

TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF TSA CONVENTION BOG MEETING

22 May 2004

(Convened at the Burnet Community Center, Burnet County, Texas)

Present: Diana Tomchick, Chairman; Joe Ranzau, Vice-Chairman; Jerry Atkinson, Secretary; Terry Holsinger, Treasurer.

TSA Members in Attendance: Don Arburn (BG), Jay Jorden (DFWG), Logan McNatt (UTG), Marvin Miller (BG), Jim Kennedy (UTG), Ron Ralph, (UTG), Allan Cobb (UTG), Linda Palit (BG), Bill Steele (DFWG), George Veni (BG), Jon Cradit (Ind), Kevin McGowan (GHG), Emily McGowan (GHG), Pete Strickland (UTG), Jocie Hooper (UTG), Paul Fambro (UTG), Robin Barber (MG), Becky Jones (BG), Mike Walsh (TCC), Bob Burnett (UTG), Susan Souby (UTG).

Observers: Geary Schindel (BG), Charles Fromen (GHG), John Crosthwait (UTG).

The meeting convened from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM. The minutes from the TSA Winter BOG meeting held on 24 January 2004 at Government Canyon State Natural Area were accepted as printed in the December 2003 *Texas Caver*.

Chairman's Report : (Tomchick) Diana emphasized that the TSA needs volunteers for the empty slots on the various committees.

Vice-Chairman's Report : (Ranzau) Joe noted that the Metroplex Grottos hosted the 2004 TSA Convention and that there were 76 pre-registrations. 103 cavers were in attendance as of lunchtime. The next membership meeting will be held at this years TCR.

Secretary's Report : (Atkinson) The minutes of the TSA BOG meetings are now posted on the TSA website.

Treasurer's Report : (Holsinger) The approximate current financial statement for the TSA as of May 2004:

Total cash assets : \$18,786.15

Of this amount, the Land Fund account comprises \$10,040.12.

Paid Memberships : 160

The chairman asked if the TSA needs at least 200 members in order to break even. 50 memberships have expired since the October TCR. A general discussion ensued concerning ways to increase membership.

Committee Reports:

TSA Store : (McNatt) The TSA Store has recently received an order of 275 t-shirts at a cost of \$1311.77. New bat stickers will be arriving shortly. Logan requested that he be reimbursed \$144.49 for expenses and purchases made for two tires and the registration of the TSA trailer. It was noted that the TSA still has no volunteer to replace Logan as storekeeper.

A general discussion ensued regarding the creation of new decal designs. Atkinson volunteered to pursue the matter.

Publications :

I). Texas Caver Report : (Arburn) Don reported that he will edit and publish the February 2004 issue of the *Texas Caver* and then retire as editor.

A question was made to the floor asking "What should the *Texas Caver* be?" Responses were :

(Arburn): Should be professional looking and informational to members; it should also serve archival purposes. Would like to see more color, additional advertisements. Serve as a revenue producing source. Be a magazine newsletter.

(Jorden): Should be a mobilizing tool, drives membership and energy levels, recruitment. Has to be more frequent in publishing and reliable. Editor should not be solicitor, editor, and publisher.

(Tomchick): Not reasonable to have only one person doing all the work to put out publication.

(Palit): Editor interprets job requirements and others interact with editor. Editors tend to burn out after 6 months.

(Jones): Let editor design *Texas Caver* goals and layout; let the other issues be worked out at later date. The editor's energy will drive the publication.

There was a general consensus with both Linda and Becky's thoughts.

II. TSA Webmaster : (Kinchen) Kinchen was absent. It was noted that Travis has more time now for both caving and the TSA website.

Safety and Rescue : (Jones) Motion was made by Jones to change name of committee to Safety and Techniques, as the TSA does not conduct rescues. Motion passed by acclamation.

The February 2004 TSA training session at Colorado Bend State Park was attended by 2 cavers and 6 high school students.

Jones is planning to have a NCRC-sponsored training session addressing small party self-rescue in the fall at Colorado Bend State Park.

Jones noted that she is willing to work with grottos that are interested in learning advanced rigging skills.

Land Fund : (Tomchick/Jorden) A short history of the Land Fund was given to the membership. It was stated that the original intent of the fund as written in 1996 was "To obtain a permanent Texas Cavers Reunion and TSA meeting site and further the goals of cave conservation." The TCMA has requested that funds from the Land Fund be allocated as a donation towards the proposed purchase of Punkin/Deep caves. It was noted that the Land Fund Committee has not formally met and that there are questions as to the exact amount that is in the Land Fund. Kennedy stated that it was not in the spirit of the original intent of the fund to use it for purchasing caves. Veni stated that it was not feasible to purchase caves near the urban corridor, and that the TSA should consider using the fund for conservation purposes. Palit noted that the Punkin/Deep property was not suitable for a TCR or TSA Convention. The issue was deferred for consideration by the Land Fund Committee in the near future.

Membership : (Heuss) Heuss was absent.

Constitution : (vacant). No report.

Research Grant Committee : (Holsinger) No activity.

Conservation : (vacant) No report.

Project Reports :

Due to time constraints, all verbal project reports were tabled for a future meeting.

Government Canyon State Natural Area : (Miller) Miller submitted the following report via email:

Project Summary as of April 2004 :

- Cleaning, repairing, and preparing the bunkhouse for use by all future volunteer projects.
- Assisting with preservation efforts of the Zizelmann House.
- Preserving a cave archaeological site for future study.
- Collecting data and conducting observations on the bats from Government Canyon Bat Cave for 12 different months.
- Conducting observations on the bat population of Lithic Ridge Cave for six different months.
- Assisting bat flight patterns by clearing brush around Government Canyon Bat Cave entrance.
- Establishing a trail system inside Government Canyon Bat Cave.
- Conducting collections and observations of invertebrates from 22 caves.

- Conducting detailed searches through about 3849 acres of the Government Canyon property.
- Finding 22 sites with historical material.
- Finding 16 sites with archaeological material, and assisting with the evaluation, study, and preservation of two sites.
- Finding one site with possible paleontological material.
- Finding 267 non-cave karst features.
- Evaluating and/or excavating 51 non-cave features without finding caves.
- Digging open 8 new caves.
- Finding 30 open caves.
- Precisely determining the location coordinates of 38 caves and 71 karst and cultural features using GPS equipment.
- Setting permanent benchmarks at 36 caves.
- Completing the survey of 29 caves.
- Producing maps of 12 caves.
- Finding and reporting seven trespassers.
- Assisting with the herpetological study by gathering GPS locations and by reporting sightings.

The project this spring has been hampered by rainy weather. Most days that threatened rain still turned out good for project activities, but the threatened bad weather kept participants away. The past several trips we have concentrated on finishing hanging bits of survey in several caves and ridgewalking. The project priorities remain exploring and surveying caves, investigating and digging sinks, and ridgewalking, in that order.

Average participation for a weekend for this past year has been 5.2 persons. Not a lot but it has been picking up lately with new people joining the project for the first time and the previously mentioned weather problems helped to keep numbers down.

Internal Organization Reports : No reports were made.

Affiliated Organization Reports :

Due to time constraints, all verbal affiliated organization reports were tabled for a future meeting.

Old Business:

TSA Member's Manual : (Holsinger/Ranzau) No progress.

New Business:

Proposed Constitutional Amendment Regarding TSA Officer Elections : (Atkinson) The item was tabled. Intent is to publish the proposed amendment in the *Texas Caver* and on CaveTex in order to solicit input.

Ad-hoc Election Committee : (Tomchick) It was announced that Bill Steele will be chairing the 2004 Election Committee.

Digitization of Old Texas Cavers : (Tomchick) Logan McNatt has volunteered to digitize the remaining issues of the *Texas Caver* that were not digitized by Mike Moore.

Proposal to add Life Membership Category : (Kennedy) Greg Passmore suggested that a \$200 Life Membership category be added to the existing TSA membership categories. The item was tabled. Intent is to publish the proposal in the *Texas Caver* and on CaveTex in order to solicit input.

Texas Caver 50th Anniversary/TSA 50th Anniversary Preparations : (Tomchick) Diana noted that the 50th anniversary of the Texas Caver will occur in 2005, and that the 50th anniversary of the TSA as a region will occur in 2006. It was proposed that a series of posters be printed commemorating these events. A proposed poster was shown to the membership that used Tom Culverwell's famous drawing of the Devil's Sinkhole that appeared in *NSS Bulletin* #10 in 1948. Permission to use the artwork has been obtained from the NSS and Terry Raines has quoted a price of \$500 for printing 1000 posters. The Devil's Sinkhole Society will purchase ½

of the print run.

A motion was made to allocate \$500 for the printing of the first poster as shown. The motion passed with one dissent.

Bustamante Project : (Ralph) The project would like approval to change treasurers. Ron Ralph was the previous treasurer and the project would like Alana Skrabanek to assume the position. A motion was made by Ron Ralph to approve the appointment of Alana Skrabanek as the new treasurer of the Bustamante Project. Jim Kennedy seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

***Chronicles of the Old Reading Grotto* Payment :** (McNatt) The TSA owes Cristen Kroeger (Squire Lewis' daughter) approximately \$700 for sales of the *Chronicles of the Old Reading Grotto*. Joe Ranzau will expedite payment.

Announcements : (Tomchick) The TSA has received a request from Jean Louis Lacaille Múzquiz from Mante, Tamaulipas, México and Pro Biosfera Sierra de Guatemala for slide shows, videos and lectures, and a graffiti removal and cleaning project for the Cueva de El Abra and Gruta de Quintero. Interested parties can contact Diana Tomchick for additional information.

The next TSA meeting will be held at the 2004 Texas Cavers Reunion at a time to be announced.

Submitted by Gerald L. Atkinson.