

## **Bexar Grotto Meeting**

Date: 5/22/17

Attendees: 39

Arron Wertheim called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

### **Visitors**

John Cooper just finished his Master's degree at UTSA. He's interested in Robber Baron.

Rob is visiting from UTSA.

Amber is a speech-language pathologist who is interested in caving.

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

\$14,581.35

### **Organization Reports**

**TSS** - No news.

**TSA** - No news.

**TCMA** - We had a strategic planning meeting last weekend at Dolan Falls Nature Preserve. We tried to define a clear path and a structural framework for the organization, as well as short and long term goals. It was a productive meeting and we had many good ideas. We're all going to be better for it. Lindsey Adamoski is the new fundraising chair. There will be a possible repair trip at Dolan Falls on the Devil's River. It will probably limited to 20 people.

**NSS** - Geary reported that convention is coming up. Things are going well for the convention. Fundraising is going on if anyone wants to donate.

**Bracken** - The bats are back. Rob explained White Nose Syndrome to the newcomers and how the bats have made it to north Texas.

### **Old Business**

Jill said a homeless man has been seen in the area around Robber Baron. The respectful man has salt and pepper hair. She does not know what the troublesome homeless man looks like.

### **New Business**

Geary reported that the grotto should help the fire department purchase some field phones, which are for sale on eBay. There is no good communication alternative right now. There are caves in the area in which they could be warranted. Communication was an issue at the cave rescue training. Bill Steele said that they used field phones in caves in Huautla, Mexico. Bill added that it was \$620 for 4 phones and the wire was separate (1000 feet of spool). You can splice into the line anywhere because you're grounded to the bedrock. They used them up to 4 feet into the cave. Geary said it's something to consider. Kirk mentioned Honey Creek as a cave that would need a phone. There are projects that could genuinely benefit from that as a purchase that could be loaned to people. They can be placed in

waterproof cases and the wires are waterproof. Alan asked if there is an ultra-low frequency radio set and Kirk said that there are some but they're not reliable and they're very expensive. Nothing else really works. Gregg asked for the general cost for a field phone system and Geary said it would be \$1000. Linda said that there are projects in Texas for which that would make sense. Bill Steele spent less than \$1000. Bill mentioned that being on a cave rescue without communication is very difficult. Geary mentioned that you can also follow the wire. Geary said that if we want to purchase one we could have a lockbox placed outside to use the phones as a shared resource. Gregg said that he thinks it's a good idea and that the fire department would want to have it as their priority. Arron mentioned that the fire department would need four of them for their four rescue units. Steve said that firefighters would be calling cavers if they needed to rescue someone. Alan asked about the new facility. Rob said we should keep talking about it.

Lindsey reported that she will be sending cards to the fire department about the firefighter who was killed recently.

### **Announcements:**

Greg Mosier told the waitress at Chester's that we would not be at Chester's on June 12<sup>th</sup> because we'd be at Bracken.

Geary is calling for volunteers for the Hydrogeo Workshop. There are about 40 modules. Activity will start to pick up over the summer.

Bennett reported that he will be sending out an email for his survey/sketch trip at Obvious Cave in Rolling Oaks. He also plans on doing the vertical workshop sometime in June.

### **Upcoming Trips:**

May 24<sup>th</sup>: Scout trip Wednesday at Robber Baron. They'll open the cave at 6:15 and close it around 8:30 or 9pm.

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 scheduled soon. It might be in August.

June 19<sup>th</sup>: NSS Convention in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Consider getting a hotel because camping in New Mexico in June in a parking lot is not comfortable. Go to the website. Registration is open.

September 15-17<sup>th</sup>: Hydrogeo Workshop at Cave Without a Name.

September 23-30<sup>th</sup>: International Association of Hydrogeologists in Croatia

October 12-15<sup>th</sup>: Texas Caver's Reunion at Paradise Canyon. 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.

November 11<sup>th</sup>: Robber Baron Open House; we will need lots of help.

### **Trip Reports**

Linda and Allan went to the E.B. Fawcett cave where Mr. Fawcett lived in 1884. He signed his name on the wall and built stone corrals for the horses up a little higher. It is still there.

Marvin had his last Government Canyon trip for the season until October. Two people came out and they were only to stay half a day. They hiked to Indian Cave, which is secluded in the central/west part of the park. They installed a benchmark there. They've also been collecting algae samples from cave entrances for a woman who is doing a project on cave diatoms. Marvin stopped at Dancing Fern, Dancing Rattler, and Hackberry Sink. Peter Sprouse told him that the javelinas have taken over Bone Pile, Hackberry Sink, and Lithic Ridge. Lithic Ridge was found in '93 when the project started. Marvin has seen signs of animals entering the cave, but has not seen a lot of evidence of javelinas.

Mike, Jill, Geary and two other people went into a water cave to do some dye tracing. They haven't gotten any results back but he does not think they had enough dye. Geary and Mike didn't go back very far. They went back far enough to get to flowing water. There is a fair amount of water in there.

Bennett and Bill went on a survey trip to Honey Creek. They also took pictures of Goss Hall, which is a huge room. It's between the shaft and the natural entrance.

### **Program Announcement**

Bill Steele is going to give a presentation on the best cave trip of the year: Proyecto Espeleológico Sistema Huautla (PESH).

**The Meeting Concluded at 7:46pm.**