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PHILADELPHIA
LOCKSMITHS
ASSOCIATION

www.gpla.org

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The Professional Locksmith

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PRESIDENTIAL VIEWPOINT

As all of you have probably heard by now, Skip Eckerd died of an apparent massive heart attack just two short weeks after being presented with the 2013 Philadelphia Award at our convention in October. Skip truly embodied all of the qualities that the Philadelphia Award selection committee looks for when choosing a recipient. His dedication and devotion to our industry were nothing short of exemplary, and his leadership as the president of SAVTA made that organization what it is today. Skip leaves behind a grieving family, including a wife, son and daughter, and many, many friends. It is difficult to accept that we will no longer see him at future SafeTech conventions or other industry events including GPLA; no longer read his comments on ClearStar; no longer be able to seek his advice on opening a challenging safe or vault. We will certainly miss him.



GPLA will be holding elections during this month's membership meeting. The 11 individuals elected will be tasked with leading GPLA forward over the next 2 years. As of now, there are no contested seats, although any eligible member who is interested in contributing to the growth and progress of GPLA is encouraged to seek nomination from the floor prior to the election. Although there may not be a need to count votes for any office that has only one candidate, you still need to attend this meeting. These individuals will be dedicating a significant amount of their time to serve the GPLA over the next two years and they deserve your support and the knowledge that the membership appreciates their efforts. Please plan to attend and cast your vote, even if it's only to be part of a unanimous vote.

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Minutes of the October 2013 GPLA General Membership Meeting

The October 2013 GPLA General Membership Meeting was held at the GPLA Headquarters October 21, 2013 was called to order by President Cliff Shafer at 7:41 PM

The President welcomed one guest to the membership meeting: Steve Roop of Stanley Security Solutions.

Reading of the previous meeting minutes: A motion was made by Joe Reustle to accept the September 2013 General Membership Meeting Minutes as printed/mailed in the Newsletter, 2nd by Sven Hellwig and was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: President Cliff Shafer stated that the report was presented to the Board of Directors on October 7 and was unanimously approved for the period through September 30, 2013. The President reminded the membership that anyone in good standing may request a copy of the GPLA Profit/Loss statement.

Correspondence In & Out: No report.

President's Report: Cliff Shafer stated that the 64th Annual Convention was a great success thanks to the hard work of the various committees led by Chairman Sven Hellwig. Also the Friday Night Social Event was a great time and an additional thanks to Sven and Karen for another wonderful event. Cliff reviewed the award recipients from the Banquet. It was also announced that Marty Arnold has been appointed as the GPLA Treasurer effective January 2014.

Convention: Chairman Sven Hellwig stated that all the tallies have not been completely calculated but the returns indicate we had a very successful convention financially. The TV raffle raised some money to benefit the association and the prize boxes were a success in support of the Connelly-Singer Scholarship Fund. Sven stated that \$333 was presented to Marty Arnold for the Fund. Unfortunately, there were some disappointing issues surrounding the hotel in which compensation was provided in the form of a refund.

- **Convention Education:** Cliff Shafer stated that all classes at the convention had an average of 10 students per class and that most were taught by GPLA members.
- **Convention Exhibits:** Ed Fitzgerald reported that all the feedback from the exhibitors was very positive.
- **Convention Reservations:** Nelson Dayton said there were no issues at the registration table and thanks to Orvis Kline & Mike Nimmo for communications of print and electronic media of the event.

Nominations: Orvis Kline posted the slate for Row Officers and Board of Director candidates. Mark Bolno made a motion that we accept the listing as presented, 2nd by Sven Hellwig.

Health & Welfare: Sven reported that he is recovering from cancer treatment.

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Happy Holidays



GPLA Annual Holiday Party



December 14th, 2013



Saturday 7:00 pm

Hilton Philadelphia Airport, 4509 Island Ave, Phila. 19153



Reservation Name: _____

Number of Guest(s): _____ *Hold at Door:* _____ *Mail tickets:* _____

Send reservations to:

*Lightning Locksmith
27 Preston Road
Brookhaven, PA 19015*

Make checks payable to GPLA Cost: \$40.00 per person Cash only bar

My memories of Skip Eckert ...

I have been in the safe & vault business at Diebold for 20 years. This brotherhood – albeit a niche in the locksmithing community – is a very tight-knit family. So when one of your friends, mentors or heroes leaves so suddenly, the pain takes time to set in ... and even longer heal. It's been nearly a month since the passing of this true role model and not a day goes by without my mind wondering about him. Two weeks ago, I was drilling a TL-30 chest and ran into trouble. I actually thought to myself, "What would Skip do?" I will admit, there was no divine intervention or magical moment, but it did provide clarity for me to focus and eventually open the container. I thought back to the first time I met someone named "Skip" and how amazing he was to work with – a familiar theme among those that were blessed to have shared a moment with him. I was only 3 years into my Diebold career and had a vault door locked out – a Rotary Wedglock – and needed help. I made the required calls and was told "Skip from Ohio" was on his way out. I actually thought he was an employee of Diebold. Hours later, a man wearing sweatpants and a T-shirt (much like the photo below) walked in and asked, "So what do *you* think it is?"





I was so shocked that this “expert” from Ohio even cared what I had to say. I offered my guess; he tested the theory on the door and exclaimed, “Not bad for a red-head!” We both laughed and began the task of opening the vault. An hour later, the door was open and our friendship had officially begun. Fast forward to October 5, 2013 at the GLA Awards Banquet ... Skip was selected as the recipient of the Philadelphia Award. After the awards ceremony had concluded, I went up to him and offer my personal congratulations. I told him how proud I was to see him receive this award. His reply was typical Skip: “Yeah ... it’s nice. So, how’s your daughter? She’s five, right? Must be just starting school? Enjoy these days.” He went on for 10 minutes telling me the importance of balancing your career and family life. Words to live by.

Skip Eckert was an expert safecracker, a great father and husband, a teacher, a prankster, a leader, a role model, a Super Hero and a humble genius. But to me, he will always be my friend.

RIP Skip. You are sorely missed.

Mike.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the reservation form for our Holiday Party. We have changed the venue to the Hilton Philadelphia Airport Hotel – the same hotel that our convention was held at just last month. It's easy to get to and you can get a room if you want to party a little longer into the night! Why not consider holding your company's holiday party at our party? There will be some great door prizes, raffles, entertainment and plenty of good cheer. This will be my last official public act as your president and I will have some special surprises as well!

Have a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving. Try not to bust your diet on the very first day of the holiday season!

Fraternally,

Clifford L. Shafer, CPS, CML
President



Legislation PA/NJ: No report for NJ. For PA, Sven Hellwig was successful in getting PA State Representative Vanessa Lowery Brown to attend the Banquet dinner and speak with a number of locksmiths about the illegal locksmithing dilemma.

New Business: GPLA FaceBook page is up and running. It is a closed-group so access must be granted by a page administrator.

Good of the Association: Orvis Kline mentioned the JustCars convention for 2014.

50/50: The winner was presented with \$45.

A program was then presented by Scott Roop from Stanley Security Solutions on the current products available and their applications.

At 8:38 pm a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sven Hellwig, 2nd by Dana Barnum and was carried unanimously.

Mike Nimmo, GPLA Recording Secretary

Calendar of Events

November 18	GPLA General Membership Meeting	Philadelphia, PA
December 14	GPLA Holiday Party	Philadelphia, PA
January 20	GPLA General Membership Meeting	Philadelphia, PA

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NEXT MEETING:

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2013

GPLA HEADQUARTERS
8015 CRAIG STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA

SCHEDULED PROGRAM:

**ELECTION OF ROW OFFICERS
& BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**The Greater Philadelphia Locksmiths Association
C/o Michael Nimmo
71 Cutchogue Trail
Medford Lakes, NJ 08055**