

2017 Congress of Grottos Report to NSS Board of Governors

The 2017 Congress of Grottos meeting convened on June 21st in Rio Rancho, New Mexico with Chair Bill Stringfellow, presiding. Thirty-two Internal Organizations were represented.

Old Business:

NSS President Geary Schindel briefly addressed the Congress before leaving for another meeting.

New Business:

Dogwood City Grotto Moved:

The NSS should undertake a redesign effort to change the format of its website to be 'responsive' so it is easily read on most computers and mobile devices without the need to scroll left and right.

In addition, new NSS produced publications placed on the NSS website should be in a responsive format. Where possible, any NSS publications currently listed on the NSS website should be re-published in a responsive format.

This transition should be completed by the 2020 NSS Convention.

Motion PASSED

San Joaquin Valley Grotto moved:

That in consideration of continued declining NSS membership that the NSS board develop a plan to increase membership and share it widely.

Motion PASSED

During a Committee of the Whole discussion on this motion the following ideas/topics were discussed to help raise NSS membership:

- What is meant by 'widely' (... share it widely.)
- Losing members in Diving Section with their rule change so members do not have to be an NSS members
- Facebook is not bringing members in, it reaches cavers who are not new to caving
- Meetup.com
- Making NSS website easier to navigate for new/young people
- Are we looking for new cavers, or new members?
- Look at conservation minded people, preservation groups, cave scientists or those interested in cave science, hydrology, etc.

- Look at recruiting, or encouraging, leaders to join the NSS from Outing Clubs, church groups, scout groups, school groups
- Putting signs at caves the above groups use to encourage them to join the NSS

Dogwood City Grotto Moved:

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONGRESS OF GROTTOS (Appendix Q of the BOG Manual) is amended to use gender neutral language. (revised copy attached)

Motion PASSED

Discussions from the floor:

Human Science Section Moved:

The NSS Board consider encouraging members to consider legacy plans for their data and memorabilia, and give the members a means to do so.

Motion PASSED

Note: Bernice Gottschalk representing the Human Science Section agreed to submit an item to the NSS News on this issue.

VAR Moved:

The Congress of Grottos requests a complete financial report of expenses or operations of the NSS headquarters, which includes cost analysis for rentals, income and expenses, and long term viability.

Motion PASSED

Note: Presentation to be at the 2018 Congress of Grottos

Elections of Officers:

Chair: Bill Stringfellow, elected by acclamation.

Vice-Chair: Barbara Moss, elected by acclamation.

Meeting adjourned until next regular meeting of the COG by Chair Bill Stringfellow.

Bill Stringfellow

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Barbara Moss

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RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONGRESS OF GROTTOS

- I. The name of this organization shall be the Congress of Grottos of the National Speleological Society.
- II. The Congress shall meet each year during the annual convention of the NSS.
- II. Representation at the Congress of Grottos (hereafter referred to as COG) shall be determined in the following manner:
 - A. Each Grotto (Chapter), Section, Regional Association, and Survey shall be entitled to representation according to the following schedule: two votes for 5-15 NSS members, three votes for 16-25 NSS members, four votes for 26-35 NSS members, and so on.
 - B. In determining the number of votes to which an Internal Organization (I/O) is entitled, no NSS member may be counted as a member of more than one I/O.
 - C. The NSS membership database shall be used to determine representation.
 - D. Each I/O is entitled to a minimum of two votes.
 - E. Any collection of eight or more NSS members who are not members of a Grotto may receive representation according to the same schedule as for Grottos with the provision that the NSS member has designated no Primary Affiliation in the NSS database.
- IV.
 - A. The COG shall be composed of delegates who are members in good standing of the NSS.
 - B. Each I/O and grouping of NSS members may appoint any number of delegates up to a maximum of the number of votes to which it is entitled.
 - C. I/O's may, in order to ensure their representation at COG, appoint as delegates proxies who are not members of the I/O, provided written authorization is presented.
 - D. In the event that delegate and proxy methods are not possible, votes may be submitted in writing to the Chair of the COG. If, during the course of discussion on the floor, a resolution is amended so as to change its original intent, the written vote will not be cast.
 - E. Delegations need not cast their votes as a unit but may split the vote so as to indicate the desires of the membership. Grottos may instruct their delegates how to vote or may allow them discretionary voting power.
 - F. Distinctive placards will be provided, bearing the name of the I/O and the number of votes to which it is entitled.
 - G. Voting shall be done initially by the show of placards. The Chair may, at his or her discretion or upon the request of any delegate, call for a roll call vote.
- V. Any NSS member may attend the COG to express their views and shall be entitled to speak if recognized by the Chair.
- VI. The Board of Governors of the NSS are requested to attend COG, as observers, to be advised of the views of the membership. Delegates may address questions to the Officers regarding their department if it is germane to the discussion.
- VII. The COG shall elect a Chair of the COG to preside at meetings of the COG during his or her term of office, and also a Vice-Chair.
 - A. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be nominated and elected by the assembled Congress at its meeting during the annual convention.
 - B. These officers shall serve from the close of one annual convention to the close of the succeeding annual convention.
 - C. A Chair may not serve more than four terms in succession.
 - D. No one may be elected Chair who has not attended at least one COG prior to election.

- E. A Chair or Vice-Chair who becomes an Officer or Director of the Society during their term shall complete the term with the COG but may not be re-elected.
 - F. If the Chair of the COG vacates the office during the term, the office shall be assumed by the Vice-Chair.
- VIII. The agenda of the Congress shall consist of resolutions submitted for its consideration.
 - A. Resolutions may be submitted by any I/O or grouping of eight or more NSS members. The COG encourages the BOG and the Executive Committee to refer significant issues to the COG for consideration.
 - B. An Issues Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the COG and by the Chair of the I/O Committee of the Society to determine the issues confronting the Society and to propose resolutions intended to reveal the views of the membership. The Issues Committee shall provide the I/O's, in good time, with information and discussions concerning these issues.
 - C. The Issues Committee shall, in correspondence with the proposer of a resolution, establish clarity of the wording of a resolution, consistency of a resolution with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Acts of the BOG of the Society, and shall resolve conflicts or overlaps between resolutions submitted.
 - D. The agenda shall be submitted to all I/O's in sufficient time to allow the resolutions to be discussed before the annual convention.
 - E. If time permits, resolutions will be allowed from the floor of the Congress after all other business has been taken care of.
 - F. The purpose of the COG being advisory and not legislative, resolutions need not be stated in advisory form but may be phrased in a multiple answer format to better express the views of the membership.
- IX. No Officer, Director, or Chair of a permanent committee of the NSS may serve as a delegate unless no other individual is available.
- X. These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Congress provided that such motions to amend appear on the agenda.
- XI. *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised* shall govern all procedures not covered by the above rules.

(Adopted by the Congress of Grottos in 1969 with amendments in 1972, 1973, 1976, 1980, 1993, 2002, 2003, and 2017.)