

# **Bexar Grotto**

## Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 12, March 12, 2018

### **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Bexar Grotto was called to order at 7:00 p.m., on Monday, March 12, at Chester's Hamburgers.

### **Present**

30 + people

### **New Members/Visitors**

3 new members/visitors

Cody from Japan (Air Force) ; other person's name not understood from Japan; Mrs. Kasmos from Lee High School; Grace; Dennis Kasmos, Jesse Chadwick

### **Treasury Report**

Final number: \$15,130.00

**Bexar Grotto Caving Membership: \$5.00/year per person; Family--\$7.00/year**

### **\*\*Bexar Grotto and Robber Baron Cave Rescue Incident story from Mike Harris,**

Mike Harris talked about the incident that happened at Robber Baron Cave this past Thursday, March 8, 2018. Lee High School students in Mrs. Kasmos's science class were doing a service project at Robber Baron Cave for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Several Bexar Grotto/TCMA members took the kids in the cave after a hard mid-morning work, and a young woman (a student) was in the passage in the "Hole in the Floor" passage, and she became stuck. The SA Fire Department, along with TCMA, worked very hard to help the student become free and safe. No injuries were reported. We are all thankful she is ok and alive and had a great time, still! We are thankful for the partnership between Bexar Grotto and SA Fire Department! Thank you SA Fire Department for your help and training! Thank you to TCMA and Bexar Grotto for support and help. Please contact Mike Harris, Joe Mitchell, or Joe Ranzau for more information on the incident at Robber Baron Cave, or please send an email to: [info@tcmacaves.org](mailto:info@tcmacaves.org), thank you!

**Zach S. Talks about Robber Baron Cave Incident and Lee High School:** What started as a one-time project became a three year project, for these students at Lee High School. Zach was really gracious in talking about the POSITIVES of the incident that happened that night, showing that there was a lot of team work, support, community service, education, and cave tours for these students. He thanks the SA Fire Department, the Students, the volunteers, and all people who contributed and supported this project. Thank you, Zach, for organizing this event for the students! We love that you love caves.

Mrs. Kamos talks about her experience: “I have to say for the last five years its been great. The best part about this is the parents—the parents emailed me Thursday night and said it was the BEST trip the kids had been on, they were glad their children were able to go, former students came on Friday and brought me flowers. I benefited from all of this, the students and parents benefited from this, thank you.” (Mrs. Kamos is retiring from many great years of teaching, and so this is the end of the Lee High School service project for Robber Baron, as we know of, until another teacher or opportunity comes up). Thank you, Mrs. Kamos.

### **Organization Reports**

TSS: [TSS has a Board Meeting on April 21, location???, see Joe Mitchell for more info.](#) [There is a new publication, “Hypo-gene Karts of Texas”](#). From last meeting notes: Texas Speleology Center (property in South West Austin we recently purchased for the headquarters), they had a meeting a couple of weekends ago, but moving forward there are repairs needed to be made on the house, moving things from the TSS office over to the new Texas Speleology Center, just in time because of a recent burst of a pipe for flood; nothing was ruined; glad they moved; looking for people to help repair the place; looking for people in general to lead and help; N/A;

TSA: TSA Spring Convention coming up March 23, 24, at Hill Country State Natural Area outside Bandera, TX.; be looking at grotto emails/Texas Cavers email lists for more info on TSA Spring convention, the online registration should be opening up in the next two weeks or so, so be looking for that. nice, fairly-large camping area; earlier this year so its not so hot!; (nice place to go hiking, hang out, camp, go caving possibly?) SIGN UP EARLY FOR TSA REGISTRATION FOR THE CONVENTION!!!!!! \$20.00 online pre-convention or \$25.00 at the door (gate) at registration! There will be workshops, camping, activities, food (DINNER SAT. NIGHT), talks, auction,

MAYBE POSSIBLE CAVING TRIPS??!, etc. Contact Rob Bissett for more info.  
REGESTIER ONLINE! TSA WEBSITE!

**Texas Cave Management Association-(TCMA):** *There is a members meeting coming up on March 24, at TSA Spring Convention, at Hill Country State Natural Area, at lunch time from Noon to 1 p.m.,* Rob brought a donation for the auction we are having to help support the funding and conservation of Texas Cave Management Association (TCMA). WE need anything valuable that you may want to donate, for the live and silent auction! Please donate! Email Lindsay Admoski on the TCMA website or find her on FB. No recent or near future cave purchases yet due to getting the organization stuff to run more smoothly, but hopefully in the near future; we need money and support, too! *Lindsay said: We have a really exciting auction item (Ben Hutchins) is giving us the naming rights to a new species they found in the Edwards Aquifer, a type of Ostracod \* ?, if you bid on this auction item and win, you get to name the new species. (this is at the live auction at the convention on Saturday, only!!) SATURDAY NIGHT< AUCTION; Sunday morning—TCMA Breakfast—time?? 9 a.m. ? Ask Greg Mosier ?? TIME????? Sunday Morning!*

NSS: Encouraging people to join! The parent organization of the Bexar Grotto. You can join on caves.org ; you can get an NSS Magazine; Check out the NSS newsletter; if you're serious about caving; NSS Convention in Montana in July 2018! Date: TBD. Board of Governors meeting in Blacksburg, VA, weekend of March 17-18.

Bracken: White Nose Syndrome Research continues in the Texas Panhandle caves; the research has expanded to do more than just the times of the year when the Bats are hibernating so we can get a better understanding of the fungus and what its doing to the bats and in general throughout the year and what kind of conservation ? it has". Continue down with trip reports with BCI and Fran Hutchins. THE BATS ARE BACK at Bracken!!! They've been back for about 2 weeks now. Fran wants the grotto to come out to have a meeting sometime, he also needs help out there with the lots of acres!! Ask Fran if you can help out with cedar clearing and other fun chores! FRAN HUTCHINS.

MJ had question on NCRC Scholarship: *He (MJ) and Garry Donnom didn't get to participate in the NCRC this past year with the scholarship, and wondered if that rolled over to the next year? Mike Harris said that from what he understood, that it did roll over, and that the grotto paid for it. MJ said he thought he heard something like that, but wasn't for sure if it was in stone or not. Mike asked Lindsay about when she was secretary about if they discussed anything on this, and she said, "I*

don't think we discussed on if it would roll over or not." Everyone said they assumed it should roll over, Tom F., made a motion or so to roll it over, (MJ said that the problem was that by the time the scholarships were granted it was too late to sign up,) no one believed there needed to be a motion, because they voted to send him, they haven't sent him yet, he is still here, (Garry Donnom). MJ?

***Open Issues: Leia will be recording (AUDIO) for meeting minutes! This recording is for notes use only! When talking about meeting or anything, please speak loud and clearly so I can hear what is being said and so I can type the meeting min up afterwards! I have talked to several people about recording and they are ok, if you are not ok with it, please talk to Leia Hill! Be kind and polite because the thoughts are being recorded!***

#### **Old Business**

No. Bennett said he doesn't know if the grotto needs it anymore but here is the old laptop he had for the grotto presentations. As a back up. He said it needs a charger, a Dell Charger, it has Microsoft Office 2010, which would work with office 2016. Steve said he will keep the laptop with the projector, and he will look for a charger, since he has several laptops/chargers. Needs to be a DELL charger, or compatible with DELL. (FYI: If anyone uses Powerpoint, u can automatically save it to .pps which will play it on almost any device, media projector.

**Bennett Lee: The NSS that's hosting our website for 12 dollars a year is not doing that anymore, something about a contract ending April 15, 2018, and we need to decide if we want to keep doing the website, and if we do we would need to move it to a new site. More info from Bennett, Geary, and Randy Baker next meeting.**

Mike Harris on behalf of the Bexar Grotto asks the Tresuar, Emily, regarding to the motion made last time to the NSS, did we send a check to the NSS? She said no one spoke to her about it, or followed up with her on it. (Mike Harris says that there were some letters from Dave Hahn, in regards to some of the communication that's happened, (some of the stuff discussed: "Has the NSS received the \$1,000? The office said no. Is the NSS going to accept the loan offer? Answer was NSS and I are very grateful for the Bexar Grotto stepping up to help out. At this time it appears we do not expect to need the loan, but would like to keep this option open for the next 30 days, if that's ok with the grotto?" "IF the NSS is going to accept the loan offer, the Bexar Grotto would like something in writing from the NSS to formalize the loan agreement," and they said yes they would put something in writing if needed. And

the other question was, “what was the current status of the fundraising for the completion of the construction?” Answer was, “We appear to have cash flow to complete the project; legal has went after the contractor and I have talked with a couple of contractors to finish up the project.” Que. “What was the total cost of the remodel and the fix?” Answer: “The total contract cost was \$29,150.00, how much was paid to contractor? Total was: \$23,700, and how much did the contractor do? “He claims 21,000, but no materials were ordered and all ground and underground completed medal studs installed, and part of ceiling drilled or brew in.” “How much money is needed to complete the work?” “They said less than \$26,000,” And last statement was: “If two through four did not add up, could you explain the descreptincy?” He said, “I would assume three things: first, he underbid the job; second, work completed was more than expected, cost wise; third, he’s a poor manager.” Issues on the toilet up there. So based on his [Dave’s] communication, they’re grateful for the \$1000.00, and as far as the loan, that’s currently on hold; and Mike Harris says we can discuss that later if need be, but the NSS will get back with us within 30 days if they do want to accept the loan we voted on.” 30 days, dated the 25<sup>th</sup>, (Feb. 25)? So we can go ahead and send the check for a \$1000.00, and loan we can discuss if and when that pops up.”

### **New Business**

Catherine Berkley-Jones: I would like to, on behalf of, 2018 [Proyecto Espeleológico Sistema Huautla](#) (PESH) project, I would like to request a donation from the Bexar Grotto the project. The expedition this year will be leaving April 1 and will be a month long, expecting over 40 people for the course of the expedition, including Bexar Grotto member, Amy Morton. (Biologists will be attending, archeologist, cavers from Austin will be attending, Fernando will be attending again.) The expedition expenses are extensive, all cavers who are coming pay their own way, including transportation, they are charged a fee of \$15 a day, but that pays for all of their meals, gear, rental fees, transportation there at system. Frugal project! It is a very worthy cause and last year the grotto donated \$1,200 to the expedition. “I would like to ask for a donation of a \$1,000. Catherine made a request, not a motion, yet. Was discussed. Questions asked. Motion was then made after some questions for \$1,000 unrestricted funds, for the PESH trip. Discussion: Some people in grotto felt a 1,000 was too much to ask for, they asked about 500 instead. There was a vote on the amendment. It was voted on, and was amended for \$1000 for the PESH trip). For more information, see or contact Catherine Berkley-Jones of the Bexar Grotto. Also check out: <http://www.peshcaving.org> (the PESH website is great info, too)!

Garry White: Made a proposal to the grotto regarding programs, “What I would like to do is when I send out letters to speakers, I conclude that they bring their own computer, (compatibility and familiarity) (familiarity—they know everything about their computer and how everything works and where everything is, but) Compatibility –the issue is if we (Bexar Grotto) have our own computer, and someone brings their computer, there is the risk that there will be compatibility issues with their software. BTW: Office 2019 is coming out soon, and Powerpoint Viewer is discontinued in April 2018, which is the reason why we stay safe, the presenter bringing his or her own computer) but send their food bill over to the treasure, plus if they have traveled OUTSIDE of Bexar County areas, then we give them \$20 for gas. I would like this as a standard rule for programs. Mike motioned for the ability to pay for the guest speaker’s meal and their gas; Discussion: if they travel from outside Bexar County; flat simple rule; and it was amended. (Garry White says that he will not accept nor request \$20 for gas for driving from San Marcos to make a presentation or for the grotto to pay my meal for the simple reason of conflict of interest. However, the policy is before the presentation is made, I (Garry) will email the presenter and remind him or her that they need to bring their computer, the Grotto will pay for their meal, and if they’re driving in from out of Bexar County, they get \$20 for gas, and their meal will be paid for). Are these words worth it?! : Gratuity, Appreciation, Courtesy, Public Relations, and Good Will. (This grotto could very well use some Good Will right now)!

Joe Mitchell announced very last meeting on Jan. 22: “Texas Speleology Center (located in South West Austin) now has a government board that is composed of two (2) TSS Directors, one (1) TCMA director, and two (2)-at-large-cavers, one from San Antonio, and one from Austin, and we will start to figure how to manage the facility, looking for someone to serve as Property Manager, helping make a move in the next few weeks out here, and then we can start looking at what repairs need to be done.” \$1,000 donation and 4,000 loan.??

### **From Last Meeting Info on Geary Schindel on the topic of Bathrooms for NSS:**

He was at the NSS office in Huntsville, Alabama two weeks or so ago, for a committee meeting; there seems to be a problem; regarding a set of restrooms in the foyer that are important in the ball room rented, some of the contract work disappeared?, which has shut down any work on the thing. **Issue: NSS vs. Contracting company case (may have to file a lawsuit); need to raise about \$15,000**

*within the next 30 days, looking to see about getting some seed money. -----*

**Question:** Can Bexar Grotto help supply money to get the funding for the bathrooms? What money can we donate? The completion for construction of bathrooms is totaling:

15 K. **Motion** was made by Jill to give a donation to the NSS for the completion of restroom project, totaling 5 k. It was **seconded**, and then there was discussion.

**Discussion:** Lively discussion was going on, Look into a loan for the completion of the project; some money is included but not enough to complete the construction project; all for helping NSS most grotto members said and agree. Some disagreed that funds were not needed to donate for the project, was voted on, and majority said yes.

**Amended:** by Jill Orr, proposed the [Bexar] Grotto give \$1,000 + \$4,000 Loan {donation} that was made to motion to be paid back by December 31. 2018.

**Announcements:** The UT Grotto in Austin is having a Film Festival, submissions may be turned into Bryce Williams?, Film Festival is March 7, 2018 at 7:45 p.m. on the UT campus! They are looking for short films, maybe 5, 10, max 15 min films on caves and cave-related topics; Cave calendar for sale: \$20.00, benefit TCMA, and they are made by Bennett Lee.

**New Bexar Grotto Officers:** Mike Harris, President/Chair; Garry White, Program Chair; Leia Hill, Secretary, and T-Shirts; Trip Chair, Jill Orr, Bexar Facts: Richard Silver; Treasure, Emily Thompson, website/master, Randy Baker,

**Geary Schindel on Vertical Training!:** Vertical Training class—a lot of people are interested and have contacted Geary about it; so if you're interested in getting some good vertical training, please see Geary Schindel after the meeting or email him at: gschindel@edwardsaquifer.org to confirm your interest or talk with him more about the training; see the Handout Geary printed about the Vertical training class, and requirements, dates, etc., get vertically trained and “certified” so you can go on cave trips that require vertical competence and knowledge; it doesn't hurt to even get a refresher if you have some experience; really for new folks, and people who haven't had any or much vertical training!

Mike Gibbons: a family who is part of the Bexar Grotto recently added a new member to the family—a new baby! Mike brought cards, so please kindly sign them and sincerely congratulate the family on the newest addition to the family and grotto! Let the big brother know he is welcomed and loved, too! Thank you Mike! The woman (wife) is from South America and apparently has land where caves are

and has invited a few people to go next year hopefully to check them out; hopefully more will and can be invited; see Mike Gibbons for more info?,

***T-Shirts are on Sale!*** SALE IS EXTENDED UNTIL THE END OF THE TSA SPRING CONVENTION ON MARCH 25, 2018! See Leia Hill at Grotto meeting and buy at TSA Spring Convention! See Leia for Bexar Grotto shirts!!! *Short Sleeves: Sale \$10, Reg. \$15 ; Long Sleeves: Sale \$15, Reg. \$20 ; Hydro Geo Shirts: \$5 ; Patches: \$5 ;*) Please buy t-shirts! See Leia Hill at grotto meetings for shirts; or email her; PLEASE BUY! They are perfect gifts for friends, yourself, family, etc.

Books are for sale (TSS) from Marvin Miller at meeting, see him after meeting;

### **Upcoming Trips:**

Jill Orr:

\*JUNE 2: Trip to Joe Ezeinhauer Ranch. CM Shovel Cave and other caves are visitable. You must be vertically trained to go to CM Shovel, but Jill contacted Doris and Joe Ezeinhauer to work on a CM Shovel Cave day where it could be open to the whole Bexar Grotto, working on an overnight stay. Something about coming up Saturday morning, and possibly overnight trip, maybe. See Jill for more info. There are several caves on property we may be able to go into, but CM Shovel cave specifically is vertical and you MUST BE vertically trained and proficient to go in that specific cave, along with a wet suit. Jill doesn't have a date yet, she is working with Doris on that. She also told Joe that we would do a couple of hours of service work there, cleaning and clearing cedar trees. We would need to bring our own equipment and gear.

Jill: Also started another project where hopefully (NO promises not for sure yet) she talked to Joe Mitchell about getting into Natural Bridge Caverns, Joe has his lidar and we could maybe possibly do a trip with me and him, using the lidar, donating that to NBC and maybe opening some off-trail trips to the grotto?? No Promises! She is going to ask and find out. She proposed the idea to NBC? And they are supposed to get back to Jill. She will let us know. No dates yet. (Also depends on Joe with Lidar, but wants to try and ask for May if we do the trip with Joe Ezeinhauer in April).

Bennett: A couple years ago we explored some caves on Fraizer's Ranch, a couple miles north of CWAN), Fraizer has now found some more caves on his property and wants us to come take a look at them. None of the caves are huge, but there are a lot of them, including one which is really long in length and needs to be surveyed or is a

good survey cave. **April 8, 2018. 10 AM --Fraizer Ranch.** Bennett will send out more details by email or so when the time gets closer and he finds out more info. Stay tuned! Email Bennett Lee for more info at: [Bennett@bennettlee.com](mailto:Bennett@bennettlee.com)

Lindsay: March 31, Robber Baron Cave Big Brothers and Big Sisters Trip (she is still talking to them and getting the details for that) but she does need a few volunteers to help with the kids, but she will send out more info later.

**April 7, 8 GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE NATURAL AREA:** [Meet at 9 a.m. at the volunteer headquarters station. @ Gov. Canyon state natural area project.](#) See Marvin Miller for more info on where to go and park. His email is: [\*\*mlmiller@gvtc.com\*\*](mailto:mlmiller@gvtc.com). This is a great place to go caving, ridge walking, karst searching, digging, surveying, hiking, and camping.

**March 23, 24, 25 :** [TSA Spring Convention at Hill Country State Natural Area](#) near Bandera TX; one day of scientific presentations and workshops, maybe a workshop on Sunday. (Anything from Photography, surveying, to sketching, to rigging, field excursions (presentations). This is a catered event. Camping is included in the registration! \$20 if you pre-registrar /per person; \$25 at gate/ per person. Bandera, TX. To find out more see Robb Bissett, or go onto the TSA Facebook Page, TSA Website, or check your emails for the Texas Cavers list. There is pre-registration through online service (ask the treasure). Important: The Convention is at the **Chapas Group Area**, if you see a lot of people there, you're probably there! There is a map too somewhere to find the area. Go to the Chapas Group area, there will be a big building there, that's where the registration will be, the presentations will be there, you can sign up for the workshops there, either Friday night or Saturday Morning! When you get into the park, just keep hanging a left, don't go in the main part of the park on the right, keep going to the far left road of park!

\*\*Lindsey Admoski mentioned that she is willing to host a trip on a week night to beginner Robber Baron Cave located down the street in Alamo Heights. Leia Hill is also willing to help host a trip to Robber Baron Cave. See Leia Hill and Lindsey Admoski for more details! Usually we go about 6:30 p.m. one week night till about 9 or 9:30 p.m. This is a cave you should explore and work your way up in; only hazard is high CO2 sometimes, especially in the Summer.

## **Trip Reports:**

Robber Baron Cave has had a couple of trips and service projects there. More to come!

Government Canyon trip this past weekend March 10, 11, Marvin, Bennett, Shiruam, Joe Schertle, Jesse, Steve Gutting, Patricia Calbrese and Drew went on some cave trips at gov canyon. Saturday there were 17 people there! What a record! IT was hot outside too! 5 teams. Shiruam and his team took some scouts to do some ridge walking, for their expiration project meret badge, they apparently saw two possible karst features; Steve took a group to work on a dig, Jesse was with them, Renee, Mike and son Johnny from Austin, Ari was there, they worked on a sinkhole Rabbit Hole, (which seemed pretty promising), they weren't sure if they were at the right dig at first, did some rock shaving; Joe S. and Richard Silver took Steve and Suzie G., to ridge walking and they found a feature right off the trail. Drew Thompson, and Patty Clabrasc came down from Austin to go caving. They went to Solitude Pit on Saturday. (Patty is a skinny girl and she could only go so far around the corner from the drain). Sunday, Leia Hill, Marvin Miller, Patty, and Drew went to Dancing Fern Cave to work on a promising lead on the far southwest portion of the cave.(Marvin worked on this cave a number of years ago with Joe Schertle). Patty went first, digging on the tiny tunnel that lead to another room, which air blew out of intensively. She and drew and marvin dug and dug until they widened the tunnel big enough to get through. They found new passage beautiful rooms with formations, and more to survey and explore! Patty decided to name this room, "The Bowling Alley". Leia found virgin passage up a breakdown slope and was the first to see over the hill! She claims the passage continues and needs to be broken through. She wanted to name the new passage, "Over the Hill", in resemblance to her last name (Hill) and the breakdown slope. AWW. IT was a great time had by all.

Notes written and recorded by: Leia Hill, Secretary of the Bexar Grotto, 2018,

Email: llhill1992@gmail.com ; secretary@bexargrotto.org

Phone: (830) 660-5884

## **Meeting Adjournment 8:00 p.m**

**Presentation for tonight: Rob Bissett talks about the Gypsum Karst Trip up in North Texas with Bats and White Nose Syndrome Research, with Fran Hutchins and Rick Corbell. Great presentation!**