

# **AMERICAN KNIFE AND TOOL INSTITUTE**

## **Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting**

June 25 and 26, 1999

Chicago, IL, Marriott O'Hare Suites

Friday, June 25, 1999 Meeting was called to order approximately 9:00 a.m. by meeting facilitator Sal Glessner. Regents present: Les de Asis, CJ Buck, Wally Gardiner, Sal Glessner, D'Alton Holder, Jim Wehrs. Others: Jan Billeb, Executive Director. The meeting recessed at approximately 12 p.m. for one hour and continued until approximately 6 p.m., reconvening Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. until 10 a.m.

These minutes are presented on a per subject basis, not chronologically.

### **Financial Update - Wehrs**

Jim presented the current financial statement showing a net income for the period from the first of the year to June 22 of \$22,286.62. The current checking account balance is \$24,389.99. Outstanding obligations include the monthly StateNet fee of \$1,000. Jim will be working on a projected cash flow based on previous disbursements to present at the next meeting. Regents dues not paid yet include Spyderco and Pro-Cut. Sal indicated Spyderco would be paying in about a month. Gardiner moved, Buck seconded to approve financial report. Passed unanimously.

The 1998 compilation will be mailed in about two weeks when McGladry & Pullen has it completed. Jan reported she completed the Form 1024 for nonprofit status and it is being reviewed by McGladry's.

### **Blade Show Update**

Glessner, de Asis, Holder, Buck and Jan reported on reactions to AKTI's participation at the Blade Show. \$1245 was received for dues during the three days, an additional \$2,000 membership was mailed later and an additional \$2,000 is expected.

It was agreed that the timing on the AKTI presentation was not good for exhibitors and others to be able to attend. Suggestions received included a breakfast, coffee and donuts or something, possibly having a sponsor and doing it each year so people would expect it. Associate member Ethan Becker offered to purchase beer if AKTI wanted to do an after the show get-together.

It was noted that advance planning for the presentation time needed to be done versus allowing Blade to schedule without AKTI input. Also Blade could be asked to promote information on the drawing for new members.

The location of the booth was discussed in terms of the pros and cons of being in the lobby versus in the showroom.

### **Knifemakers' Guild Show**

Holder announced the Knifemakers Guild would give AKTI a table at the July 23-24-25 Guild show in New Orleans. Parameters include that nothing protrude 18" above the table, but the AKTI banner can be draped in the front and a different cover can be used on the top, and table size is 6' x 30".

Jim Wehrs offered the services of a Gerber representative and Wally Gardiner offered the services of an Imperial Schrade representative to help at the AKTI table. It was decided that Jan should attend.

Ideas were discussed to encourage Guild honorary members to sign up for \$100 membership, and pros and cons of having a knife give away, a "USA Tomorrow" sign, or some type of attention getter, being able to get announcements in the room, etc. CJ Buck offered to make leather luggage tags (with the AKTI in-box flyer inserted into them) for giveaways to the first 1,000 people. Jan will have 1,000 shipped to him. D' will see that the small AKTI stickers with the web site is put at each Guild member's table. D' also requested Jan have a smaller sticker printed (approximately 2,000) with the word AKTI and member underneath it so it could be put on all the badges of members.

### **Bruce Voyles Proposal**

After discussion of the ideas presented in Bruce Voyles proposal and a review of the monthly fee requested, Buck moved and Wehrs seconded to not accept Voyles' proposal at this time due to the financial obligations it involved. Carried unanimously. Les will draft Bruce a letter.

It was generally agreed that the board needs to re-outline the job description for a Communications Director.

### **Publicity - Glessner**

Sal announced those regents present at the Blade decided to proceed with an AKTI forum on the BladeForum.com web site. The forum is up and working and a brief demonstration was given. Buck is moderating the forum, and Sal, Les and Jan will monitor for additional assistance.

Sal intends to start a thread saying that everyone should join AKTI.

Ideas previously discussed for the Publicity Committee included writing to all senators and representatives announcing AKTI and offering membership. For this to be effective, Sal would like to include demographics on the knife industry. CJ offered to get the number of employees, dollar volumes, etc. using broad based statistics and include all sporting goods business. Sal will have his marketing people work on the letter. It was noted that AKTI needs to give them a contact person. The message will be AKTI members are responsible people - let us help you if you have questions, offer a legislative alert service for them. Gardiner reminded the board that the legislators' priorities are: #1 votes, #2 economy, #3 public opinion #4 publicity. It was suggested AKTI could use the information about contacting legislators as press release.

An additional project Sal discussed was Hollywood and developing contacts. Gardiner will check out the Licensing and Franchising show in New York. Les may attend as well. Jan will try to research source information who is contact for movies, who's who in Hollywood of agencies and supportive actors. Ideas for making contact will be developed later.

Other groups to target with membership information and offer to assist with information are law enforcement through police associations and the NRA.

CJ recommended that AKTI pursue a display at the Future Farmers of America convention/career show in Louisville in August and that Jan attend. He and Wally will check out the possibilities. A give-away lapel pin was suggested as well as a knife drawing.

Sal asked if everyone had received the membership challenge from Michelle at Spyderco. It was noted that the regents should encourage employees to join, however, some of the companies have policies against soliciting their employees for anything.

Sal suggested AKTI marketing could be a challenging project some marketing class/journalism school might concern tackling. He also posed the question of a market research survey to determine AKTI can reach potential members.

It was generally agreed that the web site should incorporate "This happened to me" or "From the AKTI files" of true stories of knives used as a tool. It was noted that parameters

should be adopted and we would need a release. To authenticate the information the initials and state or town and state of the contributor should be included.

### **Membership - Gardiner**

Wally reported Zippo now owns Case and with top management changes the commitment to join AKTI is probably gone. He said Smoky Mountain committed to \$2,000 for their renewal.

D' reported A.G.Russell committed to \$5,000. He also agreed to AKTI's use of the company's mailing list provided only an outside source had physical use of it. He has offered advertising space and it was agreed that AKTI should allow him to determine the content. D' will discuss the information with him.

Other potential members discussed included: Armco, PKA, ABS, and New England Bladesmiths.

Wally showed the premier plaque with the date engraved by Imperial Schrade. Cost of the plaques for the current premier members (20) is approximately \$3,000. It was agreed the plaques would be mailed with a letter of appreciation signed by each regent.

Additional recruitment ideas discussed included printing something on the outside of the knife boxes, another insert in knife boxes, using the counter top tear-off poster, and Brian Huegel's request for an 18x24 sign (which de Asis agreed to have done and forwarded).

### **Education - Holder**

D' distributed an outline for presentations and asked everyone to over the information and give feedback to him as soon as possible.

He has been working on content for a booklet knife safety in conjunction with Wally. Imperial Schrade will do the printing.

D' will check with Bob Miller for further specific information on the idea of providing resources for the DARE Program.

After discussion about a video D' agreed to explore video production for a 30 minute public service announcement. It was suggested educational programs for kids groups would be the best place to start. A basic outline is needed including: proper knife safety, use, advantages and disadvantages of different knife styles.

Wally noted we need to copyright all AKTI materials. He also commented on a book on knifery that Schrade was printing and would be available to AKTI.

### **Legislative - Buck**

CJ reviewed the services contracted through StateNet for legislation information and resources. He reported that Jan and her son Curt were working with him to get current and pending law on the site for all states as well as federal. He cuts and pastes contents and e-mails it to Jan after writing summary information. A brief demonstration was given. There are maps to click on the state and obtain current law and pending law. One particularly good feature incorporated is a map page with hyperlinks to the legislative pages for each state. These links allow access to the current laws in all areas in each state.

CJ also reported on the pamphlet Dan Lawson, attorney in Pennsylvania, volunteered to draft. It is hoped that the draft will be available within two weeks. It will be sent to all regents for review and hopefully will be on the web site by mid August.

### **Web Site - Billeb**

It was suggested that the site include lists of knife groups, clubs, associations and consumer information numbers for knife companies. It was agreed that Jan should research

arrangements and costs for using credit cards on site for membership payment.

### **Position Statement**

Discussion on membership issues, concern over members' activities and products resulted in the formulation of a position statement to be added to the web site and printed materials along with the mission and goals. Wehrs moved, Glesser seconded to approve the following statement which passed unanimously:

AKTI has done research and, in the majority of states, laws are on the books that make carrying a dirk, dagger, switchblade, or ballistic knife a misdemeanor or a felony. AKTI must focus its time and resources on influencing reasonable and responsible future legislation to ensure the definition of a switchblade is not expanded to include sportsman and one-handed knives. We expect our members to abide by the laws in the states in which they do business.

### **Administration**

Gardiner moved, Buck seconded to approve March meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

The agenda for the First Annual Membership Meeting, Saturday, June 26, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. was formulated. 1) Call meeting to order; 2) Announce no minutes to approve; 3) Election of officers; 4) Committee reports - Glesser Publicity, Gardiner Membership, Buck Legislation; Holder Education; 5) Motion to continue with accountant and renew relationship with Jan Billeb for another year; 6) Discussion of unfinished and/or new business; 7) Call for open communication opportunity; 8) Thank you; 9) Announcement of information conversation after meeting; 10) Adjournment.

The Action List was reviewed for additions, updates and clarifications. It was decided that no newsletter would be developed yet. Potential members will be contacted: CJ - Boker; Jim - Seguin; Dan Johnson, D' - TruGrit; Wally - Armco; CJ - Allegheny; joint letter to Crucible.

The next Board of Regents Meeting was set for October 6, beginning at 1 p.m. and ending Thursday, October 7 at 1 p.m. to be held in Las Vegas.

Les de Asis moved, Wally Gardiner seconded to adjourn the meeting.

AMERICAN KNIFE AND TOOL INSTITUTE

Jan Billeb, Executive Director