

**PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY, INC.
GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
TROYER'S DUTCH RESTAURANT, SARASOTA, FLORIDA
MAY 2, 2009**

President Tom Wilder welcomed the 41 members and guests in attendance at the General Business Meeting held at Troyer's Dutch Restaurant, Sarasota, Florida on May 2, 2009. The meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m.

Chaplain Cheryl Russell gave the invocation. **Sgt. at Arms Chris Wilder** led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tom Wilder recognized past Presidents Pete Foster, Muriel Whitman, Marje Foster, Faith Brundage, Betty LeDoux-Morris, Bill McLaughlin and Bob Russell. Tom also introduced the following board members that were in attendance: Margaret McLaughlin, 1st Vice President; Shirley Avery-Bentley, Director; Jim Parthenais, Treasurer; Bob Russell, Immediate Past President; Bill McLaughlin, Bylaws and Reunion Coordinator; Chris Wilder, Sgt. At Arms; Cheryl Russell, Chaplain, Jacque Vowell, Editor and Nancy Van Sicle, Office Manager.

The meeting adjourned for lunch and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

The president thanked Bob and Cheryl Russell for organizing and hosting the luncheon and gave them a small token of appreciation from the Society. Tom also thanked Barbara and Shada, the two servers we have had for the past several years at Troyer's.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, copies of the General Membership meeting held on March 21, 2009 in Tarpon Springs, Florida were distributed to the membership; therefore, the president asked for a motion to accept the minutes as written. Pete Foster made a motion to accept the minutes; Faith Brundage seconded it. Motion carried.

The March Financial Statement was also distributed to the membership and stands for audit.

The April Legislative Report was also distributed to the membership.

Jacque Vowell, Editor reported that the June issue of the *Canal Record* is at the printer and we are hoping to have it mailed to the membership in early June.

Bill McLaughlin, Reunion Coordinator, reported that the 2009 Reunion Committees are busy preparing for the reunion in July. He also reported on the following:

1. June 1st is the cut-off date for advance ticket sales.
2. The hotel has extended our cut-off date for room reservations. So, if you haven't reserved your room yet, please get your paperwork in as soon as possible.
3. Betty LeDoux-Morris reported that the confirmations are in the mail.
4. Tito Mouynes will be performing on Friday night and Frankie Pretto will be performing on Saturday night.
5. The "Sentimiento Panama" dance group will perform a Panama Folkloric dance at the Annual Luncheon. The performance will include various folkloric dances that will highlight the origination and significance of the different dances.
6. Saturday afternoon, the 4th of July, we will be hosting a poolside party with a DJ.
7. BHS/79 will be hosting the Thursday night dance with the band "Strobe" and they are also hosting the Saturday afternoon movie.
8. The Cultural Seminars are chaired by Bob Russell. Bob reported that the Panama Canal Society and the Panama Canal Museum are working together with these seminars. On Friday afternoon from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Dustin Smith from the Miami Zoo will be talking about different animals native to Panama including the Golden Frog. On Saturday afternoon from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. different members who wrote articles for the "Write of Passage" will be talking about their life in the Canal Zone.
9. Bill reminded those in attendance that the reunion operates on volunteers, so please consider helping out by signing up for registration, ticket sales, etc.

Beth Brandenburg, a volunteer for the past several years has been working with our members for several years concerning the International de Segurous Insurance Company by providing them information on how to change their beneficiary, submit claims, etc. Beth can be contact by email or by phone.

Tom Wilder announced that this year the membership attendance award was won by Joan and Ed Ohman. They are entitled to either to tickets to the Panazonain Dance, two tickets to the Annual Ball or one for each dance.

The president also announced that Bliss Connerton, who lives in Texas, has accepted the position of Director-at-Large and this will be effective after to-days meeting. The Executive Board has approved the appointment.

Tom Wilder reported that the bylaw changes were counted at the April Membership Meeting and each bylaw was approved by the membership including the membership dues increase starting in 2010. The cost of membership renewal for 2010 will be \$40.00.

The president reported to the membership that we are planning on having another SWOT exercise at the Annual Meeting. The board feels that we have received several good suggestions from the SWOT exercise in 2007 and we have even implemented some of the member's ideas.

We have also improved and updated the website this past year with the help of Chris Wilder and Bill McLaughlin.

Barbara Peterson, Secretary of the Panama Canal Museum reported on the following for the museum: 1) the theme at the reunion will be the Flora and Fauna of the Panama Canal; 2) the museum calendar will have the same theme; 3) the 2009 Christmas ornament will be the golden frog; 4) the museum store has brought several items including stuffed iguanas and the new book "Write of Passage" for sale today; 5) the Museum in the Trunk is doing well, several counties in Florida have one. There are also others in Virginia Beach, Va., Williamsburg, Va., and Washington, D.C. Some others in Manatee and Orange Counties in Florida will be completed sometime this year. Barbara encouraged those attending the luncheon to give Museum memberships to their family members as gifts.

The president reminded everyone of the upcoming meetings starting with the Annual Reunion from July 1st through July 5th at Rosen Shingle Creek Resort; the September luncheon will be held at the Ocala Elks Lodge on Saturday, September 12, 2009 and the November meeting will be held in conjunction with the Space Coast Picnic on Saturday, November 7, 2009.

Door prizes were awarded and the grand prize, a silk flower arrangement, was donated by Margaret McLaughlin and was won by Pete Foster.

Pete Foster made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Pete Lang; Motion carried.

NANCY VAN SICLEN
OFFICE MANAGER/SECRETARY

TOM WILDER
PRESIDENT