

# Write in the Saddle

April 2010



## Highlights this month:

Membership Meeting –  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 7pm @ the VFW

VFW Dance –  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 8pm

Country Night at the  
Townhouse –  
April 17<sup>th</sup>

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## From the President

Mark L

Howdy Cowgirls & Cowboys,

I hope everyone is enjoying the nice spring weather we've been having. Perhaps that's a sign that winter in Minnesota and Wisconsin may be over (I'm keeping my fingers crossed).

Recapping the past month, thank you to all who attended NSGRA's March dance at the Ballentine VFW. I think we all enjoyed Dan's music and dj-ing skills. Though I was out of town, I understand that the Townhouse also had a successful C&W dance night. Thanks to Holly and her staff for bringing back an evening of dance for the Twin Cities' country & western community. Thank you to everyone who attended, for supporting one of our local establishments. That's truly the spirit we all need as we continue to be supportive of our community.

As we move into April, the next NSGRA dance will be on Saturday the 17th from 8 pm until 12:30 am and the NSGRA membership meeting will be just before the dance, at 7 pm, also at the VFW. I encourage you to attend the meeting and get involved with North Star. We want to serve the community better, and your involvement and input will help us.

The Florida Gay Rodeo Association will be hosting the Sunshine Stampede in Davie, Florida (Fort Lauderdale) the weekend of April 16-18; more information is available at [www.fgra.org](http://www.fgra.org). You can find the complete IGRA rodeo schedule on the igra link at [www.nsgra.org](http://www.nsgra.org).

Patrick has informed me that he has the online store up and running once again. By going to our webpage, you can order NSGRA shirts and other merchandise at your convenience. Patrick has some beautiful NSGRA trivets available and AJ has some collectable NSGRA coffee/tea mugs as well. You can contact Patrick ([publicrelations@nsgra.org](mailto:publicrelations@nsgra.org)) or AJ ([fundraising@nsgra.org](mailto:fundraising@nsgra.org)) directly to order these items or simply (and conveniently) grab few at the next NSGRA dance at the Ballentine VFW. A informational list of all the upcoming NSGRA dances for 2010 is on our website at [www.nsgra.org](http://www.nsgra.org). NSGRA will continue hosting the dances on the second Saturday of each month when possible. Occasionally we will need to alter that given other events previously scheduled at the VFW.

I look forward to seeing you soon. If we haven't already met, please introduce yourself to me at the next meeting or dance.

Yours in rodeo,  
Mark Larson,  
President-NSGRA

From the VP

Dan V

Hey everyone,

It seems we are really getting a handle on the dance thing. Every month I hear more and more positive things from people. We are on our way, and now we can start moving forward with a solid foundation. We continue to try to make the dances the most enjoyable event for as many people as we can. NSGRA is also preparing to resume our dance competition, so stay tuned for details! With summer just around the corner (3 months people!), we are already laying the groundwork for the Grand Day Parade, and the Pride parade. We will get these on the calendar as soon as we have confirmation, so visit [NSGRA.org](http://NSGRA.org) early and often! Do you have an idea about what you want NSGRA to do this summer? Now is the time to act. Please attend a membership meeting before any dance or email or call any board member so we can bring it up and see what we can do. We are now sitting in a great place, and we need to decide what direction we want to go forward with, so let us know what excites you!

Your friendly DJ and VP  
Dan

Treasurer's Report

Ron B

Due to the success of the VFW dances, we currently have a balance of around \$1,500 in the two checking accounts combined. The February dance celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary was free admission; however, donations received, the silent auction and the shoe shine booth netted enough to cover most of the \$450 cost we had for that event. We have also had some activity in merchandise sales on the website this past month which contributes to the cash balance on hand. There was also a royalty dance fundraiser that netted over \$100 for the organization.

Besides paying the VFW for the dances, we have paid the monthly telephone bill, paid for some newsletter expenses, paid for costs incurred in making the shoe shine booth and paid \$25 to the State of Minnesota to file the nonprofit registration application with the Attorney General's office.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ron Brunk, Treasurer

NSGRA is a proud member  
of



We thank our IGRA  
Sponsors:



We thank our 2009 local  
Sponsors:



**GLBT Pride**

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AND ALL OUR LOCAL  
NSGRA PARTNERS!  
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**Please visit:**



[WWW.IGRATRAVEL.COM](http://WWW.IGRATRAVEL.COM)

IGRA shares in the normal commission rate instead of sites like Travelocity and the funds are used to support IGRA Finals. It costs you nothing extra to use it, too!

**Board of Directors**

**Mark L.....President**  
**Dan V.....Vice President**  
**Jerome.....Secretary**  
**Ron B.....Treasurer**  
**Linda M.....Rodeo Director**  
**Jeff R.....Contestants**  
**Colin S.....Membership**  
**Carl S.....Trustee**  
**Patrick S...PR/Sponsorship**  
**AJ V.....Fundraising**

**Newsletter Team**

**Dale C.....Editor**  
**Colin S.....Assistant Editor**

*Please Help Us By*  
**Sending Your Updated  
 Address Info &  
 Email Address To:**  
**membership@nsgra.org**  
**or call us at**  
**(763) 78-NSGRA**



Letter from the Editor

Dale C

Howdy all,

Happy Spring! The snow has melted, the flowers are blooming and “life” is returning to the frozen tundra called Minnesota. I always love this time of year since it brings people out of hibernation and gets them more social. Now with 2 venues to dance, I’m hoping that I get to see people I haven’t seen in a while. I was at the Townhouse in March for the return of country dancing to the bar and I just have to say that it felt like going home. Lots of people where there and it was like old times. It would be great if we can keep the crowds growing both at the Townhouse and at the VFW and help increase the awareness of NSGRA and the country lifestyle among the “next generation”. Please, spread the word to your friends and colleagues who may have an interest in the country nights at the 2 venues and if they don’t know how to dance, let them know about Lee’s on Sunday nights and the lessons that Michael McGee and others lead.

Until next month!

Your friendly editor,

Dale

Making History

Making History!

We realized at the anniversary bash, we have a lot of history, and a lot to preserve! As VP, one of my myriad duties is to be in charge of preserving our history. Colin has kindly volunteered to head up an ad hoc committee to see if we can preserve these items in multiple ways and venues. Please consider if you have historical items that you would like to donate, or if you would like to help in our efforts by volunteering to be on the committee, please contact Colin (Black Bart) We have 20 years of history, so if you've been around for any considerable amount of time, or know a former member who was here in the "old days", please see if they have anything they would like to donate, such as articles, photos, prizes, ephemera, etc.

Thanks

Dan

Trustee’s Report

Carl S

Hats off to the NSGRA Board and friends for hosting a wonderful dance at the Uptown VFW on March 13th. The event was wonderfully planned and it is so good to See Gary smiling and shinning boots again!!! GREAT WORK TEAM!!!

IGRA events coming up in April is the Florida rodeo hosted in Fort Lauderdale, Sunshine Stampede-April 16th-. I will be representing NSGRA at that rodeo and if you will be competing please let me know.

Keep up the great work NSGRA members... we are arising to be a bright Northern Star again

Carl  
 NSGRA Trustee

## Membership Report

Black Bart

Howdy, all!

As this article goes to print, I am on my way back from Los Angeles. It was very exciting starring in a major motion picture while I was here! APRIL FOOLS! Actually, I \*am\* on my way back from Los Angeles and I have seen a few movie stars and a television star, but the closest I came to being in a major motion picture was working on a major television commercial for a boxing prize fight coming up May 1<sup>st</sup>. If you see a commercial for the Mayweather-Mosley fight, I helped with the art department.

I have been in contact with the Twin Cities Pride Committee and it looks like everything is coming together for an NSGRA Dance Tent at the Pride Festival on June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. I'll be posting details next month, but I want to get the word out early that I'll need help with hauling the dance floor and staffing our tent. Folk with horses—if you want to ride in the parade, I'll need your contact information.

I am working with Dan our VP to start the process of collecting, cataloging and dispersing our historical items. I am conferring with the Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection, but I am hoping we would be able to get access to our items for special events and for other needs. Presuming that is the case, I will research what is required to set up a transfer from NSGRA to the archives. In particular, I am concerned about the safety of our irreplaceable items that are in individuals' homes including my own. A fire, broken water pipe, high heat or humidity can destroy fragile papers and textiles. That is why a climate controlled facility is essential to the preservation of our unique items. Please read Dan's article and if you have any items to donate from the 20 year history of NSGRA, please let me know!

As always, PLEASE let us know if your mailing address or e-mail address has changed. We don't want to lose touch when you change addresses (either kind). Sending newsletters in electronic formats is faster than a printed version and saves postage and trees. Nevertheless, we will send a printed version to any member who requests it.

If you are a current NSGRA member and have not been receiving the email versions of the monthly newsletter, please check your Spam guard. The emails are sent blind carbon copied to respect our members' privacy, and they will come from our editor Dale-- [writeinthesaddle@gmail.com](mailto:writeinthesaddle@gmail.com).

NSGRA encourages all members to contribute articles for Write in the Saddle. Ideas for articles and other submissions are always welcome! It is our connection with each other. Let us hear from you!

Let's Rodeo!

"Black Bart"

2010 Membership chair

## 2010 Rodeos

Apr 16-18 Ft. Lauderdale, FL

~~Apr 30 - May 2 Palm Springs, CA~~  
**CANCELED**

May 28-30 Oklahoma City, OK

Jun 11-13 St. Louis, MO

Jun 11-13 Sacramento, CA

Jun 25-27 Detroit, MI

Jul 2-4 Calgary, AB, Canada

Jul 9-11 Denver, CO

Jul 23-25 Albuquerque, NM

Aug 13-15 San Francisco, CA

Aug 20-22 Chicago, IL

Sep 3-5 Kansas City, MO

Sep 10-12 Dallas, TX

Sep 10-12 San Diego, CA

Oct 1-3 Tulsa, OK

Oct 21-24 World Gay Rodeo  
Finals  
Laughlin, NV

Nov 11-14 IGRA Convention  
Reno, NV



## Dancing at Lee's

Is there a line dance that you have seen and want to learn? Come out to Lee's to learn. Lessons start at 7pm and open dancing at 8pm.

Don't know how to 2-step? The first Sunday of every month, BEGINNER DANCES are taught at Lee's Liquor Lounge

Lee's Liquor Lounge  
101 N. Glenwood Avenue  
(Corner of 12th & Glenwood)  
Minneapolis

## Dancing at the VFW

### NSGRA - Invite Your Friends

As we move forward with the Country Western VFW dances, Patrick recognized that the most valuable form of advertising we have is you personally inviting people to come to event. Keep up the good work. It has been working great.

Patrick will be making a Facebook event for the March 13<sup>th</sup> dance and will place the link in the dance announcement on the [www.nsgra.org](http://www.nsgra.org) website. If you get a chance, please link to it and invite all your Facebook friends.

If you have ideas about other ways of getting the word out, please let Patrick know. [publicrelations@nsgra.org](mailto:publicrelations@nsgra.org)

### Dance Schedule

April 17th (third Saturday - same as Townhouse country western night)

May 1st

June 12th

July 10th

Aug 7th

Sept 11th

Oct 9th

Nov. 13th

Dec. 11th

**NSGRA - Where are the sponsors? (part 2)**

Previously I wrote about needing to attract marketing dollars by offering access to the spectators (and participants) at our events. There needs to be a match between the potential sponsor's marketing needs and the people who will be attending our event. Proving that the folk who attend our events are a good match requires statistic about the attendees, and like many organization we have very few details about our guests. At the national level IGRA has collected some statistics (they are getting old) but they won't identify anything that is unique to our particular audience.

We need to know where the people who come to our events live. For example, what percentage lives in the Twin Cities? We don't really know. We expect that most do but we don't have a percentage. We also know that a significant percentage of the attendees don't live in the area and are visiting because they enjoy our rodeo. Without this information, it is going to be difficult to make a business case for a local sponsor to be interested in our events.

We need to provide sponsorship opportunities that are valuable. There are statistics available for the value of various types of communication. This is where it gets a little ugly because things we have done like arena banners and program advertisements have an extremely low value (In the range of a cent or less per view). Things that are significantly more valuable are opportunities for attendee interaction with the sponsor's product. More valuable are opportunities to distribution free samples and arrange product demonstrations, etc. (I remember in the last rodeo there was a last minute rush to get items for gift bags to be given to rodeo contestants. I have since learned there is greater value in gift bags for everyone.)

Value is a key component of providing a sponsorship opportunity. For a bank to get someone to open a new checking account cost somewhere in the range of \$3000. If sponsorship of our event results in one new checking account being opened, it is valid to arrange a sponsorship of about \$3000. Knowing the value is a important aspect of sponsorship arrangements.

The number of attendees makes a signification difference too. For example if a sponsorship is arranged for \$5000 and the event has an attendance of 1,000 people, they are paying \$5.00 to market to each person. If the attendance is 5,000 people, that changes to just \$1 per person. (By the way, we need to come up with about \$50 of sponsorship for each person who attends the rodeo to cover its cost with sponsorship dollars.)

To improve our ability to promote sponsorship, we need to be able to show the sponsor the value they are going to get for their investment as well as being flexible in offering value rich opportunities. It is fair to expect also that every sponsor wants a bargain. We need to get the details about the people who attend our events and we need to get the attendance sky high.

Patrick  
NSGRA Public Relations and Sponsorship

S

**North  
Star  
Gay  
Rodeo  
Association**



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(763)-78-NSGRA

## NSGRA Calendar

### April –

Membership Meeting – April 17<sup>th</sup> 7pm @ VFW  
Dancing at the VFW – April 17<sup>th</sup> 8pm  
Country Dancing at the Townhouse – April 17<sup>th</sup>  
Sunshine Stampede - Ft. Lauderdale, Fl – April 16-18

### May –

Dancing at the VFW – May 1<sup>st</sup>  
Country Dancing at the Townhouse – April 15<sup>th</sup>  
Great Plains Rodeo – May 28-30

## 2009 Sheriffs and Marshalls

### **Sheriffs (Individual Sponsors)**

Mark L  
Jerome H  
Jack R

Patrick S  
Black Bart  
Mark D

Curt P  
Linda R  
Lawrence E

### **Marshals (Business Sponsors)**

Blazing Saddle

Buddy's Corral

Dance Hall Creek Farm

Want to be listed above? Being an NSGRA Sheriff (Individual) or Marshal (business) is a type of membership where the amount over your normal membership dues is tax deductible. Your contribution helps us meet our goals “assisting our local community and charities through support, education, and fundraisers while providing a friendly environment for all persons to participate in and learn about the western lifestyle and skills.” For those interested, you can upgrade your regular membership to either Sheriff or Marshal with an additional contribution of \$75.00 or more. Lest anyone wonder, your contribution of time is also greatly valued by NSGRA. No matter your financial resources, everyone's participation is needed and appreciated! We also thank those who have donated time and financial support in other ways!

## NSGRA Store

With the rodeo season here, please keep in mind that NSGRA has an online store open 24 hours a day every day--just go to [www.nsgra.org](http://www.nsgra.org) and click “store”. You will find our team shirts, lapel/hat pin, name badges just a few clicks away. You can even join or renew your membership there! If you click the hyperlink “you can get more merchandise here” you will be sent to <http://www.cafepress.com/nsgra> opening the door to t-shirts, tote bags, coffee mugs and more! For those of you without an Internet connection, you can either go to your friendly neighborhood library to get online, or call our hotline at 763-78-NSGRA and we can mail you an order sheet.