



Panama Canal Society Annual General Membership Meeting
Marriott World Center, Orlando Florida
Reunion 2017 – July 7, 2017

Meeting called to order at by Mike Coffey (President) at 10:00 a.m.

Location: Marriott World Center, 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando FL 32821

Pledge of Allegiance: James Beattie (Sergeant-at-Arms)

Invocation: Richard Grimison

Past Presidents: Muriel Whitman (1987-1988), Betty LeDoux (1989-1991 & 2000-2002), Margot Jordan (1997-1998), Bill McLaughlin (2002-2004), Elaine “Vestal” Lewis (2004-2006), Bob Russell (2006-2008), Tom Wilder (2008-2014).

Nancy Van Siclen – Office Manager Emeritus.

Board Attendees: Mike Coffey(President), Shirley Avery-Bentley (1st Vice President), Kelly Parthenais (2nd Vice President), Tom Wilder (Immediate Past President), Noreen Hanson (Treasurer), Kathy Malin (Director), Brittney Wilder (Director), Patrick Smith (Director), Raymond Husum (Director at Large), Richard Grimison (Chaplin), James Beattie (Sergeant-at-Arms), Lee Bentley (Bylaws Chairperson), Jacque Vowell (Editor), Cheryl Williams, (Office Manager)

Rae Donaldson (Sunshine Committee) & Chris Wilder (Webmaster).

Members attending: 148

Special Recognition: Mike Young was presented with a plaque to thank him for his service on the Board of Directors.

Minute approval: Mike asked for an approval for the May 20, 2017, General Membership minutes, Margot Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Terry Fuqua; Motion carried.

Door Prizes: Several door prizes were drawn and Shirley encouraged everyone to stop by and support the sponsors and vendors who generously donated door prizes.

Sponsor Recognition: Ricardo March and Lori Snow were presented with a gift certificate and clock in appreciation of their many years as our Diamond Sponsors.

Andrew Kaufman was also recognized for his generous door prize donation of his new book on Panama.

Reunion Coordinator-Bill McLaughlin reported that we started working on this reunion last August with our after-action reports. He announced that as of June 23, 2017, we had: 1861 registered, 327 registered for the Luncheon, 406 for the Rock and Roll dance, 764 for the Ball, and 912 hotel rooms. He announced the different donors for the different sponsor levels. He listed all the events that will be available for the remainder of the reunion. He reminded the group of the 85 cent cuba libres that will be on sell for a limited time in the Clubhouse. Sentimento Panama has added a new event; *The Pollera/Montuno Experience* for the Cultural Seminar; stating, “You won’t want to miss this”. He also announced that the lottery ticket sales are soaring and encouraged everyone to purchase their tickets.

Murga: Richard Grimison urged everyone to attend the Murga tomorrow night, there will be a Calle Arriba & Calle Abajo with music and horns. This only happens every 5 years.



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Golf: Katie Beattie provided an update on the Golf Tournament. 1st place team: the defending champions from last year wearing Hot Pink was Brian Husted, John Michael Norman, & Chris Bowman, Low Net; 2 pairs, paired together by handicap and age-Barbara Sanders, Jim Kaufman, & Jo Finneman, Closet to the pin Patrick Smith, 2nd closest to the pin Hubert Jordan. Katie thanked Betty LeDoux for planning a delicious luncheon for the group. They held a 50/50 raffle and 212.00 was collected and the winner went home with \$106.00. There were several door prizes given out. Katie encourage everyone to check with David Wright to purchase their golf memories.

UF Museum: Dean Judy Russell informed the group about the opening of the Smathers Panama Canal Corridor. The gallery has 18 cases and in March there was a short program and ribbon cutting ceremony at which approximately 140 people that attended. The next Luncheon will be March 3, 2018. Joe Wood was recognized and advised that the University of Florida did an outstanding job with the displays and urged everyone to visit. There is a new audio system to tell you about each exhibit. He also urged everyone to become members of Friends of the Museum, last year they had 211 members, and this year they only have 171 members. The Silent Auction helps support the collection. They also hold a Museum cruise March 17-25, 2018. Andrew Kaufman is donating 10% of his profits to the museum collection.

Upcoming Events: Shirley Avery announced the upcoming events for 2017. September 16, 2017: Membership Drive— Gaspar's Grotto, Noreen Hanson, Chairperson; October 14, 2017: South Florida Picnic—Tradewinds Park, Scott Parker & Kathy Malin Co-Chairs; November 4, 2017: Space Coast Picnic— TBA Bob & Kathy McConaughy, JoElla & Randy Deakins & Richard Grimison, Co-Chairs and December 16, 2017: Holiday Luncheon at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club, Kelly Parthenais, Chairperson.

Data Base: Mike thanked James Beattie for his countless hours updating access data base from 2003 to 2016. Our hope is to be able to better serve our members. James reported he is now working on a program to enable mass emails to communicate with all our members, to include recurring payments so members won't have to worry about renewing your membership each year. For the future, we are also looking at members being able to update their own information. James stated he would be happy to answer any questions members may have after the meeting.

Future Reunion Events: The Reunion will be held here at the Marriott World Center for the next 2 years, then we will return to the Caribe Royale for 2 years and then to the Royal Shingle Creek for 2 years.

Financials: Mike presented a slide of the 2015 and 2016 financial analysis and advised that the Panama Canal Society had a surplus in 2015. We then established a budgeting process in 2016 and came up with another surplus in 2016. One of the reasons for that surplus was that we backed off on the expenses for the reunion. This year we have spent more money because we are celebrating our 85th anniversary and we are at a new property. Mike reported that he and Noreen, our Treasurer, are predicting that we will likely break even this year but we won't know until all the Reunion bills have come in and been paid. Membership is the most important factor to keep the society going and unfortunately, we have seen a drop each year in membership. Mike asked the membership to please remind their families and friends to join each year or enroll in the Governor's Club.



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SWOT: Mike asked the group to review the copy of the SWOT exercise they were given. Mike went over the Executive Boards SWOT strengths then he asked for feedback from the members.

Strengths:

Volunteers
Willingness to have a SWOT
How to Volunteer
When and how to volunteer
Reporters need feedback from the members in their area
Board Open to change

Weakness:

Our motto
Different views of heritage of the Canal Zone
Membership driven Society
No more Zonians
Educate youngsters
Stories from Elders
Acknowledge members email

Opportunities:

New Members/Renewals (trinket) discounts
Notify class leaders to encourage members
Add Trader Brock to our Website and he will add ours to his.

Threats:

Needing to reach out to groups like Paradiso for membership

Mike thanked the membership for their candid input and advised that the SWOT results will be published in the October Canal Record.

The SWOT will be published in the October Record.

Curundu Veterans: Fred Webster started a list of Veterans from the Curundu on a lark but ended up compiling a list of Veterans who had lived in Curundu. He challenged other members from other town sites and communities to start their own groups for the veterans, to recognize and remember all our Veterans who have served or given the



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ultimate sacrifice. Joe Wood stated the University of Florida has a list of Zonians who served in the armed Forces.

Mike asked Lori Snow to come forward and help present the Grand Door Prizes – trips to Panama. The grand prize was won by Walter Kleefkens.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

Cheryl Williams
Office Manager

Mike Coffey
President