

PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY, INC.
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
ROSEN SHINGLE CREEK RESORT, ORLANDO FLORIDA
JULY 4, 2014

President **Tom Wilder** welcomed the 160 members in attendance to the Annual Meeting at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort, Orlando, Florida and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chaplin **Cheryl Russell** gave the invocation and Sgt. at Arms **Brittney Wilder** led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The president welcomed the past presidents in attendance including Pete Foster, Muriel Whitman, Betty LeDoux, Margot Jordan, Faith Brundage, Bill McLaughlin, Elaine (Vestal) Lewis and Bob Russell.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting copies of the minutes from the general membership meeting held at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Sarasota Florida were distributed. The president called on Nancy Van Siclen to highlight the minutes from the May meeting. After, Tom Wilder asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Betty LeDoux made the motion to accept the minutes; it was seconded by Muriel Whitman. Motion passed.

Tom Wilder welcomed everyone to the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Panama Canal Society and thanked each of the board members who have volunteered their time to the Panama Canal Society including 1st Vice President Mike Coffey; 2nd Vice President Shirley Avery; Director Noreen Hanson; Director Kelly Parthenais; Director Mike Young; Director-at-Large Bliss (Morris) Connerton; Treasurer and Historian Bill McLaughlin; Sergeant at Arms Brittney Wilder and Immediate Past President Bob Russell. He also thanked the Standing Committee Members including Bylaws Chairperson Kathy Malin; Legislative Representative Jim O'Donnell; Chaplain Cheryl Russell; Insurance Liaison Beth Brandenburg and the office staff Canal Record Editor Jacque Vowell and Office Manager Nancy Van Siclen.

Tom also thanked his wife Kathy for all her support over the past six years while he served as President of the Society.

The past six years have flown by. But as my third term concludes it is bitter sweet. We have worked hard to ensure our beloved organization will remain for many years to come and our newly elected Executive Board will bring new ideas to the table and remain diligent in preserving what we have worked so hard to maintain. Saving money when possible and avoiding unnecessary expenditures continues to help our bottom line. We have ordered a complete audit of our funds in preparation for the new board.

Tom reported that we were notified that the office building where we lease space has sold and we have been notified that we must vacate our office where we have been for the past 23 years by the end of the year. The new board is aware of this and will be addressing a new location in the coming months.

In May we brought on Cheryl Williams as Secretary to learn the office and prepare to assume the duties upon the departure of Nancy. All reports indicate that Cheryl has been a quick study and will be ready when the time comes.

The Society Face book page continues to grow and this year we have grown to over 3,300 friends following our page. Now if we can get all of them to join and pay dues that would be great. The *Canal Record*, is the cornerstone of our organization. Tom thanked the Area Reporters who make it such a successful publication and Jacque who spends many hours getting the *Record* ready for publication.

Each year the president included a handout for the membership to highlight the activities and finances from the past year along with a PowerPoint presentation. Tom emphasize that the membership is the lifeblood to keeping the Society around. The Governors Club continues to be a success with over 347 members since we started the program in 2011. The Traveling Meetings are important in that they allow for our members throughout the year access to their Executive Board.

The next slide is a snapshot of our General income versus Expenses from August last year to May of the current year. What is reflected in this graph is the continued good stewardship of the Executive Board and as you can see our income is above our expenses a trend that we have maintained for the last five years.

The Canal Record Costs continue to be within acceptable limits. What has increased is the cost of postage and the board is looking at ways to offset this increase in the future.

Our 2013 Annual Reunion was another success. As you can see by the charts, fees collected versus reunion expense paid is almost break even for most events. We have several corporate sponsors who donated prizes and in some cases funds to offset our expenses. This year we were faced with an overflow situation where members who didn't register early for the reunion were moved to an overflow property. The board regrets this had to happen, but we didn't want to be faced with the expense of holding rooms that may not be booked then ending up having to cover those costs. The lesson here is to Book Early; you can always cancel.

Please remember that our reunion is run by volunteers. Please remember to thank a volunteer to show your appreciation. Also, I would like to thank Bill McLaughlin and Mike Coffey our Co-Reunion Coordinators and Betty LeDoux, our hotel liaison.

In conclusion, the state of the Society remains healthy. We continue to be financially solvent. As I conclude my 6th and final year as President I want to thank everyone for their support of the Panama Canal Society.

1st Vice President Mike Coffey reported that he and Bill McLaughlin are splitting up the duties of Reunion Coordinator. Bill worked on getting all the preliminary work done prior to the reunion and Mike will be responsible for the on-site during the reunion. He reported that we have occupied 2,899 room nights. The Thursday Night dance hosted by the classes of BHS 69, BHS 74, CHS 74 and BHS 79 was a huge success; the golf tournament was changed to Friday night this year to see if we could attract more attendees; Margaret McLaughlin and Stefanie Cutler are hard at work designing the table decorations for the Friday and Saturday night dances. Don't forget to stop by the photographer table and place your order for your pictures from David Wright.

Treasurer Bill McLaughlin told the membership that the May 2014 Financial Statement was in the packets handed out as you came into the meeting and it stands for Audit. He also reported that unfortunately Randall Drake, CPA who has spoken at several of our Annual Meetings could not attend this year since he has completed the merger of his accounting practice with DKM Certified Public Accountants and has since relocated to Tennessee. Randy did inform Bill that this past year the Society Form 990 tax return was done on a timely basis and as part of the process he reviewed accounting transactions and board meeting minutes.

PCM Friends Executive Council Joe Wood spoke and thanked Tom Wilder and the membership for their support of the Friends of the Museum. When the Museum moved from their Seminole office to Gainesville 16,478 artifacts transferred to the University of Florida in Gainesville and 7% of the collection has been digitized. In 2013 we had over 1 million hits on the website and as of this month we have had 2,349,000 hits in 2014. Joe announced that the yearbooks are on the website and the most hits received were for the BHS 75 and in second place was BHS 72.

At this time, Joe introduced Dr. Judith Russell, Dean of University Libraries. Dr Russell informed the membership that the weekend of August 15-17, 2014 the University of Florida will be hosting several events commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal. There will be a performance of the Symphony of the Americas featuring Maestro James-Brooks-Bruzzese on Friday evening, on Saturday there will be a Centennial Celebration Banquet and on Sunday Edith Barkowitz Crouch will present a seminar on Molas. The University also developed a coin to commemorate the 100th Anniversary and they are offering it for a minimum of a \$100.00 donation.

Tom Wilder presented Bob and Cheryl Russell with the Distinguished Service Award for 2014 for there many years of volunteer service as active members of the Panama Canal Society Executive Board. Tom also presented Nancy Van Siclen with the Office Manager Emeritus award for her years of service to the Panama Canal Society. Tom mentioned that Nancy would be retiring at the end of July 2014.

Bill McLaughlin, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee along with the committee consisting of Bob Russell, Bliss Connerton, Rae Donaldson and Tom Ellis counted the ballots for the election of Society officers for the term 2014-2016. There were a total of 186 ballots received and of these six were invalid. The results of the ballot count are as follows:

President Mike Coffey – 180 votes
1st Vice President Shirley Avery – 177
2nd Vice President Kathy Malin – 176
Director Kelly Parthenais – 175
Directory Brittney Wilder – 174
Director Michael Young – 175

After reporting the results of the ballot count Bill McLaughlin asked for a motion to destroy the ballots. Betty LeDoux made a motion to destroy the ballots and it was seconded by Robert Forsythe.

Tom Wilder administered the oath of office to the new Executive Board and presented Mike Coffey his gavel on behalf of the Society. The new officers will take office on August 1, 2014.

Through out the meeting several door prizes were awarded which were donated by the vendors and the grand prizes donated by Condor Tours and Travel were won by the following members:

2 nights at Sheraton Bijao and 3 nights at Country Inn & Suites was won by Mickey Fitzgerald
2 nights at Le Meridien Hotel and 3 nights at InterContinental Playa Bonita Resort was won by Shirley Boswell
3 nights at Gamboa Rainforest Resort, 1 night at Riande Granda and 1 night at Riande Aeropuerto was won by Len Brockman
2 nights at Los Mandarinos and 3 nights at RIU Playa Blanca was won by Ana Rodriguez

At this time Mike Coffey presented a token to Tom Wilder from the Executive Board and membership for his six years as President and a bouquet of flowers was presented to Kathy Wilder.

Pete Foster made motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30; it was seconded by Shirley Boswell. Motion carried.

NANCY VAN SICLEN
OFFICE MANAGER/SECRETARY

TOM WILDER
PRESIDENT