

PSFS News

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society

July 1998

Our July Guest:

Tony Daniels

"I grew up in Alabama, went to grad school in St. Louis and L.A., then lived in Seattle, on Vashon Island, for a few years, mostly in a bus — a '49 Crown Supercoach to be exact. Spent a year in Eastern Europe then moved back to the U.S., to California, New York, Alabama then New York again, where I've been for the last two years.

"Clarion West in '89. Dropped out of film school, moved to Seattle and became a writer.

"Next few years: Stories all over the place. *Full Spectrum 3, Universe 2, Amazing, SF Age, SF Eye, Fantasy & Science Fiction, Pulphouse, SF Review, Confrontation, Asimov's.*

"*Warpath*, my first book, published in 1993.

"Horrible writing block for three years.

"My story, "Life on the Moon," won the best short story of the year in the Asimov's reader's poll and nominated for a Hugo in 1996.

"Two stories this year in Dozois's *The Year's Best Science Fiction*.

"Second novel, *Earthling*, out in December to decent reviews for the most part. It'll be out in trade paperback in October from Tor.

"Got a short story collection coming out next year from James Turner's imprint, Golden Gryphon Press.

"Got a novella, "Grist," upcoming in *Asimov's*.

"Am actually not a "beatnik" at all, but a crazy Catholic mystic Buddhist — wait, I'm channeling Jack Kerouac!"



Call the PSFS Hotline
(215) 957-4004

PSFS & Philcon Meeting Info
Leave Messages

Last Minute Meeting Cancellation Info

Announcements

Copies of any official PSFS correspondence should be sent to the Secretary for filing in the Society's official records.

Newsletter Submissions and Announcements can be e-mailed to rak@netaxs.com, mailed to the Society's P.O. Box or the Kabakjian's home address, or given to the Secretary or Rich K. in writing at the meetings.

Dues Reminder - to all Active and General members: Your dues were due April 1st. If your dues are not paid by July 1st, you automatically become a Suspended member *and you will not be able to vote at any meeting* until they are. If you are having severe financial difficulties, you can contact any Board member for special consideration. Check your Bylaws. If you need a copy, contact the Secretary by phone, e-mail, or pick one up at the Meeting.

Art Group - meets the first Saturday after the P.S.F.S. Meeting every month at 10 a.m. for 4 hours. Please help P.S.F.S. by supplying your own materials such as pencils, paper, and other art supplies. You can contact hosts Bridget Boyle or Barb Higgins for the specific supplies you'll need. Call (215) 423-2076 or e-mail at "bridget@phillynet.com" or "bridget@psfs.org" for more information or directions..

Camille Bacon-Smith is presenting a monthly series of author readings, on the last Friday, at the CCC Gallery, at 10 N. 3rd St. in Philadelphia. Camille Bacon-Smith is July's guest and Darrell Schweitzer is August's guest. See Bruce or Shelley for further information.

Membership Status

Note: Status Changes from inactive to general or general to active become effective after the meeting has adjourned.

First Timers: Andrew Yost, Larisa Bekerman, Bob Bruhia, Dane Waters, Ellen Weitz
Second Timers: Ray Lopez

Members at the June Meeting: 50
 (44 active, 5 general, 1 inactive, 6 non-members)

Board of Directors

President	Tina Blanco.....	(215) 744-6045
Vice President	Tim Binder.....	(215) 634-8730
Secretary	Carol Kabakjian.....	(610) 623-1139
Treasurer	Gary Feldbaum.....	(215) 673-4044
2 Year Director	Tony Finan.....	(215) 744-6045
2 Year Director	Shelley Handen.....	(610) 642-6061
1 Year Director	Oz Fontecchio.....	(215) 563-7538

Questions? Comments? Contact any Board Member at the above numbers.

To send e-mail to the board, write to bored@cyber.com

Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the General meeting held on June 12th, 1998, at International House. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 pm.

Proxies: Laura Paskman Syms to John Syms. Lew Wolkoff & Joni Brill Dashoff to Todd Dashoff.

Corrections to the Minutes: none. The minutes were approved as printed.

Officers' Reports:

President: Tina said, "Hi y'all."

Vice President: Tim said, "Hi everyone. I'm the Vice President. Here's the Secretary."

Secretary: Carol had a message to those members who have junk mail sent to the P.O. Box in their names. Stop it! Tell the mailers to send the mail to your own home addresses. We have several people who shouldn't be getting junk mail since they no longer have the jobs for the Society that gave them the reason to send for this mail.

Reminders to the members: 1) Please sign in the book or it doesn't count toward your membership determination. The book is on the Treasurer's table from before the meeting starts until it's declared closed after the guest speaker is done. 2) If you've got an announcement, meeting, or special event you want listed in the newsletter please give me the information *in writing*. If I don't receive the information in written form I won't guarantee that your notice will be listed (*accurately if at all*) in the Newsletter. You can e-mail me at rak@netaxs.com, come to the meeting and give the information to me or to Rich (at the Treasurer's table), or snail mail it to the P.O. Box or my home address (in the Society's Directory).

Treasurer: Gary said he'd like to report that while he was out in the Bay area he got elected as a member of the Bay Area Science Fiction Association by a vote of 10 to 4 which was rather amusing because there were only 11 members present. However, they have a very interesting tradition; you're allowed to buy votes. A dollar a vote; maximum of five.

2 Year Director (Tony): said, "Hi."

2 Year Director (Shelley): No report.

1 Year Director (Oz): Following up on the 4th Friday thing that we're doing (*see the Camille Bacon-Smith announcement on the front page*), the July meeting will be the kick off party for the worldcon. Oz has been asked to supply the "fluids" for the party. Oz will have a viewing of "High Crusade" by Poul Anderson on Saturday, June 27th, (no time was announced) at his apartment.

Special Order of Business: none.

Committee Reports:

Programming: Oz announced the Hugo Panel. (See Announcements for list of Speakers.) (As of the printing of this Newsletter Jack McDevitt will not be able to attend the March 1999 meeting. He wants to catch a Phillies game while he's in town and would like to reschedule to a monthly meeting that coincides. CK)

Book Discussion: June's book will be *Permutation City* by Greg Egan on June 21st (Father's Day), 2pm, at the Rutkowski's. July's book will be *Catch the Lighting* by Catharine Asaro on Sunday, July 26, 2pm, at Darrell & Mattie's new home, the author will be there. Call Oz at (215) 563-7538 for more info.

Space Sciences: Hank Smith has a list of events to be held in the near future. Please see him for details.

Publicity: Shelley has no flyers for distribution, because we haven't confirmed August's speaker yet. She will make them up and send them out as soon as she knows. She is planning more advertising.

Special Events: Day at the Beach: the location for the picnic; the Bohemia Bay Marina, in Maryland, near Elkton, about 1 1/2 hours drive from NE Philadelphia down 95. They have a life-guarded pool, a beach (on the river), a lounge & kitchen with a patio which would have to be rented ahead of time, grills, lounge chairs, air-conditioned private changing rooms with showers. Tina took a straw poll to see how many would be interested (8). Shelley passed around a sign-up sheet. Shelley asked for \$60 to rent the lounge. Attendees will be asked to help defray the costs. Passed many to 2. It's scheduled for Saturday, July 18th, (sorry, no rain date) noon to 7pm. Bring your own food and supplies. Contact Shelley or Bruce for more information and directions.

No Fund: John Prenis thanked Ira and Darrell for their generous contributions. He also thanked John Desmond for keeping up the tradition while he was out.

Old Business:

Motion: to reinstate the office of scapegoat was taken off the table. Ron T. moved, Mark T. second, to table to June 1999. John Syms asked for a friendly amendment that it be tabled indefinitely. Ron & Mark accepted the amendment. Tina called for the vote. Passed many to one.

New Business:

Motion: Hank S. moved, Hal H. & Ira K. second, to grant \$4000 to the Philly in 2001 worldcon bid. John S. thought that the amount was excessive. Gary F. agreed and moved, Rick N. second to amend the amount to \$750. Someone asked what the bid would do with the money. Hank said it would help them to throw a better party at worldcon which could get them more votes. Becky reminded everyone that every bid committee member is giving [\$120 each in yearly dues] and they've been assessed an extra amount (John S. said \$50 each) just for the party at worldcon. The

other bid will probably spend upwards of \$12,000 for their party. Todd said that this motion was Hank's, not the bid's. However, Todd knew the bid would appreciate any money we'd decide to give. Todd also said that besides the money that the bid members have given to the bid they've gone to many conventions, etc. at their own expense to help promote the bid. Bridget moved, several second, to extend business 10 minutes. Passed unanimously. After more lively discussion John S. moved, Tim B. second, to call the question. Passed unanimously. Vote on the \$750 amendment. Passed many to few. Becky K. moved, Carol K. second, to change the dollar amount to \$2000. Passed many to few. Tim B. moved, Tina B. second, to amend the amount to \$2001 (Becky and Carol accepted the amendment). Passed unanimously. The motion as finally amended is "to grant \$2001 to the Philly in 2001 bid". Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 pm.

Board Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the PSFS Board meeting held on June 19th, 1998, at Tony & Tina's home. The meeting was called to order at 8:35 pm.

Board members present: Tina, Tim, Carol, Gary, Tony, and Shelley.

Others present: Bruce B., Becky J., and Rich K.

Officers' Reports

President: said, "Hi, Y'all!" No report.

Vice President: No report.

Secretary: No report.

Treasurer: Not present.

Two Year Director (Tony): No report.

Two Year Director (Shelley): No report.

One Year Director (Oz): Not here.

Committee Reports: none.

Old Business: none.

New Business: none.

Reasons for Being Here: none.

Adjourned at 8:40 pm. (This is a record! Five minutes.)

See Meeting Notices for details on the next Board meeting.

Philcon Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the Philcon '98 meeting held on June 14th, 1998, at the Dashoff's home in Philadelphia. The meeting was called to order at 1:25 pm.

Committee members present: Todd, Winnie, David B., Hank, Ed R., Tim B. & Becky J., Oz, John & Laura, Bob, Gary, Bill, Tony & Tina, Carol, Tim K.

Officers' Reports:

Chairman: Tony thanked everyone who showed up at the meeting. Bruce Sterling is our GoH, John Kessel is our Artist Guest, Walter Jon Williams and Tom Savini are the Special Guests. We've found out that there's a media convention running on the same weekend in Baltimore.

Vice-Chairs: Todd said the Art Show director would like to know what the status of the two page flyer is. Tony said we're still waiting on Pete. Laura said she would talk to the hotel people herself. Laura had no report.

Secretary: No report.

Treasurer: Gary said Den memberships are the same as last year: \$5 for Committee, \$15 for Staff.

Fixed Functions Division Head: John gave Tony a "thing" from Devra about Dealers Room. He also said we got "a strongly worded thing" from Lynn last year about children's programming.

Administration Division Head: Laura had not report.

Programming Division Head: Oz was not here.

Department Reports:

Hotel Liaison: Laura found out the name of our new Hotel Rep. He's inexperienced with science fiction groups. Laura will meet with him to explain what we're about. We may need to give him our hotel information sooner than September.

Registration: Carol passed around copies of last year's 6 page flyer and a copy of this year's FYI sheet for the committee to check and make corrections/changes to. She said she'll hand out the new committee reg. form at the September meeting which *must* be returned to her by the October Philcon meeting. Carol introduced Bill, her heir apparent.

Babysitting: will happen.

Quartermaster: David said, "the stuff will be checked in, the stuff will be checked out, and nothing will get lost." The new room layout was good.

Science Programming: Hank had nothing firm yet, but would like to know if we're getting the new space and if it means he'll be getting more slots. Tony said everyone should plan on having the same space just in case we don't get the extra space.

Personnel/Gofer Recruitment: Ed had no report.

Logistics: Bob said there will be a truck with a high back. Last year we had a problem with dealers blocking the loading dock on Sunday. Laura said this year in our mailing we tell anyone who does it that they won't be allowed tables at Philcon in the future. Tony will find someone (a dealer?)

who will sit by the Loading dock and control traffic.

Web Page & Party Czar: The web page is up and has all the little finishing touches. Becky J. requested a copy of the changes to the 6 page flyer so she can make updates. She has an e-mail directory on the web if you want an e-mail address for your department tell her. If you don't want your address on the page tell her. If anyone wants anything different of the web page let her know. Her e-mail address is: morgana@netaxs.com or webmaster@philcon.com

If you know anyone who wants to throw a party at Philcon have them contact Becky at the above e-mail address.

Meet the Pros Party: Becky asked for a budget increase to \$500. Gary asked if they would be buying more with the increase. Becky said that last year extra money was added to the budget which was not reflected in the current budget and the increase would bring it up to what it should be. Passed unanimously.

Tony asked Becky if we got the line art from Bruce Jensen. Becky said she didn't have it, but she'd give him a call.

Dance: Tim said we worked out arrangements so we shouldn't have any expenses this year. Tim wants to speak with the programming people about an earlier start time for the Dance.

Programming: Oz said they're getting a late start this year because 2/3rds of his department got married. His committee will be meeting by the end of the month to get things started.

Publications: Tim K. brought a copy of the 6 page flyer, but Carol had already passed a copy around. Tony said our printer has changed names and moved a little bit.

Old & New Business: none

Adjourned at 2:14 pm. (A new record!)

See **Meeting Notices** for details on the next meeting. The September meeting may possibly be changed to Saturday the 12th, same time and place. If the meeting takes place on the 13th it *MUST* start *immediately* at 1:00pm.

PSFS News

PSFS News is the Newsletter and Corporate Minutes of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, published monthly as a benefit of membership. It is available free to Active and General Members of the Society, and to any SF club or organization wishing to trade newsletters. Non-members or Inactive Members may subscribe at an annual cost of \$10/year.

PSFS News welcomes submissions, and is seeking to expand. Anyone wishing to contribute articles (book or movie reviews, discussion group or convention reports, announcements, etc.) is encouraged to do so. We prefer that articles be e-mailed (send to rak@netaxs.com), but they may be mailed if necessary to the P.O. Box. Deadline is two weeks before the next general meeting.

PSFS News is produced on a Macintosh using ClarisWorks 4.0, and is printed on a Desk-Writer 320. Emailed articles may be either submitted as plain text, or as attached Claris-Works files (use machinery or binhex if available). Other file formats may be possible. Art-work or photos are also welcome in any Mac graphics format, or we can scan originals if mailed to us.

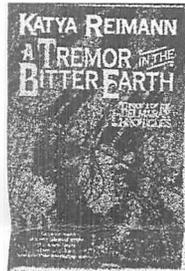
PSFS News Editor & Publisher: Rich Kabakjian. Secretary: Carol Kabakjian. Regular contributors: Henry Lazarus, Lee Weinstein. Missing in action: Tasha Kelly. All contents © 1998 by The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society and the individual contributors.

Books for July

by Henry Leon Lazarus

Science Fiction doesn't seem to have a generic form. This is because there are so many sub-genre's within the field, i.e time travel, far future empire, near future, etc., that each group is too small. Fantasy, however, is a different story. I think of generic fantasy as taking place in a background generated from history anywhere from King Arthur through the reformation. The background is England or France during the middle ages with serfs, nobility, and a very strong church. Season in hand-waving magic and you can get a pretty unreadable blob. However, when the author modifies part of these elements, adds interesting characters, and adapts the background in subtly different way, then you can get great mind food.

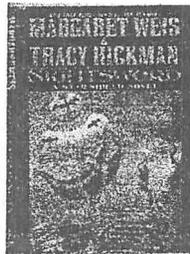
Consider Delia Marshall Turner's *Nameless Magery* (paper from Del Rey) a sort of female fantasy Tom Jones. Lisane, on the run from the Enforcers whose starships destroy magic, and on a strange world, is put in to a magic academy filled with magicians whose first burst of power killed their parents (or even their whole village). This would be standard, even boring stuff, but Ms. Turner never takes a straight path to where she is going and Lisane is a wonderfully brash character who I hope to see more of. I also like how Katya Reimann uses the very real and amoral gods of her world to shape the characteristics of the societies that worship them. In the sequel



to *Wind from a Foreign Sky* (paper), Gaultry is on a quest to the corrupt, poison-loving empire of Bissanty in *A Tremor in the Bitter Earth* (hard from TOR). Aided by a young assassin, originally sent to kill her, and a slave she rescues, she has to face an evil, mad sorcerer. Ms. Reimann makes all this very real, and peoples the empire with living characters who reflect their society.

I have been very impressed with Felicity Savage's *Ever*, the final book being *A Trickster in the Ashes* (trade from Harper Prism). Ms. Savage is telling the history of Europia, an imaginary subcontinent set in the Pacific. Now that the Demons have been released from their cages, stiling the engines they drove, and now that the Significant Empire has conquered Ferupe, Ms. Savage, taking a historical novel approach, rather than a fantasy one, has Crispin on the run from one side of the Empire through Ferupe, showing how the technology created for demons is converted to diesel engines and sold to America and Europe, thus creating new opportunities and directions for growth. I was expecting more explanation of the demons and how they fit in with the world, but I remain impressed with the trilogy. David Brin also takes a historical approach in telling how the dolphin crewed starship, *Streaker*, finally makes its way home and why all the alien species have been chasing it all this time. *Heaven's Reach* (hard from Bantam Spectra) has the crew reacting to cataclysmic events, rather than creating them. This makes the ending of this long series less satisfying.

Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman have a very odd and fun background for their *Starshield* series. Apparently each region of space has its own physics or magical rules. This allows a very odd mix of science fiction and fantasy. All the action and background is a bit larger than life. In *Nightword* (hard from Del Rey) our heroes are after the fabled weapon and are opposed by the greatest magician in the galaxy. I also had a lot of fun with Alan Dean Foster's *Carnivores of Light and Darkness* (hard from Aspect) about a humble African herdsman, a self professed non-magician, on a quest given to him by a dying man. On a odd world where size can change easily from region to region as well as other basic characteristics, Etjole somehow has a seemingly magical solution for every major problem he faces on his way. I had a broad grin as I read this one, and can't wait for the continuation. Ken Hood pulls the largest rabbit out of a hat that anyone has ever dared in fiction in his continuation of a tale of a *Demon Knight* (paper from Harper Prism). This time Longdirk, the man ridden by a hob, must get the fif-



teenth century Italian city states in his demon infested world to cooperate against Nevil who has conquered most of the rest of the world. They wouldn't have cooperated in our world either.

In 1912 Europe was suddenly replaced by *Darwinia* (hard from TOR by Robert Charles Wilson), an overgrown jungle modified from an altered history, leaving it to be re-conquered by European-Americans. Nothing is, of course, what it seems in this very odd time travel novel that is both of the turn of the twentieth century and the far, far future. Mr. Wilson evokes a pastoral voice similar to the late Clifford Simak and is the best replacement for that lost voice that I have ever seen. Robert J. Sawyer also mixes people stories with science fictional ideas. But only he would dare to use transmission from space as a way for a family to cope with a therapist who believes that all of her patients have been raped by their fathers. *Factoring Humanity* (hard from TOR) deals with how the father deals with these accusations and how the mother translates the inscriptions and finds a very alien way to contact humanity's soul.



Patricia Briggs introduces a woman thief and magician who has to help the conqueror of her country fight a demon he doesn't believe in. Of course they fall into friendship in *When Demons Walk* (paper from Ace). Anne McCaffrey continues her tale of colonists dumped to survive on planet farmed by another superior species in *Freedom's Choice*. (Paper from ACE). Of course everything goes right for them and bad for the evil rulers. *Acorna's Quest* (hard from ACE by Anne McCaffrey and Margaret Ball) for her species has the unicorn-like girl facing weather pirates and the species that destroyed the ship she had been on and left her homeless. Younger readers will probably like this pleasant but very obvious series.

At the far end of time, on a world peopled by animals modified into human form, a true human makes his way down the river to find his destiny in *Child of the River* (hard from Avon by Paul J. Macauley) which would be pretty good except for the cliff hanging ending. Melissa Scott has a great idea about terrorist artificial intelligences sent by religious fanatics in *The Shapes of Their Hearts* (hard from TOR) but it was too confusing to work well.

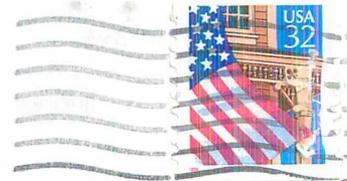
Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens, who've done a number of Star Trek novels, have an edge-of-your-seat, non-stop action thriller, *Ice-fire* (hard from Pocket) about terrorists using nukes to boil antarctic ice and send a disastrous tidal wave out to the southern hemisphere. I believed it while I was reading it, and really enjoyed the description of high tech planes used by the hero to outrun his continual danger.. Finally, collectors of horror interested in Fritz Leiber will love to know that TOR has printed a lost manuscript of a novella of horror *The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich* (trade), written originally in the 30's. Media related books include *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, (trade from Pocket and edited by Dean Wesley Smith) which is fan written short stories, and *All the Things I Really Need to Know I Learned from Watching Star Trek: The Next Generation* (hard from Pocket) by Dave Marinaccio, a collection of humorous anecdotes.

The ultimate market for Science Fiction that every wannabe writer yearns to sell to is, of course, Playboy. So we have *The Playboy Book of Science Fiction* (hard from Harper Prism and edited by Alice K. Turner) with forty-five years of what they bought. Alas, there isn't one unknown amidst them. It's all famous stories by famous authors like Stephen King, Ursula K. Le Guin, etc. Which means it's a very readable killer of dreams. Sniff. Other collections include David G. Hartwell's look at 1997 SF, *The Year's Best SF 3* (paper from Harper Prism), a look at alternate history in *Roads Not Taken* (paper from Del Rey, edited by Gardner Dozois and Stanley Schmidt), and two paperbacks from DAW both edited by Martin H. Greenburg: *Black Cats and Broken Mirrors*, new tales of superstition, and *Camelot Fantastic*, new tales of King Arthur.

Books in paper for the first time include: Terry Brook's look at modern good and evil *Running with the Moon* (Del Rey), *Acorna* (the first of the series by Anne McCaffrey and Margaret Ball from Harper Prism), and the final Avalon novel by Marion Zimmer Bradley, *Lady of Avalon* (Trade from ROC).



Philadelphia Science Fiction Society
 P.O. Box 8303
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303



NYSFS, The Lunarians Inc. (T)
 PO Box 3566
 New York, NY 10008-3566

980710

10008X3566



Meeting Notices

General Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, General Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month in the South America Room at International House, 37th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Business meeting starts at 8 pm. Program starts at 9 pm.

Date

July 10, 1998
 August 14, 1998
 September 11, 1998
 October 9, 1998
 November 13, 1998
 December 11, 1998
 January 8, 1999
 February 12, 1999

Guest/Agenda

Tony Daniels
 (unscheduled)
 Alan Steele
 Laurel K. Hamilton
 Philcon
 Stephen Youll
 Annual Meeting
 Robert Sawyer

Date

Board of Directors

Mon., July 20, 1998, 8:00 pm

Host/Location

Shelley Handen, , Philadel-
 phia, (215) 744-6045

Philcon '98 Meeting

Sun., Aug. 23, 1998, 1:00 pm

Todd & Joni Dashoff, 830 Bar-
 low St, Philadelphia; (215)
 676-4194

Sun., Sept. 13, 1998, 1:00 pm

Rich & Carol Kabakjian, 17
 Lewis Ave., East Lansdowne,
 PA; (610) 623-1139

About the Society

The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society (PSFS) is a non-profit organization that meets monthly to discuss and promote science fiction and fantasy in literature, the arts, and popular culture. Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at International House, 37th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. Meetings consist of business proceedings from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., followed by a guest speaker involved in some area of Science Fiction or Fantasy, such as writers, editors, artists, publishers, etc.

In addition, PSFS sponsors an annual science fiction conference, Philcon, and has many special interest subgroups; such as the Book Discussion Group, which meets monthly to discuss a work of science fiction or fantasy; and the Special Events Group, which attends science fiction and fantasy movies and other events.

Membership in the society is open to everyone. Becoming a member is easy. Attend your first meeting; we'll say "Hello." At your second meeting, you can nominate yourself for membership or ask someone else to nominate you. At the next meeting you attend following your nomination, you're eligible to be voted in as a General Member. Our current dues are \$15 for a full year (\$24 for couples), and attendance at 4 meetings each year maintains the status of Active Member.