

## **Bexar Grotto Meeting**

Date: 2/13/17

Attendees: 43

Arron Wertheim called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

### **Visitors**

No visitors announced themselves.

### **Treasury report provided by Pam Campbell:**

All checks have been cashed. The current balance is \$14,007.58.

### **Organization Reports**

**TSS** - David McKenzie, author of the Walls cave mapping program, died of cancer in December. The TSS is doing some reorganization to handle this. We're looking for programmers to help us with what Dave had done. The Long and Deep Cave List was receiving data from Dave's personal computer and the list disappeared. We have to move data and do some reorganization. There was a recent TSS Board Meeting. Books are for sale. Rob was at Hill Country State Natural Area and got the contract signed. Rob will be announcing project dates in the near future. (Marvin)

**TSA** - Spring Convention is Saturday April 29<sup>th</sup>. We need volunteers. TSS is running workshops. This will be more of a "field convention" with survey classes and possibly a mock rescue. It will be at Hill Country State Natural Area in Bandera. (Rob)

**TCMA** - We're organizing for spring convention, discussing the auction and also breakfast. We elected officers in January. (Gregg)

**NSS** - The convention is June 19-23 in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. If you want a hotel you should reserve a room now. The Board of Governors meeting is March 25<sup>th</sup> in Park City, KY. (Geary)

**Bracken** - A work trip is scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup> for the vertical course. We need to clean up the top of the cliff face and clear out the landing spots. We'll meet at the cave parking lot at 9am. It's not a Meetup event; it's only for cavers. We will have some people on vertical to clean the rock face. There are 80 to 100 foot drops along the cliff face. One of the drops leads into the mouth of a shelter cave on the cliff face.

### **Old Business**

- Trailer - Official grotto trailer - it has been tossed around to buy one. Rob Bissett will be in charge of buying it. He would like to get options and then take it to committee to make the final decision. **On hold for now.**

## **New Business**

Leia has published the latest edition of the "Bexar Facts" newsletter. There will be a spotlight of individual cavers. If you would like to be in the spotlight, email Leia and tell her why you want to be in the member spotlight and what makes you a special caver.

## **Announcements:**

- Budget committee will have another meeting next Wednesday.
- Casey from SAFD brought two guys from NCRC training. This weekend TCMA is going to allow them to do a training exercise in Robber Baron. We would like 6 to 9 people there to represent the grotto. They have a special operations chief as well. He will be there on Sunday.

## **Upcoming Trips:**

February 25<sup>th</sup>: Snookie's Cave at Guadalupe River Ranch Resort located at 7200 Spring Branch Road. There will be an upper limit of 20 people allowed on the trip. We are meeting at 9:30am. The owner proposed that grotto members should take the public into cave for private tours. However, the grotto can't participate in for-profit trips. If somebody would like to do this on an individual basis they may feel free to get in touch with the owner. Snookie's Cave has a large entrance room, some "twisty-crawly stuff", a room full of mammoth bones and other animal bones, soda straws, and a couple of highly decorated areas. There is a little bit of water. The trip lasts a few hours.

March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>: Government Canyon. Contact Marvin.

March 11<sup>th</sup>: Colorado Bend contact one of the trip leaders Chris Pena and Will Quast before going in order to obtain permission.

March 18<sup>th</sup>: Bracken work day. Contact Fran or Bennett.

March 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>: Deep Survey trip. The trip is full but you can contact Joe Mitchell to get on the waiting list.

April 1<sup>st</sup>: Ezell's Cave

April 22<sup>nd</sup>: San Antonio will have a March for Science. It's also Earth Day.

April 29<sup>th</sup>: TSA Spring Convention

May 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup>: Bamberger Ranch Cookout will be held on Sunday, but volunteers are needed for both days to prepare lunch for 350+ people.

June 12<sup>th</sup>: Grotto meeting at Bracken. There will be a potluck and bat flight viewing. Make sure to bring a lid for your food and an ice chest for perishable items. There is no electricity and no running water.

Things to look out for: Bexar Grotto has been invited back to Cave Without a Name and the trip should be sometime in August. We're also working on setting up a spring trip sometime in the next few months. We have to do that soon because the bats come back in the first week of March. Mike Burrell is the owner and wants to go on the trip.

### **Trip Reports**

Marvin, Joe Schaertl and Mike Gibbons went to Lilyhammer to extend the lower limits of the cave. They started at edge of a blind pit. There are walls around edge of pit and on the opposite side the wall of the pit shows that there is more space beyond. About 30 feet away there are stalactites. Their goal was to install traverse line. Marvin set three bolts with difficulty because everything is muddy. At the third bolt he was on the separator between two pits. The air seemed kind of stale at the time. On their first Lilyhammer trip the air was bad. On the second time the air was okay. On this recent trip, the lighter didn't light. Their first look on the other side of the pit revealed that the floor was 15 feet below. There is one other lead at the bottom of the pit that is clean wash and is narrow and going down. Marvin's plan was to lower rope and rappel down.

Leia, Joe and Greg surveyed a cave at Government Canyon. They had to belly crawl  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the cave. There were substantial amounts of animal droppings. Joe Mitchell said that using the Cave-a-Tron in this cave made the survey harder. They surveyed 39 meters in one day.

Bennett and Pam went to a cave in Kerr County with lots of bats. They also found lots of bat carnage from raccoons. They went to the LaChance property again and dug about four feet. They found another sink hole.

### **Program Announcement**

Dr. Rene DeHon will talk about plans to develop shelters for astronauts on Mars in order to protect them from radiation.