

**BYLAWS  
of  
THE NORTHERN INDIANA GROTTO**

I. Membership:

A. Application for membership in the Northern Indiana Grotto is made by filling out a membership application form endorsed by a Regular member that has caved with the applicant and submitting it to an officer of the Executive Board.

1. Applicant becomes a member upon acceptance by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a grotto meeting and upon payment of appropriate dues to the Treasurer.

B. Members are classified as follows:

1. Regular -- (R) -- Persons who are 18 years of age or over, are current members in good standing of the National Speleological Society, have all privileges of NIG, including the right to vote, hold office (on the Executive Board), serve as committee chairmen, receive the NIG newsletter, and have access to grotto records and data.
2. Regular Family -- (RF) -- Persons who are current members in good standing of the National Speleological Society, and are members of the immediate family and residing with a Regular member of Northern Indiana Grotto, have all the rights and privileges of a Regular member except that they do not receive the grotto newsletter and other grotto mailings,
3. Associate -- (A) -- Persons who are 18 years of age or over, are not members of the National Speleological Society, may serve as committee chairmen, receive the grotto newsletter, and have access to grotto records and data, but do not have the right to vote,
4. Associate Family -- (AF) -- Persons who are not current members of the National Speleological Society, and are members of the immediate family, and residing with a Regular or Associate member of Northern Indiana Grotto, have all the rights and privileges of an Associate member except that they do not receive the grotto newsletter or other grotto mailings.
5. Sponsored -- (S) -- Exceptional persons under the age of 18, for whom a member is willing to take responsibility for his/her safety and care. A Sponsored member has the rights and privileges of an Associate member with the exception or requiring supervision from a sponsor or designated substitute member in all grotto functions.
6. Honorary -- (H) -- a special membership awarded to an individual in recognition of his/her contribution and/or assistance to the Northern Indiana Grotto which are of a significant nature to benefit the Northern Indiana Grotto's purpose in the study, safe exploration, and conservation of caves. The award of Honorary membership is given by unanimous agreement of the Executive Board of the Northern Indiana Grotto, and must be approved by four-fifths (4/5) of the members present at the Grotto meeting. The individual awarded this Honorary membership shall be given the rights of Associate Membership. Honorary members who are NSS members in good standing shall be given the rights and privileges of Regular Membership upon presentation of their NSS number. It is understood that the Honorary Membership may be terminated if contact cannot be made with the Honorary member.

I. Membership, (cont'd)

C. Responsibilities of members

- 1. Members are responsible for payment of current dues.
- 2. Members are expected to observe the practices of cave safety and conservation as set forth in the Constitution of Northern Indiana Grotto and the National Speleological Society.
- 3. Members are expected to respect, care for, and prevent improper disbursement of Grotto equipment and information.
- 4. A violation of the above is reason for expulsion, as outlined in Article IV.

II. Dues:

A. Dues are payable at the first of each year to the Treasurer of the Northern Indiana Grotto.

- 1. A thirty (30) day grace period will be allowed beyond the anniversary date for the payment of dues before the membership is terminated.
- 2. A terminated member has one year beyond his/her anniversary date in which to pay dues and be reinstated.
- 3. After a period of over one year, a terminated member must reapply for membership as stated in Article I:A.1.

B. Annual membership dues are:

- 1. Regular.....\$15.00
- 2. Regular family..... 5.00
- 3. Associate..... 15.00
- 4. Associate family..... 5.00
- 5. Sponsored..... 6.00
- 6. Honorary..... None

III. Elections, Nominations, Appointments, and Vacancies:

A. Election Committee:

- 1. An Election Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman at the December Grotto meeting, as the first order of business. The committee shall consist of (3) three persons, one of which is the Chairman and (2) two of which are regular NIG members not on the Executive Board and not currently running for office.

B. Election Procedure:

- 1. Nominations for elected positions shall be accepted at October and November Grotto meetings.
- 2. Nominations shall be published in THE MICHIANA CAVER. Voting shall take place at the December Grotto meeting. Members not attending the December meeting may mail their ballots in a sealed envelope with return address to the official Grotto address.

## III. Elections, Nominations, Appointments, and Vacancies, (cont'd)

3. The Election Committee shall verify by return address, post mark, and any other means necessary, that no member has submitted more than one ballot. Multiple ballots determined to be from the same member shall be voided. The Committee shall make every effort to maintain the secrecy of the mail in ballots.
4. Ballots must be received by the Election Committee no later than the start of the December Grotto meeting.
5. As the second order of business at the December meeting, the Election Committee shall count the ballots received and announce the results. For each office, a simple majority wins. In the event of a tie, the Election Committee shall conduct a run-off election during the December meeting.
6. As the final order of business at the December grotto meeting, the newly elected officers will assume their offices and the Chairman will close the meeting. The newly elected officers shall be announced in the January newsletter.
7. The outgoing Chairman has the option to assume the position of Board Member for a one year term. If the outgoing Chairman does not assume the Board Member position, it will be treated by the newly elected Chairman as a vacancy in office to be filled per Article III, C.

## C. Appointments

1. The Chairman may appoint necessary committees and committee chairmen with majority approval of the Executive Board. Any member has a right to protest appointments by presenting a written protest letter to the Chairman.
2. Unless otherwise notified, the committee chairmen shall retain their posts even following the election of officers.
3. The Chairman may appoint an eligible member to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board. This can only be done with the approval by the majority of the Executive Board.
4. The Executive Board shall have the right to appoint the following posts:
  - a. Editor
  - b. Librarian
  - c. Quartermaster
  - d. H.N.F.T.F. Representative and Alternate Representative
  - e. Program Coordinator

These posts must be appointed to Regular members of the Northern Indiana Grotto.

5. The H.N.F.T.F. positions will remain in effect for as long as the Task Force exists.
6. Any of these may be removed from their posts by a letter of resignation (as per III:D:1) or by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

- D. Vacancy of Office:
1. An officer may resign by submitting to the Executive Board a letter of resignation. The Chairman shall announce the letter to the grotto meeting and publish notice of the resignation in the grotto newsletter. The resignation shall become effective upon announcement at the grotto meeting.
  2. An officer may be expelled from office for dereliction of duty for the following causes:
    - a. Inactivity while in office in excess of sixty (60) days or longer without any just or reasonable cause.
    - b. Violation Of Article I:C and/or Article IV.
    - c. Failure to pay dues and/or to maintain membership in good standing with the National Speleological Society.
  3. Expulsion of an officer is achieved by the Executive Board voting unanimously to publish an "Intent to Expel" statement in the Grotto newsletter followed by a two-thirds (2/3) favorable vote by those present at the next grotto meeting.
- IV. Expulsion of members:
- A. Any member can be expelled from the Northern Indiana Grotto by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership at a Grotto meeting for the following reasons:
    1. Any member who does not observe safe caving practices, who conducts himself in a dangerous or reckless manner in a cave (i.e. using alcoholic beverages or drugs, engaging in horseplay, or allowing members of his party to vandalize, despoil, or litter any cave, or destroy cave fauna, or who does not respect the rights and wishes of property owners).
    2. Any member who does not respect, care for, or prevent improper disbursement of Grotto property or information.
  - B. Said members shall have the right to address the Grotto meeting prior to the vote to expel.
- V. Amendments to the Bylaws:
- A. The Bylaws may be amended by:
    1. The Executive Board has the right to formulate and enact bylaws within the stipulations set forth in Article III, 2 and Article III, 3 of the Constitution.
    2. The voting membership has the right to submit proposed bylaw changes in the form of a petition to the Executive Board. Such petitions must be signed by at least three (3) voting members of the Grotto.
    3. Proposed bylaw revisions shall be printed in the newsletter, and shall include the ballots for ratification.
    4. Ratification shall be by two-thirds (2/3) majority of ballots returned by mail favoring the change. The ballots must be returned within 30 days of issuance and the ratification will take effect at the following Grotto meeting.

## VI. Duties and responsibilities of officers of the Grotto:

## A. The duties and responsibilities of the Chairman shall be:

1. To preside over all Grotto and Executive Board meetings.
2. To appoint committee chairmen within the mandates of the Constitution and of Bylaws III, C, 1.
3. To call Grotto and Executive Board meetings within the mandates of the Constitution of the Northern Indiana Grotto.

## A. The duties and responsibilities of the Chairman shall be, (cont'd)

4. To coordinate all Grotto activities, and to represent Northern Indiana Grotto as it's highest direct.
5. The Chairman is an ex-officio member of every committee within the Northern Indiana Grotto including the editorial staff of the Grotto newsletter, and is authorized to conduct business on behalf of the Grotto within the mandates of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Northern Indiana Grotto.

## B. The duties and responsibilities of Vice-Chairman shall be:

1. To preside over all Grotto and Executive Board meetings in the absence of the Chairman.
2. To act as a Chairman's representative in the Chairman's absence or at the Chairman's mandate, and to assist the Chairman in any way the Chairman deems necessary.
3. To act as spokesperson for Grotto public relations, and as such to appoint such help as needed.
4. To assume all duties of the Chairman in the event of the Chairman's resignation, incapacitation, or expulsion until such time as the Chairman is replaced through the mandate of Article III, C, 3.
5. To act as Northern Indiana Grotto's liaison to the Indiana Karst Conservancy.

## C. The duties and responsibilities of Secretary shall be:

1. To take and report the minutes constituting the record of the proceedings of all Grotto and Executive Board meetings.
2. To handle official Grotto correspondence and to report said correspondence to Grotto and Executive Board meetings.
3. To distribute copies of the Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Indiana Grotto, and new member information packets.
4. To maintain a record of all official Grotto proceedings such as minutes of Grotto and Executive Board meetings, and to maintain Grotto stationery supplies.

- D. The duties and responsibilities of Treasurer shall be:
1. To receive, hold, and disburse Grotto funds in accordance with the mandates of the Executive Board.
  2. To maintain a record of Grotto finances and to maintain a record of all Grotto properties.
  3. To provide a current financial report at Grotto and Executive Board meetings.
  4. To maintain a current Grotto membership list, and to deliver same to the Secretary and Editor on a monthly basis.
  5. To sign and distribute membership cards.
- VI. Duties and responsibilities of officers of the Grotto, (cont'd)
- E. The duties and responsibilities of the Board Member at Large shall be:
1. The Board Member at Large has the primary function of serving as an advisor to the Executive Board and is its fifth voting member.
  2. It is the duty of the Board Member at Large to serve in the capacity of programs coordinator in the absence of a person appointed to this capacity, and no specific duties other than described in Article VI:E:1 and Article VI:E:2 shall be mandatory on the Board Member at Large.
- F. Duties and responsibilities of outgoing officers of the Grotto:
1. Outgoing officers shall return to the Grotto board all related materials and monies prior to the next scheduled Grotto meeting.
- VII. Meetings, Quorums, Successions, and Proxy Board Members:
- A. Meetings and Special Executive Board Meetings:
1. The Executive Board shall give at least a thirty (30) day notification of intent to hold a Grotto and/or Executive Board meeting.
  2. Special Grotto and Executive Board meetings may be necessary from time to time and may be held outside the Grotto's general area, but only by unanimous consent of the five (5) members of the Executive Board.
- B. Quorums:
1. Two (2) officers of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum at a grotto meeting and three (3) at an Executive Board meeting.
  2. If a quorum is not established at two (2) consecutive Executive Board meetings, any officer of the Grotto shall constitute a quorum at the third consecutive Executive Board meeting provided proper notification has been given per Article VII:A:1. The structure of said meeting shall follow the order of succession as stipulated in Article VII:D:1.

- C. Order of Succession:
    - 1. The order of succession to the office of Chairman shall be as follows:
      - a. Vice-Chairman
      - b. Secretary
      - c. Treasurer
      - d. Board Member
    - 2. The first order of business is the replacement or restructuring of the Executive Board in the event of a vacancy of office as described in Article III:D.
  - D. Proxy Board Members:
    - 1. Any officer of the Grotto may appoint a proxy to represent them at a Grotto and/or Executive Board meeting. However, said proxy must present a signed letter from the officer stating that he or she is representing that officer.
  - D. Proxy Board Members, (cont'd)
    - 2. Proxies may be counted in establishing a quorum at a Grotto meeting, but may not be counted in establishing a quorum at an Executive Board meeting.
- VIII. The Grotto Publication:
- A. The Grotto Publication:
    - 1. The official Grotto publication shall be called THE MICHIANA CAVER and shall be published on a schedule to be determined by the Executive Board and the Editor.
    - 2. Other publications, including cave maps, may be published from time to time at the mandate of the Executive Board or as necessary for the performance of Grotto business,
- IX. Duties of the appointed posts as described per Article III:C:4 are:
- A. The duties of the Editor:
    - 1. The Editor shall be in charge of all phases of publication, printing, and distribution of THE MICHIANA CAVER. He/she shall be permitted to appoint an editorial staff to assist in various phases of publication as he/she deems necessary,
    - 2. The Editor shall be responsible for the purchase of all supplies necessary for printing, publishing, distribution, and supplying the Grotto with other printed matter necessary for the normal conduct of Grotto business.
    - 3. The Editor shall be responsible for maintaining a current mailing list which shall include members, subscribers, exchange publications, NSS and other mailings relating to distribution of THE MICHIANA CAVER. The Editor shall maintain financial records and present them to the Executive Board upon request.
    - 4. The Editor shall be given a monthly operating budget, the amount of which shall be determined by the Executive Board to be reasonable and necessary to the performance of the Editor's duties. The Editor shall administer this budget as necessary to the publication and distribution of THE MICHIANA CAVER and maintenance of other printed matter. The Editor shall maintain financial records and present them to the Executive Board upon request,

## IX. Duties of the appointed posts as described per Article III:C:4 are, (cont'd)

## B. The duties of librarian:

1. To collect exchange publications, Grotto publications, and other material for the library at each meeting, and to place all such material in the Grotto library in a sensible order.
2. The Librarian shall make such material available to Regular and Associate members of the Grotto upon request.
3. To care for the library and its contents as deemed necessary by the Executive Board.

## C. The duties of the Quartermaster:

1. To keep and maintain Grotto equipment and to make it available to Regular and Associate members upon request, and to fill other such duties as set forth by the Executive Board.
2. To purchase and maintain such stores and supplies as may be deemed desirable to have on hand, and to make them available to the members of the Grotto for sale.

## D. The duties of the Hoosier National Forest Task Force Representatives:

1. To attend all H.N.F.T.F. Committee meetings and voice the opinion of the Northern Indiana Grotto.
2. To keep the Grotto informed of decisions and activities of the Hoosier National Forest Task Force Committee.
3. The duties of the alternate representative will be as described above in the event of the absence of the representative.

## E. The duties of the Program Coordinator:

1. To arrange and/or prepare informative presentations to be presented at each Grotto meeting.

## F. Duties and responsibilities of outgoing appointed positions:

1. Outgoing appointees shall return all related materials and monies to the Executive Board prior to the next scheduled Grotto meeting.