

Report for the 46th Annual Symposium Colorado Springs, 2001

Months have gone by after the Symposium, most of the financial issues have been handled or in process. I believe this symposium was a success in most areas.

We had a strong Educational Program.

- a) Regular Member Seminar workshop was a success.
- b) Junior Member workshop was a success.
- c) Many Seminars, new and repeat.
- d) Strong Technical Paper session.
- e) Full Poster display.
- f) Good Workshop program with some different material.

A good showing of vendors and help from them.

- a) Similar number of vendors to Tahoe but lower than Princeton.
- b) Many Vendors held Seminars and generally supported the Society.
- c) Vendor Reception could have had a better draw.
- d) We had an error in Vendor Scheduling that caused some problems, vendors were scheduled to be open when the vendor packet stated they would not. This was an error on my part as I overlooked this conflict when producing the program. However several vendors reported the best booth visits and potential sales that morning.
- f) The Bothing Company left a lot to be desired however they did ok in the end. The company was chosen due to few choices in the area, recommendations and reasonable cost.

Hotel was a good choice for the size of symposium we current hold, they were also accommodating to work with. Rates were very reasonable, and the hotel comp'd us several items along the way to help with the cost.

Location was good and we received interest from several local glass shops that helped to support their employees attending the symposium. However this location did require that a large number of attendees travel, as it was distant from both coast. One issue of a smaller section holding the symposium is that our members were stretched very thin as we didn't have backups for the majority of positions.

Financial, It appears this symposium made money and supplied value to the members attending. Several small items were included back into the Symposium to add value to the attendees and vendors. This included morning coffee & Danishes, morning spouse coffee & Danishes, Vendor setup Lunch, Evening Vendor Reception that included some beverages, and Vendors Breakfast. The T-shirt program also worked well, plus this allowed me to provide a gift to the many presenters we had. We also experimented with the video taping of the workshops; per Mike Morris it worked out very well and should be an option for future symposiums.

Attendance was lower than previous years, but to be expected due to the smaller size of the Society and not holding the symposium near a large population of glassblowers. We were able to draw around 50 people that have never attended a symposium before, and possibly generate some new interest.

Observations and idea's.

These are ideas to help future symposiums and their chairs. I think the Outreach committee should be in contact to assist the distribution of Invitations to attend, not that they should do the work, but rather should be involved to supply names of local shops, suppliers, or other interested parties to the chair. This would also allow a group of people to assist more than one symposium and help to bring some consistency to the process.

I suggest that we include in the survey form one question with a few possible answers in regards to the attending of the symposium. Out of the membership we have, very few attend. We have no idea what would help to increase the number of attendee's. We do a survey of attendees, but have not addressed the non-attendees.

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Here is what I propose for this question to be included in the packet for membership renewal:

Did you attend the Symposium in Colorado Spring 2001?

Yes, any suggestions for improvement or comments.

No, Select all that apply. 1) No interest, 2) The Educational material was not present, 3) Cost of attending, 4) Location, 5) Dates selected. 6) other.

This should help to improve the symposium, and keep us in touch with the members. We will not be able to help in all areas, but if one area stands out more than others do it might warrant some research.

My goal when chairing the symposium was to provide an educational avenue for the society's members. With that said, I am going to address another area where I personally took a great deal of heat from a couple vendors and a few select others. The society has done very well working with its vendors, some vendors have taken on large roles like chairing a Symposium, and others help to promote the society. This should not be taken for granted however there is an interest for the vendors to do so. There are vendors that use the exposure for increased sales, or to contact their customers, some vendors are just willing to help for the sake of it. All these reasons are good for both the vendors and the other society members and we all benefit.

Hear are some of the standard reasons Pat Smythe and myself have heard for not exhibiting at the symposiums,

It has been said that the vendors don't feel they are getting a value or generating business from the symposium, however they do pay a large portion of the cost and incur cost for transportation, lodging and food for several people to attend. I am sympathetic to these concerns however they should be put into a better light. As a business owner myself, the number one rule for any business is to be recognized or remembered, the symposium is a great way for a vendor to reach numerous customers, current and potential all in one setting, plus several vendors take this opportunity to visit customers in the area.

I have heard that the Vendors see the same faces each and every year at the symposium, We were able to draw around 50 new faces just to visit the vendors during this symposium. Being located in Denver I have seen very few vendors visit my place of business other than when there is a ASGS event tied to it, so the symposium is a good opportunity for me to be in contact with the vendors. I also support vendors that support the society; this is a factor for me and many other ASGS members. I could include a list of many vendors that I deal with due directly to the symposiums and fusion ad's, several I would have never know about other than the Society. I have been in contact with several of the vendors that attended the symposium; many reported a direct increase in sales due to the symposium.

I can't say for each vendor if it is worth exhibiting at the symposium, however I can say they will get exposure for doing so, each vendor that registered by time of printing listed in the Invitation to attend, Symposium Program, and Fusion.

I support working with the vendors as they can help the society in many ways. Some areas include; more exposure, financial help, and expertise they can bring like any other society member. However we don't want to overlook that we have a large number of people willing to help out the society for no possible financial gain from doing so. Several people take a financial hit each and every year to help out the society and it's members, I don't want these people to go unnoticed because they have not purchased a booth or contributed money directly like the vendors. To give vendors special rights for helping support the society is not doing the many other volunteers justice and does nothing to help the Society's mission of Education. Again I support the vendors and what they can do for the society and hope that they are getting equal benefits in sales or contacts, but what would the symposium be without the education aspect (a Trade Show!). Vendors help to make the symposium a success, but the education is not dependent on their support. It is evident that a vendor leason is needed, my understanding is that we now have such a person to represent the vendor's interest. I would have looked forward to input from such a person in the planning of the Colorado Springs Symposium; it may have smoothed over a few problems that we had.

I applaud the many members and vendors of the society that were willing to help out and make the symposium a success.

Ron Bihler
2001 Symposium Chair.

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