

**Minutes of the
2007 NSS Vertical Section Meeting
July 25, 2007**

The 2007 NSS Vertical Section meeting was held Wednesday, July 25, 2007 at the Crawford County High School in Marengo, Indiana. Executive Board members present were Chair Miriam Cuddington, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boehle, At-Large Executive Members John Woods, Brice Williams, and Ed Sira, Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Terry Clark, Education/Training Coordinator Bruce Smith, and Contest Coordinator Bill Cuddington. Approximately 15 additional Vertical Section members were in attendance.

- I. **Meeting opened at 1:10 PM by Chair Miriam Cuddington**
Announcements - Thank you to all who helped at the climbing contest on Monday and Tuesday. Special thank you to John Woods for coordinating and conducting the climbing gear "tune-up" discussed at last year's convention. It was very successful and productive. See additional discussion under old business below.
- II. **Minutes of the Last Meeting** - were published on the website and read at the meeting. 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. Accepted as presented. Regarding getting paid for the Workshop registrations collected by the conventions for us, it was suggested that it would speed things up if a bill were given to the convention treasurer right after the workshop. Lynn Fielding handles the registrations for the Vertical Workshop for Terry Clark. Terry was present and agreed that this was a good idea and would pass this suggestion along to Lynn.
 - o **VS Symbolic Items** - Bill Boehle. See Treasurer's Report for sales numbers. We restocked the sizes and colors of sweats and T-shirts that we were out of. I can't fill orders if we don't have what the members want. Still thinking of producing a bandanna with vertical devices and equipment on it. Need to finalize a design and get a production estimate. A volunteer good at computer graphic design to assist in producing the photo-ready artwork needed for this project would be appreciated. The single silkscreen artwork of the section logo that was produced for the Instructor T-shirts is now available for any other projects that we may have in the future. Members have also inquired about the possibility of hats with our logo. I am looking into costs either using our patch or directly embroidering the logo on the hat. Costs will dictate if that becomes available. The new Vertical Instructor T-shirts (36) were given to Terry Clark. He and his committee will determine how and to whom they will be distributed. They are intended to both identify the instructors at the workshop as well as to reward those instructors who have provided long time service to this section activity. Section logo pins are also in short supply. Costs for production still need to be investigated. Will look into the traditional triangular pin as well as a variation with the yellow triangular design set into a red circular background. This may be cheaper to produce as well as making the logo "pop" out of the background. This will be run by the Executive Board before finalizing any purchase.

- **Nylon Highway Editor's Report:** - Information from Tim White (not present) relayed by Miriam. Tim is willing to continue as Nylon Highway editor.

IV. **Committee Reports:**

- **Contest:** Bill Cuddington -
When setting up the ropes in the gym, we need to get the contest ropes done first. This will allow us to start the contest on time, including early climbs by contest staff and workers. Thanks to all who help during the vertical contest. We can always use more help. Whether you can only spend a little time or a lot, it all adds up. 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 racketteers), etc. This year we had 8 Age Group Records set in the contest. We need more younger climbers entering the contest. They are the future of the section. The contest is a race, but it functions as a workshop as well. People come in with new rigs and get to work out any problems they may have with their setup. If you can't use your rig under ideal conditions, it probably won't work in a cave. Thanks to PMI for donating 1200 feet of rope for the contest. The ropes will be cut up for use as prizes. Awards will be given out on Friday at 1:00 PM.
- **Vertical Workshop:** Terry Clark -
The Vertical Workshop may not have happened without the tremendous help of Mike Rusin. Mike spent a lot of time with Terry rigging the workshop ropes. Terry must have more help with this big job. More helping hands would make this tough job easier. Rigging is always done Monday morning starting about 8:00 to 8:30 am. Rigging needs to be done quickly and efficiently so that the climbing contest, gear tune-up, and rebelay course can all start on schedule. This can't be accomplished without help. It was suggested that help could be requested from the convention volunteer coordinators for people that could assist with moving all the heavy equipment needed into the gym. This would free up trained riggers to have more time to do the actual rigging. Terry and Lynn have decided on their criteria for giving out the new Vertical Instructor T-shirts. Instructors with three or more years of service to the section in this activity will earn their T-shirt in recognition of their continuing support. The workshop continues to be a big success. This is due in no small part to Lynn Fielding's work with registration and coordination, and to all the instructors who volunteer their time to ensure that people learn good vertical technique. Terry also noted that we have been spending some time at convention teaching vertical technique specifically to the JSS. He believes this is time well spent instructing the next generation on proper vertical caving technique.
- **Education:** Bruce Smith -
This convention marks the 20th anniversary of the release of "On Rope". There have been 10 reprints in that time, with an 11th reprint scheduled (there are less than 300 copies remaining in stock). It has been the largest selling book for the NSS in every year for the last 20 years. It is also being reprinted now in Spanish. This success has been due to all the efforts of the section members who have participated in the many phases of this project over the years. Allan and Bruce were asked to review the book, once again, for a possible Version 3. They don't think that may be necessary, since no major revisions/updates appear to be needed. A bunch of minor "tweaks" of some information could be handled before a 12th printing would take place.

Basic Training Course - There have been a lot of requests for this course. We are cleaning up the procedures for the ordering, invoicing, and mailing of these manuals. This will allow better communication and coordination between the Editor and Treasurer. Bill Boehle noted that similar procedures need to be followed regarding the

production and distribution of the Nylon Highway annual volumes for those who have paid for them.

Intermediate Training Course - Much time has been invested up to this point on what skills should be included in this course. Bruce continues to have a problem with "HOW" to teach this course. This is not an NCRC course and some types of skills are better handled there. This course is intended for leaders so that they can properly teach many complex skills that they must be able to demonstrate as part of the course. These are laid out in Chapter 12 of On Rope. This involves a lot of time and expensive equipment and raises many logistical problems that Bruce has no easy solutions to. Bruce is stuck and out of ideas. Section ideas are desperately needed and feedback is requested. This may be something that does not lend itself to a single course, but is learned through time and practice. Perhaps acquired skills could be demonstrated/certified in some to-be-determined forum. Certification could result in liability issues. Various ideas were kicked around. Different grottoes do different things regarding vertical training. The creation and use of instructional videos/DVDs was raised. Bruce stated that is under consideration, with some recent discussion with Dave Socky. These would be helpful to convey demonstrations of complex skills.

- **Rebelay Course:** Gary Bush and John Woods - This year there were about 15 people signed up for the rope course, although many spectators sat in and observed during the orientation/demonstration portion. It was well received by all who participated.
- **Web Page:** Gary Bush, webmaster - No report submitted this year.

V. **Old Business:**

- John Woods reports that 40 to 50 people showed up for the vertical gear tune-up prior to the re-belay course. Unfortunately they kept trickling in and this was not efficient for the instructors who helped, and resulted in delays in getting the re-belay training started in a timely manner. It might be better to establish a cutoff time to avoid backups that effect the rest of the schedule of activities. Thanks to the 8 or so instructors who pitched in to help with this. Initially John thought they were okay with the 3 to 4 precommitted instructors, but they were soon overwhelmed with the crowds that showed up. Additional instructors stepped in to help. The consensus was that people have a lot of problems with their gear, especially with "frog" systems. Much improper gear needed to be replaced or upgraded. John noted the the speleo-venders who provided this gear were VERY happy. There was much positive feedback from the participants and confirmed the need for this type of activity. However, we need to be sure we are not over-extending ourselves. In the future we need better scheduling, more available ropes (at least 3), and more precommitted instructors. Although we don't want to turn people away, maybe we need to limit students if we can't resolve the manpower and other issues.
- No other old business from the floor.

VI. **New Business:**

- Bob Thrun raised issues related to the Nylon Highway on the web. Issues are in HTML and are difficult to download and print. Also complained that the early out-of-print issues that are posted as PDFs are of low or poor quality. He thinks that Adobe Acrobat could be used to produce a higher quality PDF file. Gary Bush responded that he generally

agreed with Bob. However, when the web issues were first produced starting with the post 43 issue, many members were still using dial-up connections to access the internet. Producing the issues in HTML allowed users with slow connections to more easily access the information. Now that Gary is retired, he intends to recompile the post 43 issues as high quality PDFs for those with high speed connections.

- Gary Storrick reminded people that he brought his vertical equipment collection to this years convention and invited all to stop by and look at it. He thanked those who helped him set it up.
- Ed Sira suggested that we should enter the new Vertical Instructors T-shirt in next conventions Symbolic Items contest. [Note: Since Terry Clark has all the shirts, he would need to submit the entry.]

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 Brice Williams were nominated. A ballot of the section members present was not required. Miriam Cuddington and Brice Williams were elected by acclamation. [Note: Current At-Large members Ed Sira and John Woods have 1 year remaining in their terms.]

VIII. **Motion to Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made and carried. Time of adjournment was approximately 2:40 PM.

[Additional note: Subsequent to the Meeting, the Board Members elected Brice Williams 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
- Education Committee - Bruce Smith]

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle

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NSS VERTICAL SECTION
SECRETARY'S REPORT

JULY, 2007

By Bill Boehle

Number of Members (current/expired)	163
Number of Members Current as of 2007	.....	76
Number of Subscribers Current as of 2007	.....	5
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for 2007	.....	12
Number of Complementary Subscriptions	.....	3

YEARS PAID:	MEMBER	SUBSCRIBER	ANNUAL VOLUME
Comps	--	--	3
2007	38	1	7
2008	23	2	3
2009	11	1	2
2010	1	0	0
2011	1	0	0
<u>2012</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
2007 TOTALS:	76	5	15
Expired 2006:	87	10	
TOTALS:	163		

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**NSS VERTICAL SECTION
TREASURER'S REPORT
JULY, 2007
By Bill Boehle**

INCOME:

New Memberships, Subscriptions, & Renewals \$ 231.00
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales	..... \$ 180.00
2006 Convention Workshop Registrations (not received)	..... \$ 0.00
Vertical Training Course Sales	..... \$ 127.00
Symbolic Item Sales	..... \$ 271.00
Nylon Highway Back Issue Sales	..... \$ 14.25
Shipping/Postage Charges	..... \$ 10.98
Donations	..... \$ 0.00
Bank Interest (GMAC) July 2006 - June 2007	..... \$ 495.52
Reserved	..... \$ 0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,329.75

EXPENSES:

Shipping/Postage Costs	..... \$ 10.97
2006 VTW Transportation Subsidy (Terry Clark)	..... \$ 580.00
2006 Climbing Contest prizes	..... \$ 82.50
NH Annual Volume Production & Mailing Costs (1)	..... \$ 0.00
Symbolic Items Restocking (T-shirts, Sweats)	..... \$1,182.10
Vertical Instructor T-shirts	..... \$ 315.60
New Vertical Contest Record Boards	..... \$ 97.60
Vertical Workshop Supplies (Howie's Harnesses)	..... \$ 20.00
Printing - Climbing Contest Certificates	..... \$ 126.85
Photocopying for NSS Convention paperwork	..... \$ 5.78
Reserved	..... \$ 0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,421.40

ACCOUNT BALANCES:

Commerce Bank (NJ)	..... \$3,424.68
GMAC	..... \$8,821.56

BALANCE ON HAND:

..... **\$12,246.24**

(1) Not Yet Billed by Nylon Highway Editor