

**Minutes of the
2008 NSS Vertical Section General Meeting
August 13, 2008**

The 2008 NSS Vertical Section meeting was held Wednesday, August 13, 2008 at the Lake City Community College in Lake City, Florida. Executive Board members present were Chair Brice Williams, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boehle, At-Large Executive Members John Woods, and Miriam Cuddington, 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. At-Large Executive Member Ed Sira was unable to attend the Convention. Approximately 28 additional Vertical Section members were in attendance.

- I. **Meeting opened at 1:02 PM by Chair Brice Williams.**
Announcements - Welcome to everyone who came. We will try to keep things rolling along and quickly get through the meeting.
- 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 **Nylon Highway Editor's Report:** - Information from Tim White (not present) relayed by Bruce. The supplies (stock) of the Basic Vertical Training Course have been depleted. At our Executive Committee meeting on Sunday 8/10/2008 it was decided that there needs to be some minor adjustments to the Basic course which will be discussed later in the meeting during Bruce's Training/Education report. Printing of more copies of the Basic course will be done after the course material is revised.
 - o **VS Symbolic Items** - Bill Boehle. See Treasurer's Report for sales numbers.
- IV. **Committee Reports:**
 - o **Contest:** Bill Cuddington - 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 racketteers), etc. Thanks also to the college for the great facilities. It was nice and cool in the gym. Thanks to PMI for donating 1200 feet of rope for the climbing contest and two Mitchell Climbing Systems, including two double roller

plates, to the Vertical Workshop. On Rope 1 donated two pairs of climbing stirrups to the Workshop. Terry Clark mentioned that some people complained to him about contest workers cutting in the line for climbs. Bill noted that we try to have workers climb early in the day, but that some times we accommodate workers when someone is not ready to climb. We ask the other person if they wouldn't mind a worker going first. Usually this is not a problem. Some flexibility is needed to adjust to conditions. Awards will be given out on Friday at 1:00 PM. Climbers need to be there to pick up their awards.

- **Vertical Workshop:** Terry Clark -
Six students signed up for the Vertical Workshop prior to convention. We are now up to 11 students, so we will be able to set up two rotations. We had good help setting up the ropes this year, as opposed to last year. We are not sure what the status of the workshop will be next year at the ICS in Texas. This will be brought up for discussion later under New Business. Otherwise, things have been going well, with a bunch of new equipment (mentioned above under the Contest Committee report) being donated to the workshop.
- **Education:** Bruce Smith -
The Basic and Intermediate Courses have specific goals and objectives that were laid out back in 1996. We have been working with the Basic course now for 12 years with varying degrees of success. There are three primary goals of the Basic course. There are about 250-275 different vertical skills that are available to learn. These were divided down into three separate categories: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Things have changed over the last 12 years and we have been revisiting some of the goals and objectives of the course.

Basic Training Course - The course only has one manual. We may want to provide some additions notes to assist the instructors. There has been increased use of the Frog System and rebelays. We probably need to adjust the course to address this. There are plusses and minuses to the use of each of the different systems. Much discussion followed. It was agreed that rebelays need to be in the training and that people need to really know whichever system they use. A cheat card for overcoming obstacles and dealing with blowouts is something that Bruce would like to provide to instructors. Working through these problems with students is a highly effective learning tool. The treadmill climb versus a real experience during training was discussed. A real experience is probably better. Other topics discussed were harnesses, gear, and use of gear. Once the changes are incorporated the Basic course material can be reprinted. Questions were raised about whether we should look into electronic distribution. There are pros and cons and the Board will look into it.

Intermediate Training Course - We had a great meeting last year and Bruce was challenged. He received a lot of good feedback and suggestions. Bruce was inspired and has come up with a draft for the Intermediate course. Copies of the draft were distributed for discussion. The package consists of a task book, a task completion mentor/trainer sign off card, and the course completion certificate. The structure, goals, and objectives of the course were presented and discussed. The manual contains the talking points that should be addressed by the student and the mentor/trainer. The course is structured on a "go learn" mentor model versus the

traditional "teach me" model. The student can take the lead to search out competent mentors as compared to attending a training class as is used for the Basic course. John Woods pointed out that the course book is not a mandate but an advisory guide. It provides a mechanism for people who want to learn or otherwise improve their vertical skills. This is the version of the course that the Board has approved once the typos have been corrected.

- **Rebelay Course:** Gary Bush and John Woods -
This year there were about 6 people who showed up for the rope course. It was well received by all who participated.
- **"Dial In Your Gear" Session** John Woods -
We had 12 people show up, including some new people who had never done any vertical work. They were interested in getting into vertical caving and came to find out what kind of gear to get. They wanted to talk to cavers rather than to the vendors. This provided a place, for the first time, that they could come to where someone would directly answer their questions. It was well received and some of them stayed for hours.
- **Web Page:** Gary Bush, webmaster -
Gary noted that he has received no comments on improving the website, but has received several comments about objects on the website. Last year it was raised that some of the old PDF copies of the Nylon Highway were fuzzy and unreadable. It was also noted that the later issues (43 to 52) were not available as PDF files. Gary has now made high quality PDFs of these newer issues from the source files. He notes, however, that in looking back at the old issues in his files, that the original print issues are also fuzzy. He feels that the available PDFs are as good as we can get since the original source files are not available. A lot of time was invested doing individual page scans trying to make them as good as possible. Unless someone wants to retype all the old issues so that PDFs can be made directly from a source file, what we have is as good as it will get. All future issues will be available on the website as PDFs. If people would like other things on the website, send Gary an email and we will see what can be done. As of now, the PDFs of the old issues are available to anyone. The newer issues are only available to the members via the passcode. That could change in the future. There are advantages to open availability of this information.

V. **Old Business:**

- No old business from the floor.

VI. **New Business:**

- Brice explained the recent Board actions eliminating the dues requirement for section membership. Dues was mainly to pay for the postage and other costs associated with the Nylon Highway. Since we now publish electronically, that is no longer the case and the collection of dues involves a lot of work. Dues is also not our main source of income. So the Board acted to eliminate dues and to make several other changes to the bylaws concerning membership. To be a member now only requires a person to attend the annual meeting (or other official meeting) and sign the roster or to submit an application requesting membership. We are also creating a Yahoo Group to use as a mailing list for communications from the Executive Committee. It is required by the

bylaws that the membership vote to ratify any dues change enacted by the Board. A motion was made(Gary Bush),seconded (Gary Storrick), and carried to set the section dues to zero.

- Gary Storrick brought his vertical equipment collection to this years convention and has been asked to bring it again next year to the ICS in Texas. He asked for a few volunteers to help him set it up on either Sunday evening or Monday morning. He expects that it will take a few hours. Brice asked Gary to send us an email about it a little bit before the ICS and will will send a reminder out to the membership via the new Yahoo mailing list.
- Terry Clark raised the question of whether or not we should do the Workshop at the ICS. Bill Frantz thinks we should because this is a combined International Conference and NSS Convention. It will be attended by a lot of people from all over the country and the world. Terry stated that Texas has not yet asked us to put this event on. The section is interested, but Terry needs to talk to George Veni and find out what they would like us to do and to work out any details regarding scheduling and facilities. We obviously will need members to help out in conducting the vertical activities at the event.

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) - Dick Mitchell, Terry Mitchell and Rory Tinston were nominated. A ballot of the section members present was taken. Dick Mitchell and Terry Mitchell were elected in a close vote. [Note: Current At-Large members Miriam Cuddington and Brice Williams have 1 year remaining in their terms.]

VIII. **Motion to Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made and carried. Time of adjournment was approximately 2:35 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 (Assistant: Lynn Fielding)
- Education Committee - Bruce Smith]

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle

NSS VERTICAL SECTION

SECRETARY'S REPORT

AUGUST, 2008

By Bill Boehle

Number of Members (current/just expired)	.....	120
Number of Members Current as of 2008	.....	81
Number of Subscribers Current as of 2008	.....	3
Number of Annual Volumes Paid for 2008	.....	13
Number of Complementary Subscriptions	.....	3

YEARS PAID:	MEMBER	SUBSCRIBER	ANNUAL VOLUME
Comps	--	--	4
2008	32	3	7
2009	33	1	2
2010	13	1	0
2011	1	0	0
<u>2012</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
2008 TOTALS:	81	5	13
Expired 2007:	39	1	
TOTALS:	120		

**NSS VERTICAL SECTION
TREASURER'S REPORT
AUGUST, 2008
By Bill Boehle**

INCOME:

New Memberships, Subscriptions, & Renewals	..... \$ 372.00
Nylon Highway Annual Volume Sales	..... \$ 240.00
2006 Convention Workshop Registrations	..... \$ 825.00
2007 Convention Workshop Registrations	..... \$ 650.00
Vertical Training Course Sales	..... \$ 260.00
Symbolic Item Sales	..... \$ 428.00
Nylon Highway Back Issue Sales	..... \$ 10.00
Shipping/Postage Charges	..... \$ 46.75
Donations	..... \$ 1.00
Bank Interest (GMAC) July 2007 - June 2008	..... \$ 522.98
TOTAL INCOME	\$3,355.73

EXPENSES:

Shipping/Postage Costs	..... \$ 12.28
2007 VTW Transportation Subsidy (Terry Clark)	..... \$ 123.00
2007 Climbing Contest prizes	..... \$ 320.00
2006 Vertical Workshop expenses (Lynn Fielding)	..... \$ 20.81
NH Annual Volume Production & Mailing Costs (1)	..... \$ 0.00
Symbolic Items Restocking (T-shirts, Sweats)	..... \$ 0.00
Vertical Instructor T-shirts	..... \$ 0.00
Vertical Training Course Mailing Costs (billed by Tim White)	..... \$ 41.20
Vertical Workshop Supplies	..... \$ 0.00
Printing - Climbing Contest Certificates	..... \$ 171.25
Photocopying for NSS Convention paperwork	..... \$ 14.87
Petty Cash for postage	..... \$ 20.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$723.41

ACCOUNT BALANCES: (as of 7/31/2008)

Commerce Bank (NJ)	..... \$5,488.17
GMAC \$9,385.16

BALANCE ON HAND: **\$14,873.33**

(1) Not Yet Billed by Nylon Highway Editor

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