

Annual Meeting October 18, 2006 State of the HI-Michigan Council

The Annual Meeting is an evening of thanks, of reporting on where we've come since last year and for conducting the business of the Council membership, which is the election of new Board members, and also this year, voting on new Bylaws. Thanks first to REI Stores for hosting our meeting and to Darvie Strobridge for arranging for the food for the evening.

Thanks to all who helped us through this year of change—those who helped start new programs and those who kept the old ones going while others were starting the new. Also, to our new Volunteer Coordinator, Joan Smykowski, our new webmaster, Gayle Walters, and those who have given input into the revised website.

Finally, thanks to Al Heavner and Laura Gogola for a wonderful Paddle Event which is now a tradition in Detroit, to Bob Holley and Martha Spear for managing all the details of our building garage sale, and to our Board who has served in many ways in the past year.

Our special award for this year goes to Al Heavner, who becomes our first Board Member Emeritus. Thank you for many years of dedication and service to the Council. We are looking forward to many more. As Board member emeritus, Al will be included in Board meetings but will not be required to serve on a committee or to vote.

State of the Council

Logistics

Our 35 year at the Coolidge address yielded years of files and old records. It is also in need of a great deal of maintenance on a very old building. This year the Board decided to put it up for sale, based on the maintenance needs as well as our new direction to go into the community with our programs and promote hostelling. We hired Joan Smykowski as part-time Volunteer Coordinator, to work from her home and be mostly on the road.

Sale of building—we have no buyers yet, so as of October, 2006, we still have our tenant next door and are still paying basic utilities on the building. The lawyer for the National office, Bill Evans, happens to have his office in Huntington Woods and has offered to handle all inquiries on a sale for us. Many thanks to Bill for his expertise and time.

The Board is currently meeting in his law office, but may select another location in the future. It will always be posted on the website and all members are welcome to any meeting. All old files, records that we are required to save, and special historical artifacts will be saved, but a location has not been decided yet.

New Directions for the Council--What were our three goals for last year?

1. Redesign the website to replace the paper Beacon newsletter, saving costs, and increase public knowledge of HI-Michigan.
2. Expand Travel Education Workshops to at least meet our minimum requirements of 130 attendees/participants every six months.
3. Start a trips program aiming at 3 hostel/cultural related trips per year

Status/accomplishments

1. More people and institutions know we exist today than a year ago. Joan has established contacts with Wayne State, the U of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University and Madonna College. She also established a relationship with the Girl Scouts of Detroit and Ann Arbor and has scheduled several programs for them. The enthusiasm and excitement when new people learn about us, and what we are trying to do is very exciting.
2. We found and trained 14 Workshop Presenters in September to give our WT101 programs
3. Although we had a great trip to St John's this spring and one this fall to Tobermory, both thanks to our fearless trip leader, Jim Gessner, we were not able to fully develop this goal yet., primarily due to time and volunteer constraints. With our long history of running trips as a Council, the Board will revisit this goal next year.

Finance Report

In this fiscal year, October 1, 2005-September 30, 2006, our Council took in \$79,809.95 and spent \$80,155.62, for a loss of \$345.67 for the year. This is an improvement over the previous year, in which we lost \$4,037.47. With the closing of the building June 15 and with our Executive Director, Randa Haurani, resigning effective Jan 1, 2006, with and the Office Assistant, Lisa Giesecke leaving June 15, we saved some funds this year.

Next year's budget is currently set at \$46,966.00, a great reduction from previous years. However, fundraising will still be critical for the Board, as we receive \$13,000 from our membership dues, if we meet minimum requirements of program delivery. The rest we must raise through donations or other fundraising.

With the change in the Bylaws of the fiscal year, the Board decided to use this budget until March 31 and then develop a new one-year budget to begin April 1, 2007. The budget is always available on request through the Council email address or phone number.

Other Business

The Sleeping Bear Dunes Hostel project was officially put on hold, with a letter from our Council to the National Park Service there. With many delays by the Park Service as they develop a new general management plan, to be completed in 2009, and with our need to focus on just three goals this year, to be effective, it didn't seem feasible to pursue the hostel project at this time. Efforts to find local leaders in the Traverse City area did not provide results, either. We were told that Federal Funds to preserve the

farmhouses is to come forth in 2011. Perhaps at that time, if there is a group who wants to pursue the hostel, it will be taken up again.

There is a possibility of an effort to start a hostel in downtown Detroit. Some initial feasibility work is being done. If it proceeds, we will post all news on the website.

Council Business

Vote on new Bylaws

A quorum was met at the meeting and the revised Bylaws were passed unanimously. The primary change was that of the date of our fiscal year, which will change to April 1 in 2007. The next Annual Meeting will be spring 2008, rather than October, as in the past. Copies of the Bylaws can be emailed on request.

Elections-

The Council elected Kathleen Conklin, Anne Gomez Huff, Sally Janacek and John Prusak to the Board of Directors, class of 2008. Welcome and congratulations!

Upcoming Events (also found on the website)

- October 25th Armenian dinner **last night to register is tonight**
- October 29 Kalam hike and picnic
- Intro Kevin West—potential France trip
- November 29 Polish ethnic dinner
- Dec. 8 Holiday party at Darvie's
- Jan 9 Workshop Presenter's training
- Jan 26-28 Traverse City ski trip