# Ski for Light, Inc.Board of Directors Annual Meeting

# Friday, January 19, 2018

# Sparks, Nevada

# Minutes

President, Scott McCall, called the first session of the annual meeting to order at 8:40 A.M. Pacific Standard Time. He welcomed everyone. He introduced Greg Weinbender of the Nugget Casino Resort who also welcomed the group.

Roll Call. Secretary, Judy Dixon, called the roll. Executive Committee members present: Scott McCall, Bob Civiak, Judy Dixon, Brenda Seeger, Tim McCorcle, and Marion Elmquist. Directors present: Renee Abernathy, Amy Brannan, Dede Chinlund, Julie Coppens, Wendy David, John Elliott, Krista Erickson, Andrea Goddard, Nicole Haley, Robert Hartt, Eivind Heiberg, Melinda Hollands, Leslie Maclin, Richard Milsteadt, Bonnie O’Day, Laura Oftedahl, and Larry Showalter.

Not present: Heather Berg.

Approval of Minutes. It was moved by Bonnie O’Day and seconded by Bob Hartt that the minutes of the October 16, 2017 mid-year Board teleconference be approved as distributed. The motion passed unanimously.

President’s Report. Scott McCall pointed out that the SFL accomplishments of the year reflect the work of the entire Ski for Light community. We will be hearing about many of them throughout today’s agenda. It’s been a great year. The financial position of the organization is very good. This year will be one of our most well-attended events.

Board Development and Elections Report. Amy Brannan began her report by thanking the other members of the Board Development and Elections Committee—Bonnie O’Day and Leslie Maclin. She presented the slate of nominees for election to the Board as director. 12 persons were nominated for 12 open positions on the Board. Amy received ballots from a majority of Board members. The following persons were elected to the Board:

Renee Abernathy

Judy Dixon

John Elliott

Marion Elmquist

Krista Erickson

Michael Evelo

Nicole Haley

Tim McCorcle

Nancy McKinney Milsteadt

Linda Pederson

Dave Wilkinson

Karen Wood

Amy thanked retiring Board members Heather Berg, Bob Hartt, Eivind Heiberg, and Bonnie O’Day. New Board members will assume their positions on February 11, 2018.

Event Update. Tim Mccorcle, 2018 Event Chair, provided an update on the 2018 event. This year, the number of applications was high but we had a lot of cancellations for a variety of reasons. At the moment, we have 104 visually impaired participants, 5 mobility impaired participants, and 121 instructor/guides. Because of the limited snow availability at the Tahoe-Donner ski area, Tim updated everyone on planning for alternate activities. We expect to have a great year.

Treasurer’s Report. Brenda Seeger referred to the 2nd quarter report that she had distributed (attached). The current balance in the checking account is $204,012.92 and the savings account is $29,718.91. The book value of the Endowment Fund is $365,218 and the and the market value is $416,407.39 with 3.25% of that in cash and cash equivalents and 96.74% is in mutual funds. Transportation costs and a substantial portion of meals and housing have been paid so things are looking very good. The process of closing down our Paypal merchant account and the gateway merchant account is complete, so we are paying far less in credit card processing fees. The compilation report and the IRS 990 (public disclosure copy) are on the SFL website. The Board expressed its thanks to Brenda for reducing costs and streamlining the system. A motion to accept the report was made by Amy and seconded by Bonnie. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Finance Report. Bob Civiak summarized his report that was previously distributed (attached). The 2017 budget forecasted a surplus of $14,600 but the actual surplus was $1,300. The primary reason for this is that budget estimates did not take taxes into account. The 2018 budget also forecasts a substantial surplus and Bob thinks it is on track. Bob expects that we will end the year with an operating reserve of about $95,000 which is within our target. The Budget and Finance Committee recommended that we transfer some money from the savings account into a money market account. Brenda will be able to easily move money back and forth as needed. The Executive Committee approved this recommendation. A motion to accept the report of the Budget and Finance Committee was made by Larry and seconded by Laura. The motion passed unanimously.

Fundraising. Laura Oftedahl reported on fund-raising activities. She and others have been working with the fund-raising plan that was developed last summer. It is a comprehensive plan and includes all fund-raising activities currently underway. It was decided that the priority activity would be life members. A mailing was sent to existing life members asking for their support which resulted in 10 individuals renewing their life memberships. Another idea being considered is monthly giving. There were concerns expressed about the mechanics of the process. It is a popular method of fund-raising and is likely to be successful. The general feeling about this idea was positive. Laura will work on the details. Other topics discussed were the approach to major donors, updating info on the website about donations, and re-invigorating a speaker’s bureau. Leslie will update the Facebook page to reflect donation activities. Larry pointed out the need for donation tracking software. Eivind offered to connect the appropriate SFL person(s) with the SONS Foundation Director who has experience with donor tracking software.

Foundations. Bonnie O’Day summarized her foundations report (attached). This year, we received $21,500 for the 2018 event which is an increase over last year but down from 2016. Bonnie is asking Delta Gamma for funding for a guide training video and a participant exercise video. SFL had an article in Delta Gamma’s annual report featuring Scott and Melinda. TJX has changed its focus and is decreasing the grant amount. Bonnie said that maintaining our existing foundations is not terribly difficult, but a few have dropped off. Identifying new foundations is very time-consuming and you must research a lot of them to get even one. Personal contacts are the most successful. John Elliott suggested that we investigate the Combined Federal Campaign. It was generally agreed that this was a good idea and should be pursued.

Constitution and Bylaws. Wendy submitted a report for the Constitution and Bylaws Committee (attached). Subsequent to the report, an issue arose that required the Committee’s attention. A Director Emeritus was elected as a Director. The proposed amendment  is pursuant to clarifying what happens to a Director Emeritus if elected as a +-regular Board member, as one person cannot hold both positions simultaneously. This is not dealt with or anticipated in our current bylaws, nor is the question of whether or not the emeritus status resumes once the term of office is no longer held. Furthermore, we have clear direction in our bylaws as to removal of a Board member, if deemed necessary, but no such direction is given regarding the Director Emeritus position.

The committee proposed the following amendment for approval:

Article IV Board of Directors

Section 9. Directors Emeritus.

An individual who has provided substantial service to the Organization as a Director, who is no longer a member of the Board, may be elected, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board, to the position of Director Emeritus. If accepted by the individual, Such election shall be for the individual's lifetime, unless the individual:

1. resigns by giving notice, in writing, of his/her resignation to a member of the Executive Committee;

2) becomes a regular member of the board, in which case their status as a Director Emeritus shall be placed on hold for the duration of their service as a regular Board member, after which it will resume; or

3) is removed from this title, with or without cause, by a two‑thirds (2/3) vote of all Directors present at any Regular or Special Meeting, provided that fifteen (15) days’ notice must be given to all Directors, in appropriate format, of the proposed vote.

Election as Director Emeritus places neither obligation nor liability on the individual elected, and includes a standing invitation to attend the Annual Meeting, where the Director Emeritus may speak but not make motions or vote.

A motion to adopt the proposal was made by Amy and seconded by Melinda. The motion passed unanimously.

Guide Recruitment. Bob Civiak summarized the report of the Guide Recruitment Committee (attached). As always, word of mouth was the most effective guide recruitment tool. Bob believes that the paid advertising on Google has been effective. Nancy pointed out that the regionals should not be overlooked as a rich source of guide recruitment. It was also suggested that various film festivals might be a good venue for showing our video to generally raise awareness. A motion to approve the report was made by Bonnie and seconded by Melinda. The motion passed unanimously.

Visually-impaired Recruitment. Melinda Hollands summarized the VIP Recruitment Committee Report (attached). The committee contacted numerous organizations. There was also significant effort at consumer conventions last summer. At NFB, there was a booth in the exhibit hall and at the wellness fair and at ACB, we got a 10-minute spot on the general program. there were successful receptions at both the NFB and ACB conventions. VIP recruitment has been very successful and the number of applicants has been substantially up for the past two years.

Annual Report and Program Book. Julie Coppens described the program journal. Thanks again to Jansport for the cover art and for providing t-shirts. The annual reports will be available later and will be mailed to everyone as well as being online.

Nominating Committee. Bonnie O’Day, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reviewed the process for the upcoming election of officers. By Sunday evening, Bonnie will distribute a slate of candidates for the six elected positions on the Executive Committee. The election will be conducted at the mid-week Board meeting at which time anyone may be nominated from the floor. Bonnie thanked her committee which consisted of: John, Julie, Rich, and Scott.

Participant Stipends. Scott McCall led a discussion of participant stipends. The organization has a long history of awarding only partial stipends to first-time vip’s and mip’s and more recently to second-time attendees. This is with the expectation that people will be motivated to come up with at least part of the money. Bob Hartt suggested adding more wording on the application describing the basic nature of the stipends. Bob believes that many potential first-timers have no idea how they are going to come up with the money. Nicole suggested that we review the policy related to not allowing extra nights for those getting a stipend because sometimes it is far less expensive to take an earlier/later flight. Larry said we used to have the explanatory paragraph on the application but it was removed two years ago and replaced with a separate document that provided more information. Larry thinks we should more definitively state what “partial stipen” means such as “up to half of your overall expenses.” Larry also reviewed the various ways we have tried to determine those who seriously intend to attend. Bonnie pointed out that we are raising substantial funds for stipends and must give them out; a lot of people have trouble with coming up with even half of the money they need. Judy suggested that we try a competetive approach where people had to do something like write an essay and there would be a known number of full stipends available that people would compete for. Bob Civiak suggested that we conduct telephone interviews with prospective stipend recipients. Larry pointed out that that only a few stipend recipients ever return but is awarding stipends to those who could not otherwise afford to come meeting our mission. Larry suggested giving all first-year vip’s and mip’s a flat rate stipend. A number of people voiced support for this idea. Wendy pointed out that many people may expect that their entire way would be paid. Scott appointed an ad hoc committee to review all these ideas and develop a recommendation. It consists of: Judy (Chair), Bob Hartt, Julie, Krista, Larry, Amy, and Tim.

The first session of the annual meeting was adjourned at 2:00 P.M.

Wednesday, 24, 2018

Scott McCall called the second session of the annual meeting to order at 4:35 P.M. Pacific Standard Time.

Executive Committee members present: Scott McCall, Bob Civiak, Judy Dixon, Brenda Seeger, Tim McCorcle, and Marion Elmquist. Directors present: Renee Abernathy, Amy Brannan, Dede Chinlund, Julie Coppens, Wendy David, John Elliott, Krista Erickson, Andrea Goddard, Nicole Haley, Robert Hartt, Melinda Hollands, Leslie Maclin, Richard Milsteadt, Bonnie O’Day, Laura Oftedahl, and Larry Showalter.

Not present: Heather Berg and Eivind Heiberg.

Amy Brannan, chair of the Board Election and Development Committee, introduced the new Board members present: Michael Evelo, Linda Pederson (not present), Nancy McKinney Milsteadt, Dave Wilkinson, and Karen Wood. The new Board will officially take office on Sunday, February 11.

Scott thanked the Board members who are leaving the Board: Heather Berg, Eivind Heiberg, Bob Hartt, and Bonnie O’Day.

Risk Management—Rich Milsteadt reported to the Board that there have been no changes in our insurance policies and all have been paid and are up-to-date.

Fitness and Skiing. Scott McCall led a discussion about concerns related to the fitness of vips for skiing. Many people arrive for the week without being properly prepared. Scott appointed an ad hoc committee to look at this issue. The committee consists of: Bonnie (Chair), Judy, Nancy, Amy, Tim, and Dave.

Sons of Norway and Norwegian Community Liaison. Marion Elmquist reported that the Sons of Norway is moving to a temporary location in Minneapolis while their building is torn down and a new one built. Marion is working with them to be sure that SFL has some appropriate space in the new location. Marion is working on archiving the Ski for Light materials that have been stored there working with the Norwegian American Historical Association. Marion will check to see if the digitization will be accessible with a screen reader. Also, John Tehven, the Sons of Norway International President, will arrive Wednesday evening.

Conflict of interest forms. Judy Dixon distributed the conflict of Interest Disclosure forms. Board members are asked to complete these and return their signed forms to Marion.

Election of Officers. Bonnie expressed her thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee: John, Julie, Scott, and Rich. Bonnie conducted the election beginning with President. The Nominating Committee placed in nomination for President the name of Marion Elmquist. Marion was elected unanimously. The Nominating Committee placed in nomination for Vice-President the name of Tim McCorcle. Tim was elected unanimously. The Nominating Committee placed in nomination for Secretary the name of Judy Dixon. Judy was elected unanimously. The Nominating Committee placed in nomination for Treasurer the name of Nicole Haley. Nicole thanked the committee but due to other time commitments, declined the nomination. Nicole nominated Brenda Seeger for Treasurer, Marion seconded the nomination. Brenda was elected unanimously. The Nominating Committee placed in nomination for Directors-at-large the names of Amy Brannan and Nancy McKinney Milsteadt. Amy and Nancy were elected unanimously. Scott thanked Bob Civiak, the outgoing Vice-President and Heather Berg, the outgoing Director-at-Large for their contributions as Executive Committee members.

2019 Event. Scott told the Board that the 2019 Ski for Light event will take place at Snow Mountain Ranch January 27-February 3, 2019. As outgoing President, Scott expressed his thanks to the Board and said that it had been a priviledge to be President of Ski for Light. He thanked the Board for its support and cooperation.

The second session of the annual Board meeting was adjourned at 5:45 P.M. Pacific Standard Time.

# Ski for Light, Inc.

# January 2, 2018

# 2nd Quarter Report from the Treasurer

Happy New Year Board of Directors.

I have completed the 2nd Quarter of our Fiscal Year 2018 reports.

At the end of the 2nd Quarter, on December 31, 2017 our balances were as follows:

Wells Fargo Checking - $ 220,607.65

Wells Fargo Savings - $ 29,718.91

Total Operating Funds - $ 250,326.56

Our Bankers Trust Endowment Accout:

Cash and Cash Equivalents - $ 14,364.68

Mutual Funds - $ 351,642.68

Total Book Value Endowment - $ 366,007.18

There are still some outstanding event fees that I suspect will be paid soon or at the event

I have made a $ 75,600.00 deposit to the hotel that you will see in the event meals and housing line on the Operating Funds report.

We have been seeing more endowment fund donations. The Fall Appeal garnered 9 Life Member Renewals. Above that we had $ 1,650.00 donated to the endowment with a total of $ 5,250.00

I look forward to seeing you all in Sparks at the Annual Ski for Light Board Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Seeger, Treasurer

# BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

# TO THE SFL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# Jan. 2018

The responsibility of the Budget and Finance (B&F) Committee is to oversee the financial affairs of Ski for Light, Inc. and to monitor and make recommendations to the Board regarding the organization's investments.

The committee is composed of, Bob Civiak (chair), Nicole Haley, and Tim McCorkle, with ex-officio members Brenda Seeger and Scott McCall. This report complements the financial reports submitted to the Board throughout the year by the Treasurer.

The Budgets for 2017 and 2018

The B&F Committee prepares the annual budget for SFL and submits it to the Executive Committee for approval. The FY2017 and FY2018 budgets, as approved, are on the SFL Board website.

The 2017 budget projected a surplus of $14,615, but the actual surplus was only $1,285. The primary reason for the shortfall was that we failed to include taxes on rooms and meals when setting the rate for the 2017 event. Thus, the difference between the program income we collected from participants and the actual cost for rooms and meals was lower than we anticipated and did not offset other program expenses to the degree we anticipated.

The 2018 budget projects a surplus of $15,488. If we achieve that, the operating reserve at the end of 2018 will be about $95,700, which compares well with the established target for the end of year reserve of $80,000 to $100,000.

On Jan. 2, 2018, the Treasurer submitted to the Board a summary of the Income and Expense (I&E) of Operating Funds through the 2nd quarter of FY2018. Because many I&E items are significantly skewed throughout the fiscal year, it is difficult to compare the first two quarters to the budget. However, we make the following observations:

Projected attendance at the 2018 event is about 40 people more than we expected, which should bring in excess income of about $7,000.

Total fund raising is lagging our projections. If that trend continues, it will result in a shortfall of about $4,000.

Stipends (mostly to VIPs) are about $2,000 more than we projected.

The planning meeting cost about $2,000 less than we projected.

Credit card processing fees are lower than in 2017, because we changed our system. However, the savings are about $1,000 less than we anticipated, most likely because more events fee were charged by the larger number of attendees.

It is not reflected in the I & E yet, but Tim McCorcle reports that transportation costs are likely to exceed the budget by about $3,500.

The net result of those items would result a reduction of about $1,500 from the projected surplus. Thus, barring major unforeseen events in the second half of the year, the B&F Committee projects that net income at the end of FY2018 will be about $14,000, which will leave our organization in excellent fiscal shape going in 2019.

The Endowment Fund

2017 was a good year in the stock market and our Endowment Fund performed well. As of Dec. 31, 2017, the market value of the Endowment Fund was $408,712, compared to $368,502 at the end of 2016. In addition to market gains and losses, the increase reflects donations, withdrawals, and fees paid.

As approved by the Executive Committee, $19,000 was distributed from the Endowment Fund to SFL's operating fund on May 26, 2017. The expenses paid to BTC for the year were a custodial fee of $2,000 and an investment management fee of $1,913.

The market return in the first nine months of 2017 was 10.2 percent, which was 0.6 percent below a composite benchmark of well know indices that match the weighting of our endowment.

Our Endowment was invested as follows:

45.9 percent in domestic equity funds;

14.9 percent in international equity funds;

35.7 percent in fixed income funds; and

3.5 percent in cash and cash equivalents

Those percentages are all within the ranges specified in the SFL Investment Policy Statement.

According to the Investment Policy approved by the SFL Board in June 2015, the B&F Committee shall:

Evaluate the performance of the Investment Manager, at least once a year, to assure adherence to policy guidelines and to monitor progress in meeting the investment goals; and

Review the Investment Policy Statement at least annually, propose revisions to the Board for approval, and promptly inform the Investment Manager of any changes;

On Jan. 9, 2018, the B&F Committee had a conference call with the new BTC Relationship Manager for our Endowment, Allen Goody. He explained that the 0.6 percent underperformance of our Endowment compared to the composite benchmark reflects the fee we pay to BTC of about 1 percent. That fee is comparatively low for a fund of our size. Excluding the fee, we slightly outperformed the benchmark

During the call, we discussed whether SFL might want to take steps to further protect our investment against potential negative impacts of increasing interest rates in the United States this coming year. He advised against making any major changes, but we agreed to increase our holdings in international equities by about 2.5 percent and decrease our holding of domestic equities by the same amount. Those changes will leave our allocations well within the ranges specified in the SFL Investment Policy Statement.

We also asked his opinion about the SFL Investment Policy Statement. He said it was comprehensive and appropriate to our needs and he did not recommend any changes to it.

After reviewing the performance of our fund manager, the Budget and Finance Committee has determined that BTC is meeting the investment objectives, goals, and guidelines set forth in the SFL Investment Policy Statement and is meeting all of its responsibilities as SFL's Investment Manager. We have also reviewed SFL's Investment Policy Statement and have no changes to recommend.

Moving SFL Operating Funds to a Money Market Account

In the past year, the spread in interest between the saving account with Wells Fargo, where SFL currently keeps its excess operating funds, and available money Market Fund rates has grown to about 1 percent or more. Wells Fargo does not offer a money market account. As a result, SFL may be missing out on as much as $1,000 or more in potential interest.

The Budget and Finance Committee has begun to look at steps that we might take to better manage our excess operating funds. On Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018, we plan to propose to the Executive Committee that we establish a money market account with Capital One, which currently provides an interest rate of 1.4% per year, and that we transfer funds from our savings account with Wells Fargo to that account.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Civiak,

Chair, Budget and Finance Committee

# 2018 Foundation Committee Report

# Bonnie O’Day

Committee Members: Bonnie O’Day, Laura Oftedahl and Bob Civiak

We have received $21,500 from foundations for the 2018 event, which is up by $5,800 in foundation donations for the 2017 event but down by $7,200 from the 2016 event. Following is a summary of the donations we received.

Delta Gamma: We requested funds for guide training and stipends, as we have for many years. As in past years, we received $3500 for these purposes. Applications for 2019 activities were due in January, 2018. That application has been submitted and we applied for $3500 for guide training and stipends, as well as funds for a guide training video and a participant exercise video.

TJX: We have received an annual contribution of $5,000 from TJX for many years. In 2016, TJX sharpened their focus in grant making to food and shelter and we no longer fit into their priorities. TJX is ramping down their gifts to other causes such as SFL. We received step-down grants of $3,500 in 2016 and $1500 in 2017 and do not expect to receive future funds from TJX.

Thistle/Sedona: The Thistle Foundation and the Sedona Foundation are small foundations operated by the same family (a friend of mine). We generally receive $2,000 from one or the other but this year we received $2,000 from Sedona and $3,000 from Thistle, for a total of $5,000.

We received $5,000 from the Sence Foundation to use for scholarships and guide training.

We received $500 from The Gibney Family Foundation and $1,000 from the Redman Family Fund. Both of these gifts result from guides new to the 2017 event. We received $5,000 from the Flatley Foundation through the generosity of a past guide. All three were unsolicited donations.

We requested $2500 from the Harmon Foundation as we have for the past few years, but this year we did not receive a contribution from them.

We also submitted applications to LL Bean and the Ibex Fund, but both were denied.

In 2016, Bob Civiak led a proposal to the Gibney Family Foundation for $4700 to host a reception at the annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind in July 2017 to recruit new, young SFL participants. The funds covered a reception, an exhibit table and partial expenses for a SFL representative to attend. During the convention, about 50 attendees expressed interest in SFL and several of them applied to attend, or said they would apply in the future. We also hosted a reception at the American Council of the Blind convention last July.

In conclusion, submitting applications to foundations that currently support SFL is not terribly labor intensive, but increasing donations from these foundations is becoming increasingly difficult and some of our old standby contributors, such as the Eccles Foundation and TJX, have dropped off. Submitting grants to new potential funders is terribly labor intensive and hasn’t achieved the results we would like. Personal contacts from SFL supporters with connections to foundations are critical if we are to cultivate new donors or increase donations from current contributors. Of the $21,500 we raised from foundations this year, $11,500 or over half resulted from personal contacts. Fundraising efforts should capitalize on soliciting and increasing funds from our supporters.

# Ski for Light, Inc.

# Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report

# January 19, 2018

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee is composed of Wendy David (chair), Renee Abernathy, Marion Elmquist, Larry Showalter and Scott McCall (ex-officio).

The committee remains on-call to the Ski for Light President and the Board of Directors throughout the year to ensure that any decisions or actions that may arise do not conflict with the Bylaws of the organization.

In addition, the committee remains available to evaluate suggestions and recommendations for change in the Bylaws by the Board or individual Board members.

The Constitution and Bylaws of Ski for Light, Inc. are available to Board members on the board page of the SFL website at www.sfl.org/board. An online version of the document is linked on that page, or directly accessible at www.sfl.org/board/bylaws16.html. A Microsoft Word version is available on the “Important Organizational Documents” page of the website.

The Committee has no revisions or changes to present for discussion at this time. If anyone does have items that they would like presented and discussed, please forward them to me as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted by

Wendy David, Chair

SFL Constitution and Bylaws Committee

# REPORT TO THE SFL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# FROM THE GUIDE RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

# Jan, 2018

The Guide Recruitment Committee is composed of Bob Civiak (chair), Melinda Hollands, Lars Johanson, and Leslie Maclin

After a slow start, Guide applications wound up being very robust this year, despite (or perhaps because of) our going to a new and unproven site. As of early January, we had about 130 guides -- a healthy margin of about 25 more than the total of VIPs and MIPs. The sum includes a very impressive 25 new guides, compared to only 6 last year and 20 two years ago in Colorado. The Guide Recruitment Committee would be happy to take the credit, but most of it is due to word of mouth recruiting efforts of past attendees.

Lars Johanson is the registration Guide coordinator and was not officially on the recruitment committee, but he deserves kudos for contacting numerous long time guides to remind them to apply, when guide applications lagged VIP applications through the fall.

This year, the Guide Recruitment Committee focused on supporting and encouraging our members to do more personal face-to-face recruiting. To that end, we wrote an article for the fall SFL Newsletter encouraging members to recruit new and returning guides and we prepared materials to assist those efforts and posed them on the website, including updated post-able flyers, with and without the specifics of the 2018 event, and a new description of how to get involved with SFL in several ways.

Melinda continues to spread the word to just about everyone she meets and to speak with local organizations in her area. Speak to Melinda if you want to hear more about how she does it. To improve guide retention, Melinda suggested that guide trainers call their trainees from last year to encourage their return. We believe that most, if not all of the guide training teams did so.

Leslie continued to actively manage the SFL Facebook page and to cross post to other organizations, such as Nordic Ski Clubs, Nordic Centers and Adaptive Athlete Facebook pages to give us more of a presence. A small amount (donated) was spent on Facebook advertising to broadcast the 2018 event.

This year, the only paid advertising we did was through Google “Adwords.” In 2017, our ads appeared more than 1 million times on websites that contract with Google and 4,200 people clicked through to view our website. We spent only $400 on advertising this year, compared to $1,000 in 2016.

We also had free ads recruiting guides in the VASA Loppet Newsletter, which goes to thousands of skiers and a full page ad (through Marion Elmquest's efforts) in the Sons of Norway newsletter. The latter brought in two new guides.

Finally, I was able to show the video that is on the SFL webpage on a big screen to about 200 skiers at the West Yellowstone Ski Festival. The video received a standing ovation and I had two inquiries from people who may guide with us in 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Civiak

# VIP Recruitment Committee

# Ski for Light

# January2018

# Report to the Board

The VIP Recruitment Committee consists of Bob Hartt, Bonnie O’Day, Karen Wood, and Chair Melinda Hollands. In addition to the committee’s efforts, it is important to acknowledge that everyone who participates in SFL becomes a recruiter as they share their own experiences via conversations, writings, presentations, etc. The 2018 International Event will be hosting 105 VIPs according to Larry Showalter on Jan 14, 2018. There are 26 first time VIPs, 22 from the US and 4 from other countries. That is 24.7%, which really rounds to 25% which is the VIP Recruitment goal according to SFL policy! Initially there were 60 accepted new VIP applications, and as of Jan 14 34 of these applicants cancelled. In an attempt to limit the number of cancellations, and also to increase the number of repeat attendees, Bob Hartt was asked to lead a Retention Subcommittee consisting of Tim McCorcle, Larry Showalter, Melinda Hollands and Bonnie O’Day. See that report, which was emailed to the Board by President McCall after the October Board meeting, for details.

The newest intervention this year was the introduction of SFL Receptions held at both the NFB and ACB National Conventions. Bob Hartt and Bonnie O’Day hosted the NFB Reception where over 50 people attended and several signed up to attend SFL. Tim McCorcle and Judy Dixon hosted the ACB reception and Karen Wood attended. The turnout for this reception was under 5 attendees, however some of them have signed up to attend SFL. Both of these receptions were successful and the recommendation is to repeat them again when possible.

Other outreach efforts to NFB included an SFL announcement sent to the Sports and Recreation Division email list, an announcement sent to the Presidents of nine State NFB organizations in California, Nevada and surrounding states, and submission of an announcement to the Braille Monitor which was published in the September issue. Likewise, we sent SFL announcements to the ACB State Presidents in California, Nevada, and ten surrounding states. A personal article written by Melinda Hollands was published in the Sept. Braille Forum, and a SFL announcement was published in the October Braille Forum. Several VIP attendees mentioned noticing these publications.

We sent SFL announcements to the following other agencies for suggested inclusion in their newsletters, websites, etc:

National Industries for the Blind

NLS State Talking Book Libraries---19 states in the west and northern US

Guide Dog Schools---eight if them; The San Rafael, California Guide Dog School is organizing the dog walkers at SFL this year.

California focus…agencies in Northern California such as San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind

Colorado Center for the Blind

American Foundation for the Blind VisionAware website

Winter Park National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) newsletter called “The Lift”

Blind Skills, Inc. magazine “Dialogue”

We discussed the possibility of reaching out to the Centers for Independent Living (CIL’s) across the country. We chose to hold off on this and consider consulting with the MIP program which could be impacted by these contacts.

Our mentor program was expanded this year. The Retention ad hoc Subcommittee and the SFL Board agreed to expand mentors to include board members and other long time attendees regardless of VIP, MIP, or Guide status. Thanks to everyone who helped in this effort! Each first or second year VIP accepted applicant was matched with a mentor. The mentor was to contact the VIP via phone or email, to welcome them, answer any questions, and invite them to dinner the first night. Follow up contact during and after the event week is requested to enhance relationships, open communication, and encourage future participation.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to VIP recruitment, and special thanks to Bob, Bonnie and Karen for being such fantastic teammates!

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Hollands

**Committee Report for: Social Media 2017**

**1/15/18**

**Respectfully submitted by: Leslie Maclin**

**(*Abbreviation notes: SFL = Ski for Light, FB = Facebook)***

**The objectives of SFL Social Media activities are:**

* Communicate, promote & network w/both current and potential SFL constituents;
  + skiers, guides, associates, donors & sponsors
* Provide relevant and engaging content via;
  + SFL news, SFL activities, events, members and sponsors
* Maintain a regular frequency of content to communicate that SFL is an active and dynamics organization.

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SkiforLight/>

We have a dynamic and active FB page, w/almost 1000 “likes” (up from 212 in 2013 when Kristen started the page). Next goal is 1250+

More “likes” via Content, frequency, shares and linkage to other sites maximizes and broadens engagement.

* Fundraising & Recruiting: added direct link to our web site to sign up &/or donate during the appeal and during the entire recruiting season.
  + For both skiers and guides; annually post recruiting flyer and info. on Facebook pages for Nordic Centers and Ski clubs and to Adaptive Athlete sites.
  + Click button being used frequently (can we measure on the other end if donations or sign ups coming via FB?)
  + SFL members are encouraged to do this for their local ski areas and clubs.
* Frequency consistently maintained;
  + Annually: ~1-2 x weekly
  + Pre-reg. period: ~2 x week
  + Pre-event & during event: ~1-2 x daily.
* Sponsors; All current sponsors are listed on the SFL page “about” tab. For all sponsors who have FB pages that allow it, we have “liked” their page, and post “thank you’s.” Encourage the sponsor chair to make sponsor postings as well (i.e. reference Holly Schmaling effective activity in this area previously)
* Maintain and continue content, frequency and activities, etc. Content has consistently focused on:
  + SFL events, event registration, activities, guide, skier and sponsor retention & recruitment
  + SFL member news, relevant content and achievements
  + The SFL community also posts relevant content and events, in addition to those by the administrators of the page, and are encouraged to continue to do so!
* Recommend any major marketing materials, i.e. new videos, be dist. late spring/early summer to maximize usage for recruiting in late summer.
* Small amount (donated) of FB advertising for recruiting, both skiers and guides.

FB Insight statistics: For the last ~12-month period, Jan. 2017 to Dec. 2017. Source: FB Insight Statistics

**LIKES- Thumbs up for our page: 976**

**Sources for people finding the SFL FB page: Facebook, SFL.org, Google, Bing**

**TOP REACHING POSTS: (includes Likes and Shares)**

1. “Michigan VIP rowers” video with Melinda, Nancy & Larry reached 2,100 + people
2. “2017 Race Day” video- reached 1,500+ people
3. “Safe travels to the Ridderrennet Team” reached 1,700+ people
4. “Ridderrennet Melinda & Charlie on the trails” reached 1,700+ people
5. “Shiny Happy People at Snow Mt. Ranch” video reached ~1,500+ people
6. “Dave & Melinda arriving at the Ridderrennet” reached ~1500+ people

**PEOPLE**

* Gender usage remains very similar to prior years: ~65% female/35% male
  + For reference, ALL of FB is: approx. 46% female, 54 % male
* Reaching people in 29 countries, top countries: U.S., Norway, Canada, U.K.
* Reaching these age groups in this rank order, making 67% of folks engaged in our FB page 35-64 years old.
  + 55-64 yr. old’s: 24%
  + 35-44 yr. old’s: 18%
  + 65+ yr. olds (increased over prior years) 17%
  + 25-34 yr. old’s: 13%
  + 18-24 yr. old’s: 3%

**Social Media Committee:**

* Actively seeking others to assist with sharing content.

**Appendix: BACKGROUND info.**

**Notes:**

* Monitor SFL social media sites for appropriate comments
* Social media is in addition to and alignment with the bulletin, web site, and e-mail communications
* Monitor and evaluate emerging social media vehicles for utilization

**Social Media Vehicles:**

Two Primary Social Media Vehicles:

* Facebook; SFL Page and YouTube Channel

Additional Social Media vehicles:

* Linked-In & Twitter; lower priority basis FB prioritization

**YouTube**

* No new videos posted by SFL in 2017
* There are several dozen SFL related videos on YouTube, including news coverage clips, SFL Regional events (i.e. Michigan Regional posts an event video annually), participant videos, a video from the 2016 Japan SFL event, etc.