

Bexar Grotto

Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2018

Opening

The regular meeting of the Bexar Grotto was called to order at 7:00 p.m., on April 9, 2018, at Chester's Hamburgers.

Present

30 + people

New Members/Visitors

66 Total Paid Members, please see Emily Thompson to pay your dues for this year for the Bexar Grotto!

Re-Occurring visitors and new visitors: Dr. Rene De Hon, Ph.D., a Senior lecturer of Geology at Texas State University; Dr. De Hon's wife; and old timer caver returning, Dan Hogenauer; Maxine Osterlee, and Anna Ibarra, from Robber Baron Cave Big/Little Day;

Birthdays:

Treasury Report

Final number: \$14,143.42 ; (see treasurer Emily Thompson for more info, ques.)

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

Organization Reports:

Texas Speleological Society. (TSS): TSS has a Director's Board Meeting on April 21, location is the New Texas Speleology Center in Southwest Austin). If you're interested, please see Joe Mitchell or email him for directions and information. 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 pipe which caused flooding. Nothing was ruined; glad they moved. Looking for people to help repair the place; looking for people in general to lead and help.

Texas Speleological Association. (TSA): Books for sale from TSS; other than that, no new news. Check out TSA website for more info or see Marvin Miller for more info.

Texas Cave Management Association-(TCMA):

Linda Palit: This past weekend was a work weekend at Deep and Punkin Preserve. There was a deck built around the shower house by Tom Rogers. Some minor chores were completed around the cabin and preserve. We have a need for a manager and or co-manager for Deep and Punkin Preserve! Don Aburn currently is and has been the manager for a while, but he is wanting to move on and have someone else step up to the plate. He will be around for a while, but if you have any suggestions or know anyone who would like to be a manager or co-manager, please let Linda Palit know.

There was a clean up day at Godwin Ranch last Sunday, it was mentioned there were not a lot of people there. If you haven't been to Godwin Ranch, there's a Cricket Count happening, date is believed to be June 20 or 21. Linda is going to double check and put it on the Bexar Grotto calendar or TCMA calendar. This is a great day because you can get to see where the caves are. See Linda Palit for more info.

Save the Caves Party Downtown Austin on June 16, @ 8 P.M. (No dinner, but just games and socializing) (Buffalo Billiards); tickets online and at door tickets \$25.00. See Lindsey Admoski for more info. Check your grotto/Cave Tex emails!

NSS: NSS April Newsletter. There was a letter in there that was sent to the Department of Interior and Department of Agriculture secretaries asking the federal government to readdress white nose syndrome policy, that was sent about 3 weeks ago, and we haven't heard anything back. There is a request for cavers to contact your representatives and to ask the secretaries to address the white nose policy on federal land and I encourage you'll to read the article, which was signed by me, Geary Schindel, and Peter Y., and Dr. Merlin Tuttle. This letter was mainly based and written by Merlin and is a spin off from his talk on how cavers are not responsible for spreading white nose syndrome, and the bats are doing a good job of spreading it themselves. Encouraging people to join! NSS is the parent organization of the Bexar Grotto. You can join on caves.org, you will receive the NSS Magazine. Check out the NSS newsletter. If you're serious about caving: NSS Convention in Montana in July 2018! Date: TBD.

Bracken: Bats are back. Vote for the 2018 Fiesta Medal for BCI! Fran is absent.

Dan H.: there is an award for an event in which we don't remember, and that award goes to Geary Schindel, 3rd Place!

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 sure if it was set 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

Alan Montemayor said that he and Cheryl encountered a homeless person this past Saturday at Robber Baron Cave. He mentioned that the man was nice enough to help him clean up property but that he probably had camped out over night. Joe Mitchell added that because we have signs up on the preserve now that mention there is no overnight camping or visiting after dark for the general public. And that if there is another time we catch a homeless person or someone from general public there camping out or littering, etc., that we need to call police! Please go and check on Robber Baron Cave at least once a week, for those who have time after work or during the day, and can go by the property.

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.

Alan M. said that last Saturday there was a new homeless person

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. See IT Service Announcement email/attachment. Randy: The NSS is modifying their IT capabilities and they are not going to be hosting new grotto sites so I could possibly host it off my website, service. (See email attachment from Bexar Grotto on the NSS IT service, or email Randy Baker or Bennett Lee for more information).

Mike Harris on behalf of the Bexar Grotto asks the Treasurer, 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 discrepancy?" He said, "I would assume three things: first, he underbid the job; second, work completed cost more than expected; 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 25th, (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 2 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:

Garry White: He got an email from the library in Uvalde –they are having an air and space Stem Expo for grades 5-8 (school) and they emailed me about our group possibly going out there to put up a table to display about caving and karst, etc., the only problem is that its on the same day as “Cave Fest” event at Cascade Caverns. Is there anyone interested in following up on that? April 28, 2018. See Garry White if you’re interested in helping out with the School Space Stem Expo in Uvalde.

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!

T-Shirts: See Leia for Bexar Grotto shirts!!! *Short Sleeves: \$15 ; Long Sleeves: \$20 ; Hydro Geo Shirts: \$2 ; 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. There was a discussion/motion for lowering HydroGeo Workshop t-shirts down from \$5 to \$2. Discussion about the shirts, amounts we had, and people agreed on bringing HydroGeo shirts down from 5 to 2 dollars. It was motioned, discussed, amended and agreed on.

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

Upcoming Trips:

Jill Orr:

April 28 is Cave Awareness day Cave FEST @ cascade caverns (Marvin also posted this on an email a few weeks ago), regarding the awareness of caves and this project of "The Boerne Bypass" planning, which TX DOT plans to put a highway over/around this area in Boerne which goes over quite a few caves and karst features. The TSS will have a table there, Bexar Grotto is going to help out, so we can represent Bexar Grotto. TCMA might be there! There will most likely be a repel/climbing demonstration later that afternoon, so contact Marvin Miller if you're interested in helping out on April 28, at cascade caverns for the cave fest cave awareness event!

*JUNE 2: Trip has been confirmed. CM is a vertical cave so in order to get in that cave, you must be vertically trained. But there are several small, horizontal caves Trip to Joe Ezeinhauer Ranch. CM Shovel Cave and other caves are visit able. 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).

Snookies Cave: Trip this Saturday, April 14, at 9 am. Spring Branch, TX. Check your email from Jill Orr. Up on 281. Email Jill if you would like to go and get directions from her.

May 12, Saturday ONLY! 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. This is a great place to go caving, ridge walking, karst searching, digging, surveying, hiking, and camping. Last trip to Gov. canyon until October

Sunday April 15, there is a vertical training class out at Bracken Cave! This is for those who are signed up in the vertical training class with Geary Schindel! Expect to meet out there about 9 am. Check your email from Geary later in the week.

Geary wants to visit some caves up in Edwards County and try to do some dye tracing. Not sure on dates yet, but you must be vertically proficient and have wetsuits. See Geary Schindel for more info.

There is a small trip for dye tracing with a UTSA student at CWAN. Date is TBD, but he is going to talk with this student and CWAN to coordinate a date and time, more info. Small trip, only 3-5 people probably. (Leia wants to go)!

May 5, a dig trip at LaChance Sinkholes in Northeast New Braunfels. May meet a parking lot of Forum at 8:30 am to carpool and try to arrive by 9 am. Bennett will send out more information by email and at next grotto meeting. So stay tuned.

**Lindsey Adamoski 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 Adamoski 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!

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. 9:15 AM --Fraizer Ranch.**

Lindsay: March 31, Robber Baron Cave Big Brothers and Big Sisters Trip. Volunteers helped with the kids. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Lindsey said: We had over 25 sets of big/littles. Everyone had a great time! All but one of the kids had never been in a cave before so that was pretty cool. Great job, Lindsey! Garry White said he really enjoyed the event and the kids seemed to have fun and it was a great experience for the Bigs too. He mentioned about the cave monster and he wants us to do more stuff like that! Maxine (Big Sister) said she really enjoyed it and that she appreciates the time and effort that went into making this event happen. She said her little sister (Anna) really enjoyed it and fell in love with caving!

Government canyon trip this past weekend. Saturday was cold, and hardly anyone there. Bennett stole all of the people! Sunday they went to Big Dome Cave. They found some bats in this cave, and then the cave was officially closed by the park due to white nose syndrome ☹️ boo. But Marvin made a proposal to try and keep the cave access open without allowing bigger animals to go in, so they cleaned out the poop in the cave, wore Tyvek suits, and couldn't find any javelinas or bats. See Marvin Miller for more info. Constructed a gate for the entrance out of local material. They want to keep the cave environment the same as it was before people disturbed it.

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

Tonight's Program: Rene De Hon, Ph.D., shares with us the possibility of lava caves on Mars and maybe the moon!