

# Annual Report to Moon Society Members: The State of our Society

From Society President Peter Kokh  
September 12, 2008

[This report is available as an MS Word Doc, as a PDF file, and as a web page]

In preparation for your input at the Society's first Annual Membership Meeting to be held on the ASI-MOO online chat-room environment, Wednesday, September 17, 2008, we ask you to please read over the following documents:

Society Prepares for 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Membership Meeting

[http://www.moonsociety.org/reports/1st\\_annual\\_meeting.html](http://www.moonsociety.org/reports/1st_annual_meeting.html)

Moon Society Strategic Plan for Growing the Society

[http://www.moonsociety.org/members/reports/TMS\\_StrategicPlan2008.html](http://www.moonsociety.org/members/reports/TMS_StrategicPlan2008.html)

A Project-Organizing Focus & Game Plan for The Moon Society

[http://www.moonsociety.org/members/reports/lunarSPS\\_gameplan.html](http://www.moonsociety.org/members/reports/lunarSPS_gameplan.html)

## **Forward:**

The leaders of the Moon Society have been extraordinarily busy this past year. Following on the successful Video Production ([Moon Colony Videos](#)) effort at the National Space Society's International Space Development Conference 2007 in Dallas, Texas, led by members Chip Proser, James Gholston, and David Dunlop, we plunged into another ambitious project. In the follow-up to the National Space Security Office report on Solar Power Satellites released on October 11, 2007, and the creation of a thirteen member Space Solar Alliance for Future Energy (SSAFE) which includes the Moon Society, seizing on a suggestion by Air Force Lt. Col. Peter Garretson, we launched a project to create a working table-top demonstration model of a Solar Power Satellite/Rectenna system. Our goal was to have the demo ready to make its debut at the 2008 ISDC in Washington, DC. This effort was a smashing success, and we were the only member of the SSAFE alliance that had something concrete to show by way of promoting the Alliance' goals. As the smallest of the membership organizations involved, this earned us the title "The Little Organization that Could."

That is an epithet that we want to keep earning, year after year. But the very fact that we are a small organization presents major hurdles to leap. *On the one hand*, we are blessed to have as much as 15% of our members active either in Society projects or in projects of Society chapters and outposts or in projects of their own that support our goals in space and on the Moon. Compare that with an estimated 5% in the National Space Society. *On the other hand*, there are so many more projects we would like to do, and most of us involved have already taken on too much to the point were many action items and management tasks are suffering from lack of attention.

### **Two things are clear:**

1. **We must grow** our membership substantially
2. **We must do a better job of encouraging** an even higher percentage of our **membership to get personally involved** in major or minor roles to support these efforts.

## **Changes in the Way the Society Manages Itself**

Early this year, it became quite clear that using the Board to make all decisions, was impeding prompt decision making. In an effort led by Chariman of the Board, R. Scotty Gammethaler, revised bylaws were

prepared and passed that set up a Management Council comprised of all Officers and all Directors. This body is now entrusted with day to day business and routine decisions. The advantage is the much greater ease with which a quorum can be put together to make timely. The Board, by itself, will now meet once a quarter rather than twice a month. The revised bylaws also call for an annual membership meeting.

## Membership Growth and Trends in the Past Year

Our growth this year has been most encouraging. Current Membership is up 25% over last year at this time. Yet, despite increasing efforts to increase membership retention, *we continue to lose old members at an unacceptable rate*. If all those who were members a year ago, were still aboard, our total growth rate would have been 58%. So we have two priorities for this coming year in this area:

1. **Continue aggressive recruitment of new members:** We will soon send out a Questionnaire asking members where they first heard of the Moon Society. The results will tell us which ways of spreading our name recognition are most effective. We will also be looking at ways to encourage members to spread the word personally. The effort launched by the Lunar Reclamation Society, publishers of Moon Miners' Manifesto, to encourage members to give gift subscriptions to MMM to libraries in their communities has netted less than a half dozen new subscriptions even at the sub-cost rate of \$10 each. We will be looking at additional incentives. Our Strategic Plan to Grow the Society, referenced above, addresses this issue.

A scan through our members' birth dates shows that over a third were born in the 1970s. The numbers decreasing in decades progressively earlier and progressively later. Young people, with a few invaluable exceptions, are not joining. As a result, our society is "graying." But that is a nation-wide, culture-wide phenomenon. James Allen Rogers who joined us at ISDC 2007 in Dallas at age 24, has become a dynamo, taking over our Public Relations and Outreach Team. We hope that he can find some working ways to attract more young and energetic people.

The percentage of women in the Society is also low, under 5%. This seems surprising given the percentage of articles in Moon Miners' Manifesto on lunar homesteading and psychological health that should be of more interest to women than they are to most men. This suggests that we might begin by hyping these themes in MMM in promotions aimed specifically at women, in order to attract more women. And while we are at it we might hype all the articles on sports and outdoor activities on the Moon in promotions aimed specifically at youth and men. We'll run these suggestions by our new Public Relations Team.

We also need to attract new members with specific talents, and perhaps all our promotions should mention these needs. An old bit of wisdom about cleaning glass windows advises concentrating on the corners, "the middle will take care of itself." Special volunteer needs, and recruitment needs are like window glass corners. The rest will take care of itself.

Directing our recruitment at the kinds of special talents we need most, will also demonstrate our intention to be an organization *that does something*.

2. **Slow the unacceptable loss rate:** Members fail to renew for various reasons, over some of which we have no control: some members join us with wildly unrealistic expectations of what the society could achieve ("why don't we put our money together and set up our own moon base?"), lack of time to keep up or get involved, changing demands in personal and family life, decline in discretionary spending limits, etc.

More disturbing is the number who fail to renew because the Society has failed to live up to published commitments. Promises to deliver on incentives, to troubleshoot downloading or access problems, username and password problems – all of these can irritate members considerably. The causes of these failures seem to fall in two categories: action items assigned to no one ("tragedy of the commons") and action items assigned to individuals already overburdened. We are too small an organization to have even a part time paid staff person. We need more volunteers to make the

organization run as smoothly as members have a right to expect. The alternative is to look for ways to automate delivery on promises and troubleshooting. However, past attempts to automate actions are part of the problem, as we see just below.

A problem, especially irritating to me, has been the wording of the letter sent by email to all members with current email addresses on file, that a new issue of MMM has been published. The letter directs those having downloading problems to contact [webmaster@moonsociety.org](mailto:webmaster@moonsociety.org) but that mail went to a special box that no one visited regularly. The simple solution would be to edit this canned message to advise contacting [president@moonsociety.org](mailto:president@moonsociety.org). However, this form letter was created in 2001 by someone no longer part of the team. We have been unable to find the letter in our complex website management files in order to edit it. *But we have found a workaround.* We have now set that [webmaster@moonsociety.org](mailto:webmaster@moonsociety.org) address to be redirected to the president, who can reset usernames & passwords and pre-test them to guarantee access to the /members/mmm/ and other /members/ directories.

We used to offer an incentive to members to renew: a Moon Society bumper sticker. Not only was it a trivial item with little motivating power, but it was oversized – it could not be sent in a standard business size envelope -- meaning that it cost much more to mail than it was worth. A meeting held last year to search for alternatives that we could afford, yielded a half dozen interesting suggestions but there was no consensus on which of these to order in bulk. We will bring this issue up again, and if the result is a similar lack of consensus, we will resort to an executive decision that fits within the president's discretionary spending line item in our budget.

**Our current strategy is to stress a growing number of projects** in which members can get involved, and *which we hope will give value to their continuing membership.*

## Chapters and Outposts

In the past year, the Society gained two vigorous new chapters, in **Phoenix** and **Houston**. A good portion of our membership growth this year has been concentrated in the Houston and Phoenix metro areas. The Phoenix chapter has been exceptionally busy in the outreach area, finding a good event almost every month. Houston started its own discussion forum open to all Society members and on which other chapters can have their own special place.

In addition, new outposts (one or more members not yet organized as a chapter) formed in Tucson, Longview TX, and Green Bay WI

## Last month, we introduced the concept of Project Teams.

The old ASI system of Teams that became no more than discussion groups, is being replaced with Project Teams organized around specific, well-defined, limited-goal projects aimed at getting something concrete accomplished.

### Go to our new Project Teams Page

<http://www.moonsociety.org/projects/projectteams/>

and look at the list. You will see the names of several volunteers two or three or more times. This is a clear sign that those of us who care about these projects are taking on too great a task load, almost guaranteeing that some projects will not receive due attention because we are stretching too few leaders too thin. We need fresh blood, new volunteers, who as they come up to speed, can take over the lead or assistant lead roles in these various project areas.

*We are convinced that we can do a great job on each of these projects*, and that each of them will make an invaluable contribution to hastening the day when there will be civilians on the Moon, using local resources to help those on Earth manage their increasingly difficult energy and

environmental problems. *But we cannot do a good job on all of these projects at the same time without more people stepping up to assume leadership and support roles.* Without you, and more like you, all the creative project brainstorming in the world will not move us forward.

## The Project Teams List

**The Promotional Video Team** – While we produced 30 some videos using interview material gathered at ISDC 2007, we added several more with interviews at ISDC 2008. This is an ongoing effort and one goal is to produce a DVD length documentary about the efforts and goals of the Society.

**The Lunarpedia Team** – Our goal is a wiki type online encyclopedic resource about all things pertaining to the Moon. We are off to a good start but need many more contributors.

**The University of Luna Project Team** – Dave Dunlop took the original concept developed by Peter Kokh in the early 1990s of an organized online effort to advance immature technologies needed to open the lunar frontier, and has since developed the organizational concepts needed to pursue this effort. Even in the early stages, it may be too large a project for the Society to undertake and we are looking for a major sponsor to take it over.

**The Solar Power Beaming Demonstration Team** – We successfully constructed and exhibited our table top unit at ISDC 2008, and, a month later, at the Space Frontier Foundation Conference, also in the Washington DC area. We are working on an improved version, for which we have two orders. Beyond that, we want to produce an online downloadable “kit” containing parts lists, parts sources, diagrams and blueprints, etc. We also intend to design a companion exhibit that will explain the concepts involved, and answer frequently asked questions about safety, economics, and other issues. Our goal in undertaking this project was to create an exhibit that would be seen by millions of people, showing them that power beaming from space is a realistic and practical ideal. To do this, we need to see that others can copy and exhibit what we have done.



Shown: Paul Blase who assembled the unit at ISDC 2008

**Public Relations and Outreach Team** – Finding ways to grow the public profile and name recognition of the Society, thereby preparing the way for greater membership growth.

**Lunar Materials for SPS Construction Team** – Solar Power Satellites are a natural concern of the Society because we believe that the most economical way to deploy them is by bringing the components and construction materials from the Moon, rather than from Earth. In the process, this ongoing industrial activity will underpin and anchor a Lunar Frontier Civilization.

**The Space & Environment Conversation Team** – Space Enthusiasts and Environmentalists, while their cultures are different, both seek the same goal: the survival of our home world. We accept as a goal of the Society efforts to start a productive conversation between two groups that should be natural allies instead of petty opponents. Under the slogan “**Mother Earth & Father Sky**” we endeavor to launch a series of conferences engaging both constituencies. We expect to partner with the National Space Society in this new venture.

**Experimental Lunar Agriculture Team** – In the early 1990s Dave Dunlop and Peter Kokh working under the banner of the Lunar Reclamation Society, founded LUNAX, the Lunar National Agricultural Experiment Corporation to engage High School science and agricultural-science teachers in ground level student experiments to determine how much light in what kind of lighting patterns would be best, and which minimal, to bring various types of plants safely through the two-week long lunar nightspan so that they would go on to harvest. Now, with a show of new interest, Dave is resurrecting this Project Team under the banner of The Moon Society.

**Lunar Surface Logistics Team** – The Moon Society envisions more than one isolated Moonbase. Indeed, we foresee an ever growing and spreading number of settlements and outposts across the lunar globe, each leveraging advantages of differently endowed locations, to develop a diversified lunar economy. We are interested in road and rail routing, road construction techniques, railroad design and equipment, over-the-road trucking, roadside service areas, cableway systems, and everything else needed to make the lunar frontier functional.

**Lunar Analog Research Team** – In the aftermath of our successful two-week Moonbase simulation at the Mars Desert Research Station in early 2006, we identified distinctive logical differences between Moon and Mars Analog Research programs. We’ve begun to outline the kind of complex we would like to begin deploying, and recently adopted a Lunar Campus approach in which various contractors and institutions would all have research facilities side by side with our own. Such a concept should be much easier to finance. We need new, fresh volunteers to pursue these concepts.

These Project Teams are all in an early phase. We’ve identified our goals. We need to build our teams, and develop the web spaces that will document the progress of each.

We have begun by listing the opportunity to join one or more of these teams as a membership benefit, signaling how much we need and rely on volunteers to help advance all these projects towards realization.

Success in any of these Projects will advance the goal of the Society: civilian settlement of the lunar frontier. Success of all of them would earn us a special place in the prehistory of the Lunar Frontier. *Become a Lunar Pioneer. Join one of these teams!*

## **Conferences & Exhibits:**

Given the Mutual Affiliation Agreement signed by the Moon Society and the National Space Society at ISDC 2005, our conference efforts will continue to be in the form of a vigorous presence at NSS’ annual International Space Development Conferences, usually held over the Memorial Day Weekend

As the ISDC travels around the country (once even to Canada), this gives people in various areas the opportunity to attend without having to travel too far. Beginning with Artemis Society involvement, ISDCs have been in Orlando 1997, Milwaukee 1998, Houston 1999, Tucson 2000, Albuquerque 2001, Denver 2002, San Jose 2003, Oklahoma City 2004, Washington DC 2005, Los Angeles 2006, Dallas 2007, and Washington DC 2008. The ISDC will be in Orlando in 2009, followed by Chicago in 2010.

The “Big Tent” ISDC provides a guaranteed attendance in the 500-1000 range along with the major presence of many other co-sponsoring space organizations with which we can explore various kinds of collaboration. The Moon Society has organized the Moon Track at the ISDCs in 2007 and 2008 and will do so in 2009 as well. In the future, we may host targeted workshops and special seminars at some ISDCs.

It makes no sense, given the advantage of sizeable and diverse attendance to go off on our own, though we may do so to pursue specific projects. For example we are very interested in co-hosting a Space & Environment conference as mentioned above.

Meanwhile, a month ago, we gained a used **Nimlok™ Display System** from an anonymous donor (unknown even to myself) at no cost to us other than a small bottle of dry cleaning fluid. It had been dropped off at my back yard gate. The system has two tiers of 4 panels each. Each panel is covered with a light blue-gray velvet or velour on both sides, and the panels measure 22” wide by 41” high. That’s 16 panel sides in all for a total of 100 square feet of display space. They came in two plastic shipping containers. Of course, it will cost us to ship them to conferences. But not only were they were (a comparable unit could cost hundreds of dollars, possibly even a thousand, as well as looking a lot more professional than our home made display unit that has been the Moon Society exhibit at the last several conferences. A floor exhibit would use both tiers, a table-top display just one. That makes it quite versatile. For a Society trying to do great things on a shoestring budget, this was a much appreciated and unexpected gift!

## **Finances and Funding**

Being a small membership organization with no significant sources of income beyond member dues, we are constrained in what we undertake by cost considerations. Our two-week Moonbase exercise in Utah in 2006 cost \$7,000 for the rent of the facility from the Mars Society. Both the Lunar Reclamation Society and the National Space Society contributed 14% each. Individual donors together contributed a similar amount. The Moon Society picked up the rest, about 58%. Needed equipment was funded by another donor. Expenditures of this level meant that this would be a one-time effort, but we learned enough from the exercise to make it worthwhile.

We spent over \$5,000 on the Moon Colony Video production effort, and nearly \$1,000 on our solar power beaming demonstration unit. Members need to know that we have been spending these past three years well in excess of our average income minus expenses (the newsletter, for example.)

It is obvious that if we are going to pursue the ambitious projects above that even funds from increasing membership are going to be inadequate. We need to attract corporate and other sponsors as do other organizations. At present, we have no Society leader with the needed experience to undertake serious fundraising. We do have one person who can write grant proposals, but he is already substantially overcommitted.

Fundraising, Grant Proposal Writing, Project Management, Public Relations, Recruitment – all of these activities need qualified and energetic volunteers if the Society is going to realize these ambitious goals. We also need artists and illustrators, writers and model makers.

We must also make occasional project-linked appeals to our own members. This is how the much larger (100:1) Planetary Society continues to fund one exciting and ambitious new project after the other – not by appeals for “general funds” but by appeals to fund “specific projects.” This way, members get to vote with their wallets on which projects they want most to promote.

On the contrary, almost no one – certainly far fewer members – gets out the checkbook in response to general funding appeals. We want to know how it will be used! Great projects fund themselves!

## Moon Miners' Manifesto

Now in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year of continuous production, MMM with its special Moon Society Journal centerfold section, is the most visible membership benefit. That it also serves the members of several NSS local chapters is an asset for us, exposing others to Moon Society goals and projects.

Anything that promotes MMM circulation, even among those who are not Society members, helps grow Society name and project recognition and respect. The fate of MMM and of the Moon Society are closely linked, even though each has its own name and brand recognition.

Members are encouraged to plug MMM, not only as a Moon Society membership benefit, but by itself, because that helps as well. If you can't afford a gift Moon Society membership, consider an MMM subscription direct from the publisher. The recipient of your gift will become familiar with the Moon Society and may opt for full Society membership down the line.

MMM Circulation is growing, and that is good news. Not all members have opted for the hardcopy edition, and in recent years, total hardcopy numbers have hovered just above the minimum needed for affordable bulk mail domestic distribution. With recent growth as well as more new members checking the hardcopy option, our total print numbers are looking much more sound.

The Moon Society and the Lunar Reclamation Society are discussing a Deed by which should the latter disband, the copyrights and ownership of MMM would pass to the former. As the MMM editor and principal contributor nears 71, *it becomes increasingly important to take on assistant editors and regular feature contributors*, if MMM is to survive after the editor passes or becomes incapacitated. If you have an interest in getting involved, please let us know at [kokhmmm@aol.com](mailto:kokhmmm@aol.com)

## Monthly Reports – Frontlines - <http://www.moonsociety.org/reports/frontlines/>

A few months ago, in order to keep members informed of our progress at more frequent intervals, we have been putting out a monthly edition of Frontlines. You will find a prominent bold yellow type (against blue background) link to the current issue at the bottom of our front page top center Moon Society News section.

***Your input is vital and much desired.*** If we have not touched on special issues and concerns of yours in this first annual report, please do not hesitate to bring those issues and concerns to our attention. Many of the failures in past performance can be traced to lack of member input. Your constructive criticism is absolutely vital if we are going to grow, become increasingly effective, and go on to ever higher goals. Silence challenges us to become mind-readers. And that is a challenge not likely to be met. Your role in our Society is vital. ***Giving input is a valued way to volunteer!***

***You can begin giving input at our First Annual Membership Meeting on Wednesday Evening, September 17<sup>th</sup>.***

The transcript of this meeting will be published. If you cannot attend the online meeting, you can read this transcript as well as the above and linked reports and still take part after the fact by emailing us comments on issues we have touched upon as well as on issues we have not discussed.

***We work for you.*** We value your input. It is only by addressing your concerns and issues that we can succeed in this Society. So during the conference, after the conference, or at any time you are so moved, write us: [kokhmmm@aol.com](mailto:kokhmmm@aol.com) or [president@moonsociety.org](mailto:president@moonsociety.org) Both email addresses work equally well and end up in the same personal mailbox.

Thanks! Together, we can advance the day when a lunar frontier civilization will be real and growing vigorously!

*Peter Kokh*  
*President, the Moon Society*  
*September 12, 2008*