

Bexar Grotto Meeting

Date: 10/23/17

Attendees: 35

Arron called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Visitors

Daniel Ramirez was formerly with DFW grotto.

Treasury report

We have \$13,691.63 not including Hydrogeo revenue. She will have that information at the next meeting.

Organization Reports

TSS – Things are moving forward on the joint headquarters facility. We'll have announcements on that soon. There are TSS books here as well.

TSA – There were nominations for officers. Everybody is running unopposed. Elections close on Friday. Nominations closed right before TCR. If you haven't received a ballot and you are a TSA member, notify Linda Palit. TCR was a success. The owners were happy. This was Don's last year as the organizer. We are looking for someone to take over the role of TCR chief.

TCMA – At the members' meeting there was general discussion about the strategic planning meeting and the future of the organization. We're trying to make TCMA a stronger organization that can participate in the larger purchases of bigger cave properties. We introduced nominees for the upcoming board elections. Look for the biographies and photos of the nominees on the tcmacaves.org website. All members will receive an email with a link to an electronic ballot.

NSS – We have the monthly NSS issue. There was a Board of Governors meeting in Denver last weekend. Geary is trying to recruit people to run a Board of Governors (BOG) meeting.

Bracken – There was a write-up today in the paper about Bracken. It was related to the 300th anniversary of San Antonio.

Old Business

NCRC will be held January 20-27th. Small party rescue is already full. If anybody would like to do level 1 or 2, it is a full week commitment. Small party is the 20th through the 23rd. You must do the vertical competence checklist. Get Linda's email after the meeting if you would like more information. The grotto is discussing a sponsorship. Linda will work on the application process.

There have not been any sightings of any homeless people loitering at Robber Baron. Cheryl cleaned out a lot of brush in the area where the homeless man had been sleeping so it's more difficult for him to sleep there unnoticed.

Linda has been over the by-laws a few times. They look good. We can do what we're doing without changing them. She put out a notice on the Bexar Grotto list in case anybody wants to look over them. She will send them out again this week. We have enough money to have a budget. Linda sees no necessity for altering the by-laws at this point unless somebody has something they would like to change. If you're not on the Bexar Grotto mailing list then you need to pay your dues or get in touch with Linda.

Bennett uploaded the latest copy of the by-laws to the Google drive a long time ago along with the members list. NSS uploaded a copy as well.

New Business

The CM tank haul is requesting money for port-a-potties, food, stickers, and drinks for the tank haul. Rob made a motion to donate \$425 for the CM Tank Haul. Linda seconded the motion. This was already a budgeted item. Nobody was opposed to the motion and it passed to donate the money.

Announcements:

Casey Culpepper: Casey heard that everybody had a great time at Robber Baron cave rescue training. The department would like to do this again in January. Casey has emailed Geary to help coordinate this. If you wish to participate, please let Geary or Casey know. Also, the NCRC is very beneficial to any and all cavers. If you do go to the class and get some certification, let Casey know so that they can update the rescue roster so that they can call you if there is a rescue. You meet a lot of great people and learn great skills. Let Casey know if you have questions.

Sue has T-shirts.

Joe has the latest copies of the TCMA passages.

Leia knows someone who would like to organize a trip for some teachers and scientists. She said she would get back to them. Joe retorted that we're pretty maxed out with trips this year.

Lindsey has leftover Whole Earth Provision Company gift certificates from the TCMA fundraiser.

Joe Mitchell reported that 120 advance sign up spots were full overnight. We're going to need every speck of gear in central Texas at the cave. In the past we've had 40 sets of gear and that is enough to cram 450 people through. The gear has been the limiting factor. Rob has 20 sets of gear he can add. Evelyn has 9 sets of gear. Rob said he would ask Ms. Kosmo from Lee High School for gear. We only need gloves and knee pads for the off-trail tour. We will probably want to start early because there may be lines forming by 8 or 8:30. Volunteers should show up between 7 and 7:30am. If you want to be a part of this, talk to Evelyn. There is still a party at Rob's house afterwards.

MJ met some cavers from England. If anyone is interested in caving in England we have a contact.

Rob reported that if anybody is a qualified Deep guide, we could use another qualified trip leader to help with the St. Steven's School. See Rob.

Upcoming Trips:

October 28th: Robber Baron NASA LCATS trip. Joe still needs four additional people. It starts at 9am. Forty-five people will be there.

November 3-5th: Deep and Punkin trip. The trip is currently closed.

November 4th and 5th: Government Canyon karst project with Marvin; Aggie Speleological Society will be coming on this trip and camping. There is a bathroom and shower.

November 5th: Prep for open house at Robber Baron by putting up signs in the cave and painting the bridge; 10am.

November 11th: Robber Baron Open House

November 18th: Rob is starting the Hill Country State Natural Area project. No camping is available this weekend. On this day the plan is to verify cave locations via GPS coordinates. We're still working out the process for the camping situation. We haven't established what we're going to do. Please notify Rob in advance if you are coming. Do not just show up to the trip. Email Rob Bissett. People will be expected around 9am.

November 23rd-26th: Ron Rutherford is leading a trip to Musquiz. Contact him if you are interested. Musquiz is south of Del Rio by 150 miles approximately. It is a lot of rough road. This is a "pit-bopping" trip. You must be vertically competent and be able to set re-belays. You should be able to survey and rig vertical caves. Rob is unsure as to whether he is still open to more people.

November 23rd through 26th: Peter Sprouse is going to Quintana Roo in southern Mexico, which are all horizontal.

December 2nd and 3rd: Government Canyon SNA trip. Contact Marvin Miller or show up at the volunteers' center at 9am.

December 16th: Hill Country SNA

January 20th: Hill Country SNA

January 20th through 27th: NCRC Cave Rescue Training

February 17th: Hill Country SNA

April 21st: Hill Country SNA

Trip Reports

Ben Hutchins went to Ward and Wheeler counties near Oklahoma. There are nice gypsum caves there. They did biologic inventories there. There are big properties, friendly landowners, and nice caves. It's a caving region in Texas that receives little attention. There are some that have not been surveyed. He is interested in organizing a 3 to 4 day survey trip next spring. They went to Panther Cave, Walk-Up Cave, Back Door Cave, and Boulder Cave (a downstream extension of Walk-Up). Missy is working up there and has a dozen other caves there.

Arron went to Finger Ranch into an 80 foot deep cave. It ends in a room with nice decorations. They found a burrow with cave crickets and a giant centipede. It might be worth further exploration.

Rob and Catherine took a trip to Deep and Punkin with some Boy Scouts. Rob had them go to Robber Baron first. Then, they self-selected whether or not they wanted to do something more challenging. They walked them through the cave and some different techniques. Rob and Catherine did a side trip to Pratt sink to see what the bat colony was doing and if there had been any changes. Missy Meierhofer contacted the TSS to see if Rob would put a data logger into the cave. The cave is inhabited by a moderately large population of free-tailed, tri-colored, and velifer bats. The owner gave them permission to do research in the cave. The owner's barn was also inhabited by bats. The floor was a foot deep with guano. There was a 15 foot wall covered with bats on both ends. Pratt's sink is about 100m across by 50m. The access is along the wall of the pre-existing cave. You drop through a large pile of junk. There is water flowing in the cave. Rob found evidence of dye-tracing.

There were a few Robber Baron trips over the weekend. Houston Grotto went over the weekend. Sunday they took some geosciences students from Trinity University.

Program Announcement

We have a presentation on Guatemala. Ben Hutchins is doing the presentation.

Arron adjourned the meeting at 7:58pm.