info
 - ii) By next year website will be revamped and updated for a new look
 - iii) Access to grotto info part of the process the BOG is working on
 - Grotto Development program
 - i) Strategic Planning - Grotto Greeter Program
 - ii) Spoke with Dick Mitchell - develop a pamphlet by next summer a pamphlet for grottos to aid membership.

New Business: None

Open Discussion:

- Dave Luckins had no comments at this time.
- Same with Dave Haun, nothing to speak about right now.
- The Chair asked about finding a different day for COG to meet, presently Thursday.
 - San Francisco Bay said that having the meeting on Wednesday would conflict with sessions. The attendees were asked if there were any time preferences. The majority briefly discussed and decided that in the afternoon was the best, so the meeting next year will likely be on Thursday afternoon.
- Motion on the BOG agenda to raise regular member dues
 - The issue was raised at the BOG Spring Board. Raise the membership to \$50 for Regular Member.
 - NSS President Wm Shrewsbury addressed reasons to support this. He talked about trimming the budget to offset the cash flow short fall. Several proposals were placed on the floor at the NSS BOG meeting including the NSS news in digital format versus print.
 - The Budget Proposal was massaged to comply with BOG requirements.
 - An increase in membership would elevate cash flow needs.

- The proposal was now \$45 rather than \$50 for the Regular Membership dues. This would help for 4-5 years, but another decision will have to be made. The cost increase in 2008 was for \$5.
- Q) Human Science Section - Has there been a discount for a multi-year option? A) NSS President - The only way a new member could get a discount in this fashion would be at Convention where the discount would be applied for a new member joining at Convention.
- San Francisco Bay Chapter - Talked about if students could not afford the \$45-\$50 for NSS membership, there are other opportunities that are higher to be a member.
- Q) Cleveland Grotto - Are the other parts of the Dues Structure increased? A) NSS President – Yes, the handout was reviewed. There has been a decrease in membership, around a 4% drop in membership per year. In order to make the budget balance, the NSS would have to bring in \$22,000 extra to act as a buffer.
- Q) Virginia Region - Regarding dues, are the current regular members going to have their benefits decreased? A) NSS President - No, the budget will not decrease any benefits.
- Q) Carol Jackson - Are there going to be any payment plans for hardships for students or seniors? A) NSS President - The BOG will not take any steps forward on the issue.
- Q) Diablo Grotto - Asked about the electronic vs. paper copy of the Journal. A) NSS President - Life Members will still continue to receive their paper copies. A question to Life members will continue to offer the option. In the future, the publication might be consolidated into one large issue.
- Q) Cleveland Grotto - Assuming the NSS News is digital for new members, will the option for Life members be digital as well? A) NSS President - The NSS News will soon be all color and in January, when the data is upgraded with the QuickBooks, it will have tables for automation. The goal is to have all digital and cut down on the printing costs.
- San Francisco Bay Chapter - Presently this is an accounting problem.
- RASS - Hard copy for Life Members, Possible Family Membership to get one issue of the NSS News.
- Q) Virginia Region - Will the web format of the NSS News be easy to read? A) NSS President - The printed version will look the same as in the web format.
- Q) Diablo Grotto - How many IO's get the NSS News? A) NSS President - Life members are 1600. Actual amount of IO's that get the NS News is undeterminable presently.
- The New Membership Categories were discussed.
 - NSS President - Keith Wheeland was assigned by the BOG to make the classes of membership.
 - The NSS News costs \$10 per copy to make.
 - The classes of membership were reviewed with the handout.
 - A new category was recently added called Supporting Member.
 - The vote from the BOG was not written in stone referencing the increase in regular member dues.

- Q) Southern California Grotto - Did not mention if the student copy was going to be paper or digital. A) NSS President - The student or new members will only have the NSS News when it goes digital.
- Q) Diablo Grotto - There is no Sustaining Category any longer? A) NSS President - The Sustaining Member is now in the accounting function and no longer a membership category.
- Bylaw VB2 was discussed by Wm Shrewsbury.
 - The Congress shall have the power to pass resolutions. The wording might be changed from BOG to EC so they could act faster and the resolutions could be acted upon quicker.
 - Dave Luckins - Hired a student to copy minutes of the NSS BOG meetings and create a digital archive.
 - Allentown Grotto - said the previous wording for Bylaw VB2 was questionable.
 - Q) Human Sciences Section - What if the resolution passed and the EC disagrees, does some other wording direct it to the BOG instead of to the EC? A) NSS President - Clarifies and discusses other Directors Responsibilities.
 - Q) Central Indiana Grotto - How does the grotto know that action has taken place on a resolution proposal? A) NSS President - IT creates all the reports, all IO reports go to the grottos in good detail. All members can login and review the reports and information on the website.
 - Q) Cleveland Grotto - What is the difference between the BOG and the EC? A) NSS President - explained. The EC consist of 5 and the BOG consists of 12 members. He goes on to explain the communication email to one or the whole group.

Other items: None

Elections:

Chair: Bill Stringfellow, Nominated by Rass, Elected by acclamation

Vice-Chair: Blake Jordan, Nominated by San Francisco Bay Chapter, Elected by acclamation

Adjournment:

Rass moved to adjourn meeting – passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1505 hrs

Bill Stringfellow, 204 Lake Court, Woodstock, GA 30188-3212, 678-576-0509

Blake N. Jordan, 6109 Concordia Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111, 505-362-0101