

Bexar Grotto Meeting

Date: 2/27/17

Attendees: 56

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

Visitors

Ruby: senior geology major from UTSA through Geary

John: sophomore geology major from UTSA

Erica: heard about us through Colorado Bend State Park

Treasury report provided by Pam Campbell:

Balance: \$14,002.74

Taxes were filed last week.

Organization Reports

TSS – Joe: Reminder, if you come across caves and you collect any data or survey info please submit info digitally online. If you have questions or want to look for caves, talk to George or Marvin. These people are county preserve managers, so speak to them if you would like to find out where the next cave lead is.

TSA – Amy: Convention on April 28-30th at Hill Country State Natural Area. There will be in-field workshops, survey workshops, catered dinner, and an auction in the evening that will benefit TCMA. Stay tuned for more volunteer opportunities (food servers, registration). See Amy for more info. Fees are: \$20 in advance, \$50 (family of 4+), \$25 on site. There is no potable water, but electricity on site. Children under 12 are free.

TCMA - There will be an auction at Spring Convention so start looking for quality items that can be auctioned. Speak to Pam if you would like to donate. TCMA will have a table for T-shirts and will probably have breakfast.

Linda: Reed's Cave will be subdivided into little plots. We should also check on River Styx.

Gregg: We need an acquisitions chair.

Linda: Peter is interested. Linda would be glad to stay on committee and help. We also need a new nominations chair.

Gregg: There are still a few open positions. If you're interested in volunteering, see Gregg.

Don: May 13th will be party and cabin-painting party at D&P.

NSS – no news

Bracken – Bats have begun migrating back into the city. We'll be starting tours in May. We're cutting cedar, fixing trails, chasing off pigs. Work day will be March 18th to work on the rappelling site

Old Business

- Trailer – Rob says we're not going to buy the trailer. He thinks it would be best to rent a trailer as needed. Trailer expense will be taken out of budget and line items will be added.
- Budget Committee has transformed into the Giving Policy Committee. They met last week to talk about goals and how we meet them regarding requests for funds. We have some draft texts. Committee will continue working through it.

New Business

- National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) Annual Reports available. NCKRI is a congressionally created institute established to study, promote, facilitate, and conduct caving/karst research, public education, and other activities. They are located in Carlsbad and are a non-profit with state/federal funding. Annual report shows what they were doing last year. Year begins July 1st. Administered by NM Institute of Technology. NCKRI has a \$6 M headquarters.

Announcements:

-Robber Baron T Shirts are available

-Meeting 7 o'clock Thursday (3/2/17) is Hydrogeo meeting.

-Joe needs one more volunteer to help lead trip Saturday (3/4/17)

Linda: Scholarships for NCRC national

Upcoming Trips:

March 2nd: Texas Hydrogeo Committee Meeting; talk to Geary

March 4th and 5th: Government Canyon. Contact Marvin. Project ongoing since 1994, one weekend a month. Three goals: looking for karst features like sinkholes and caves. We dig sinkholes to see if they open into caves. We explore and survey the caves, draw maps, take pictures, collect bugs, make observations, write reports for the parks, and provide them a good service while we're having fun. If you don't want to go into a cave you can look for caves or dig in sinkholes. The longest and deepest cave is still to be found out there.

March 7th-9th : Robber Baron high school trip; work the kids in the morning, cavers show up at noon, kids have to leave by 3pm. Bring your own gear. HS has their own gear. See Zach Schrudowitz

March 11th and 12th: Colorado Bend contact one of the trip leaders Chris Pena and Will Quast before going in order to obtain permission.

March 18th: Bracken work day. Contact Fran or Bennett.

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

April 1st: Ezell's Cave work day. Southern part of San Marcos, little preserve, goes all the way to the aquifer. Has a new gate and we hope bats may re-inhabit which will encourage salamander population to re-emerge. Cut brush, haul rocks, trash, cut cactus, work on trails. No work in cave at this time. Contact Michael Cicherski. Notifying early means you get part of the lunch. Also Government Canyon day.

April 22nd and 23rd: San Antonio and Austin will have a March for Science weekend. It's also Earth Day.

April 28, 29, 30th : TSA Spring Convention at Hill Country State Natural Area

May 6th -7th: Bamberger Ranch Cookout will be held on Sunday, but volunteers are needed for both days to prepare lunch for 350+ people. See Fran and Rob for more details. Annual fundraiser. Prep and setup Saturday, meeting 7am Sunday to start cooking and feed from 11-1pm. They make a sizeable donation to grotto (\$1000). Be on lookout for email. They invite us back for recreation trip. They have a 15 acre spring fed lake and we have a potluck dinner on July 4th. They also have a silent auction and native plants on sale from ranch.

May 13th: Deep and Punkin Work Day (last big work weekend).

June 12th: 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 scheduled soon.

June 19th: NSS Convention in Rio Rancho, New Mexico

September 16-17th: Hydrogeo Workshop

October 12-15th: Texas Caver's Reunion. We need people to help cook. Stefan has given up. If we don't get volunteers then we might have to do catering or fend for ourselves. Theme: Vikings.

Trip Reports

Greg M.: We had a trip to Snookie's Cave. Guy Anderson graciously and eagerly hosted grotto. We had 14 people. It was a nice cave with a variety of rooms and crawlways. The cave is taking a lot of mud. The main passage was blocked and had to be dug open. Kirk said there used to be a lot of trash. This time there wasn't much.

Geary: We had a trip to Deep and Punkin. The facilities and showers were very nice. We took some of the students from UTSA. Ruby said it was hot and humid. They made it to the helictite room and saw single wings of butterfly. John said that

beyond the helictite room there was a lower area and they got lost. They had to communicate their way back to helictite room. Gregg W. said that 3 guys from Gear Patrol Magazine were taking pictures of merchandise in the cave and doing an article on caving and cavers. They interviewed Gregg and Geary.

Lindsey: The firefighter mock rescue was a great success. The firefighters found the chapel room on their own using their map. They set up stations of communication and were very efficient and organized.

Leia: The firefighters rescued Leia but she thinks she hurt her neck during the rescue. Afterwards, Leia took the firefighters on a wild cave tour

Rob: We helped BCI and Texas Parks and Wildlife to do whitenose syndrome research in North Texas. It will cross the border from OK or Arkansas. They surveyed caves as close as possible to the OK border, spending most time on north fork of Red River and the Peace River. All of these caves are gypsum caves, fragile, and close to surface. Very fragile and dynamic and change yearly. Lots of loose and dangerous breakdown. Fran needed cavers. Rick and Rob, Linda, and Joel went to particular cave, quickly entered and found bats if there (hibernating), located them so Linda and Katie could come count bats by species and take swab samples of bats and the substrate (walls, floor), get sent to lab to look for whitenose. Caves they did: 14 in 6 days: Walkup Cave, Back Door Cave, Small Mouth, Middle Mouth, Big Mouth, walkup, Boulder (ties into walkup cave, but no time to survey), Pantherin Tunnel (Fran broke ankle), Campsy and Cedar caves, Summerfield Cave, Pot Hooks (2000m water cave, fairly decent bat population) Jimmy's Sink, and Joel's Cave.

Program Announcement

Meeting Adjourned at 7:53pm