

INTRODUCTION

The Membership Secretary is responsible for handling membership records and many of the business matters related to membership for the lodge.

A lodge may have either a Membership Secretary or a Financial Secretary, but not both. The position that the lodge utilizes must be designated in the bylaws. Which position the lodge chooses will affect the responsibilities of the treasurer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Membership Secretary is the lodge resource for membership information. Key areas of responsibilities include:

Providing Membership Category Information

Sons of Norway International delegates voted at the 2014 and 2016 International Lodge Meetings to proceed with a simplified dues structure for U.S. members, effective January 1, 2018. Effective January 1, 2020 a simplified dues structure was implemented for members in Canada and Norway.

Membership dues are uniform for all lodges in their respective countries. For all dues paid, a portion is allocated to International, a portion is for the district and a portion is returned back to the local lodge.

Membership categories

Individual Membership

An Individual Member pays the full amount for international, district and lodge dues, and receives their own Viking magazine monthly. A primary member can vote, hold office and serve as a convention delegate.

Family Membership

Family Membership includes everyone who lives at the same same single-family residence and shares the same mailing address in the Sons of Norway database. The members do not need to be related. One Viking magazine is sent per household. All members age 16 and above in a Family Membership can vote, hold office, serve as a convention delegate, and are included in the membership count to determine representation for district and international conventions.

Heritage Membership

Heritage membership is free for youth ages 0-15 who are referred by a relative who is a current member. Heritage members cannot vote or hold office, nor are they included in the lodge membership count. Years as a Heritage member do not count toward Golden Membership or anniversary pins. There is a special program to recognize years as a Heritage member.

Juvenile Membership

Juvenile membership is a category for members with a Juvenile insurance policy. They are between the ages of 0 and 21 and are designated on lodge membership lists with a "J." They cannot vote or hold office and are not included in the membership count to determine convention representation.

Long-Term Membership Categories

Golden Membership

A member becomes 'Golden' on their renewal date after they have achieved 30 years of membership and 65 years of age. The years of membership do not have to be consecutive. U.S. members who qualified before January 1, 2018 pay a reduced dues rate. Those U.S. members who qualified on January 1, 2018 and after do not receive a discount in their dues.

Members from Canada and Norway who qualified before January 1, 2020 pay a reduced dues rate. Those who qualified on that date and after do not receive a discounted rate.

Golden Members who receive a discount are indicated on the membership lists with the words "Golden Member" or the letters "GM." Golden Members who do not receive the discount are designated by "Golden Member N" or by letters "NG", standing for New Golden.

Golden pins and certificates are mailed automatically to the lodge president approximately every quarter by Sons of Norway Headquarters at no charge. Pins that are damaged or lost can be replaced by contacting the Supply Department or Membership Services. Golden members receive a membership card annually when they pay their dues.

Life Membership

Life Members are those who achieved 30 years of membership and 65 years of age before the end of 1998. Life members do not pay dues. They are designated

by the letters “LM” or the words “Life Member” on the lists. This membership designation is no longer awarded.

Life Members received a membership card when they first qualified. They do not receive a new card every year. Replacement cards can be requested from Membership Services.

Special request categories

Honorary membership

Honorary membership is bestowed by the International Board of Directors to non-members who have made unique or especially noteworthy contributions to the United States, Canada or Norway, or who have had significant achievements in public service, science, literature or education.

Requests for Honorary Membership may originate from the local lodge, the District or the International Board. Whatever entity submits the request shall pay the honorary member’s dues.

Affiliate membership

Affiliate or dual membership allows people to belong to multiple lodges at the same time. These members pay full dues for their home lodge and only the lodge portion for their affiliate lodge. Their affiliate dues can be included on their annual dues statement or can be collected by the lodge. Unless restricted in the bylaws, an affiliate member can vote on lodge matters and hold office. They cannot vote on convention delegates to represent their affiliate lodge, nor can they be a convention delegate from their affiliate lodge. They are not included in the lodge membership count. A member may belong to more than one affiliate lodge.

Affiliate members appear on their affiliate lodge’s membership lists and are included in label orders. They are designated on the membership lists by the district and lodge number on their entry, which is that of their home lodge.

Maintaining Membership Records

Membership Lists

The Membership Secretary should maintain a list of current lodge members. An easy way to accomplish this is to periodically download a membership list, in Excel or PDF format, from the Sons of Norway website. Lists are not automatically sent from Headquarters but can be requested if needed. While the PDF list is easier to read, the

Excel version can be sorted to develop lists for anniversaries, effective dates, paid to dates, calls and birthdays.

Lodge Monthly Activity Report

On the 2nd day of each month, a lodge activity report is sent to the lodge vice president and membership secretary by email (preferred) or postal mail. This report includes membership activity that occurred during the previous month, such as new members, address changes, deaths, transfers, and suspended/cancelled memberships.

Lodge Monthly Dues Report

The Membership Secretary receives a paper copy of the Lodge Monthly Dues Report, which indicates which primary members have joined or renewed during the previous month. The lodge Treasurer receives the original report along with a check for the lodge portion of the dues. This report is not available for download.

Reporting Member Changes

The Membership Secretary contacts Membership Services (by phone, email, fax, or postal mail using a form) to report changes for members, such as new addresses or phone numbers. The Membership Secretary also submits information about members who have transferred into the lodge, or who have passed away.

Membership materials

Membership materials, such as New Membership Applications, transfer forms, address change cards and more, can be ordered from Sons of Norway Headquarters by emailing Supply@sofn.com or by calling (800) 945-8851. They are also available for download from the Sons of Norway website.

Membership Pins and Certificates.

Anniversary pins and certificates are available for every 5 years of membership: 5, 10, 15... up to 75 years. Each lodge decides which anniversaries will be recognized and how/when to present pins and certificates. The lodge is responsible for placing the order. There is a charge for the anniversary pins. A bill will be included with the order.

In addition, there are anniversary certificates available for members achieving a 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 or 70 a year anniversary. These certificates are free of charge and can be ordered from Headquarters.

Heritage Members are not eligible for regular anniversary pins and certificates. There is a special program to recognize years of Heritage Membership.

Consult the Lodge Supply Catalog for information about other recognition materials available.

CONCLUSION

The Membership Secretary serves as a vital link between the lodge and Sons of Norway Headquarters, assuring that membership matters are processed smoothly, and that all member information is dependable and accurate.