

## ***Minutes of Winter TSA Business Meeting***

**13 January 2013**

(Convened at Colorado Bend State Park, Bend, Texas) Submitted by Heather Tuček

**Officers present:** Don Arburn – Chairman, Roger Moore – Vice-Chairman, Michael Cicherski – Treasurer, Heather Tuček – Secretary

**TSA Members and Cavers in Attendance:** Ron Ralph, LeeJay Graves, Ryan Monjaras, Matt Turner, Ann Scott, Jim Kennedy, Jason Cook, Dessie Pierce, Bryce Smith, Dale Barnard, Kris Peña, Ted Lee, Matt Zaldivar, Casey Tucker

**Welcome and Introductions/Chairman's Report – (Arburn):** Don Arburn convened the meeting at 8:17am. Welcome. Introduced the board members.

**Vice-Chairman's Report – (Moore):** Roger Moore talked about his duties, working on the Convention plans, including location and date. Needs to talk to venues for meeting and campground. Asked for recommendations from people who have had tasks delegated to them previously, for ideas of what can be delegated, and for more detailed information on the project. Don Arburn and Jim Kennedy gave location requirements for the Convention.

**Secretary's Report – (Tuček):** Minutes distributed. Asked for corrections and LeeJay had an edit to account for his absence last meeting- was minding the TSA Store. Ann requested typo changes to make the minute report perfect. Don offered for Ann to be the official proofreader, and Ann was agreeable. A motion was moved to accept the minutes with the changes, and it was approved.

**Treasurer's Report – (Cicherski):** TSA Assets are currently at \$10,633.12. Good news, we have a 27.1% increase in assets since the last year, with a net income of \$2,267.03. This is due to Ellie Thoene doing an incredible job at the Convention last year, with a very good turnout, and Heather Tuček doing a good job on membership, keeping up with it. Mark Alman drove down the price on the Texas Caver, and Jill Orr is working on getting sponsorships, so that will help it as well. This is the first time that the income has increased for the year. The Spring Convention and the Texas Caver encompass 88% of our expenses. Other items are small expenses in the big picture. The TSA received a letter from IRS. Pension protection requires that all tax-exempt organizations to file a tax report. TSA has never done that. Michael Cicherski called the IRS, and they explained about the process. Michael filed, and let them know that we have complied, but we have yet to hear back from them about that.

**TSA Projects – (Kennedy):** Overview of Longhorn and CBSP projects. Still have a couple of projects in discussion- Jim Kennedy sent TPWD info about Devils River and Pedernales, but heard nothing back yet. Jim also noted that Longhorn is not a "TSA" project. Don mentioned that issues have to do with their vendors. Something liability-wise that prevents them from working with us. Don asked for future project ideas. Jim has talked to Nico Escamilla; Nico has requested a clean-up at Palmito. He wants a team to come down for a weekend and do a cleanup for trash, graffiti, etc. They are starting to allow cavers into the cave again, and it would be nice to work with the town there about that. A trip could happen sometime in the next year, yet is still in the planning phase. Jim and Ron Ralph talked about the current supplies we have, and the buses that will make travel up the mountain easier.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Publications – (Orr):** Jill Orr was unable to attend, and has been non-communicating over email. Don and Michael received a receipt for an ad on Inner Mountain Outfitters for the TSA.

**Website – (Fralia):** Butch Fralia has updated the calendar. LeeJay Graves said there needs to be a delete on the store items, but Don and Jim have mentioned that it has already been removed. Don mentioned that he will ask Butch to start providing us with more information about the website, ie site hits. Ron Ralph asked LeeJay if we want to sell things on the website, LeeJay mentioned tax issues with that, and Don said we may not want to sell to non-members. Ryan Monjaras asked if we should make a store in the members' area. Jim mentioned that it's not really been much of a demand issue, so it shouldn't matter.

**Conservation committee – (Open):** Not discussed.

**WNS Update – (Kennedy):** White Nose Syndrome continues to spread West and South. No leaps this last winter, but surveys won't be done until another month or two. Some agencies and organizations have re-opened a lot of previously closed caves now, though they are still instituting vigorous decontamination protocols. It's the new standard operating procedure now. New research has shown that hot water decon is very effective, so 130 degrees or 120 degrees for 20 minutes with no chemicals is fine. But always clean your gear before you decon. Electronics can be just wiped with antibiotic wipes. If you put things in plastic bags, and don't use it in the cave, then it doesn't need to be deconned. The Panhandle has some of the biggest hibernacula in the state, so if it gets into Texas, we suspect it will start there.

**Safety and Techniques – (Ochel):** David Ochel was at O-9 Well this weekend. Bad planning communication happened. Jim mentioned the week-long NCRRC training trip in February at CBSP.

### **Other Committee Reports**

**Fundraising – (Germany):** Julia Germany absent, not discussed.

**Store – (Graves):** The TSA store won't need to ask for money for shirts or stickers this year. Even with Convention, we only had about \$80 worth of sales. Right now, we have \$675. Whatever is left at the end of the year gets rolled over. Make about \$300 at the TCRs. The store is pretty much self-funded now. If anyone has ideas for products, LeeJay will see about making it done. Jim gave kudos to LeeJay for his hard work with the store. LeeJay asked that if there's separation of vendor booths at Convention, then he gets help to spread out the inventory.

### **Old Business**

**TSA Brochure:** Not discussed.

**Membership Drive – (Tuček):** Heather Tuček just got the paperwork last week, so she will get on emailing people soon.

**Cards for Rescue – (Ochel):** Heather will talk with David about this on Monday.

**Purchases on Website:** Addressed previously

**Membership List Published:** Jerry Atkinson absent, not discussed. Don will check with Jerry about the results of that.

**Emails to recruit new TSA members:** Ron and LeeJay recommendations of what to say in the emails that get sent to people. LeeJay mentioned that for those who can't cave anymore, it's time to start helping those who can, by donating to the TSA.

**Honey Creek State Natural Area:** Sean Lewis absent, no update.

Devils River State Natural Area: Ron Ralph has logged 18 new features. Ron mentioned that they are transferring management right now, and eventually will be looking to the TSS for volunteers to come out and check on things, eventually survey the whole land area. Don added that though Joe Ranzau is transferred to the Davis Mountains, that he still somewhat oversees happenings at DRSNA as well. Jim added an update on the CBSP managers. Kevin Ferguson was transferred to Kickapoo, but we get to keep Kelby Bridwell, and he's been really great support for us the past couple of years. Jim said that if anyone is looking for work, TPWD is always listing jobs. Good opportunities there, just keep your eyes open. All kinds of jobs get listed there.

TCR t-shirts: Ron Ralph said we were about run out of TCR t-shirts. Don skipped this topic, as it is irrelevant at this time.

#### **New Business**

- Longhorn Caverns: Gerry Geletzke is at the park, but not at the meeting. Julia Germany is also absent. No new info since the last meeting.
- Weeklong cave rescue seminar for NCRC in February located at Colorado Bend State Park.
- Ellie Thoene asked Don if she could have \$100 from TSA to support the Honey Creek Tank Haul Extravaganza. Jim moved, Ryan seconded. Michael was asked if we can make that happen. So moved.
- Don asked for assistance making an agenda template.
- Ron Ralph asked for floor. The TSA has long had an exchange program for our Texas Caver and their publications. SouthEastern Caver, The Valley Caver from the Motherload Grotto, The California Caver. Although, it seems like we haven't held up the end of our bargain in the last year or so. Ron asked TSA if they will print extra copies of Texas Caver for exchange, and mail them out. He has written a letter for the other organizations, about back issues and exchanges, offering to fill gaps, and keep them updated. Ron guesses there are about 10-20 organizations. Jim mentioned that as former editor, he knows that we are obligated to send free copies to NSS (3), USGS, UT Library, etc. Those are just complimentary copies, not exchange copies. Jim thinks we should target some specific organizations. He suggested Missouri Speleological Survey, or regional survey/organizations, rather than little Grotto newsletters. TSS can provide a list of organizations. Don mentioned that as editor, it was very helpful to have references of other publications to look at. Jim mentioned that it is a good resource of information to see at the TSS. Ron continued that, on the same vein, TC has not been publishing extra copies. Logan has no back issues from the Alman years. So when we talk about filling in back issues, or if we have requests from our members, we don't have the copies to fill that. Don said that part of the problem is that the editors have been pushed hard to not have any wastage in the printing process, which is why there hasn't been an excess. Jim mentioned that bulk mailing is cheaper, so adding these complimentary and exchange copies helps to get to that number. Heather and Ron can work together to get a list updated on the member list to have Jill mail the TC out to them. Ron recommended that we follow Jim's advice to request an extra 50 copies for landowner, etc gifts. Don will speak with Jill about the issue.
- LeeJay and Don discussed about how the majority of TSA members don't do anything for the organization. Ann said that it's because they don't know what the TSA does. Michael remembered that that's what the brochure was supposed to be about. Matt Turner said it's silly to have so many cave organizations in Texas. Jim talked about old ways that the organizations were run, and how the current ones are doing better. LeeJay said it's a responsibility of the leaders to build up their organization. Matt mentioned that there are a lot of "fun-time cavers" who want to cave, but not help with the organization.
- Roger recognizes that with the GHG, they don't do enough encouragement to join the TSA. LeeJay said that TSA is your connection to the NSS. Dessie mentioned she can start hyping it in the GHG. Don said that the disconnect has happened with the Grottos not being a subset of the NSS until just recently. Don asked if the TSA pays dues to NSS. LeeJay said it's just an internal organization report, but Jim said that as a region organization we don't have to. Heather needs to talk with Ron about talking to the NSS for the IO report for TSA. Ron said that you can go in the Member's Manual to see what's been sent in the past.
- Don asked Roger if he needs any more guidance on the cOnvention planning. Roger said that he has gotten help with the recommendations from today. Jim offered to work with him about it. Roger wanted to hear about a Rock Springs thing, but Don didn't have any further information about the location. The list of venues that he does have is about 10 years old. Ron asked if Devil's Sinkhole Society had a building downtown. It was decided it's not a good location. Ann asked if Kerrville would work. Jim suggested a place near Honey Creek. Don mentioned his ranch, or CBSP. LeeJay talked about the time they built a black plastic tent and air conditioned it. Don said to just go ahead and make up a date, so that we can start working around it. Ann asked if we will have an auction. Jim said yes. Don said to talk to Bill Steele at getting us beer.

#### **Announcements:**

- Jim Kennedy mentioned thanks to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for letting us use the conference center, so we need to clean up the building before people leave. Beforehand, we will take a group of people to go visit Gorman Falls, since many people haven't seen them.
- Also, Dessie cooked last night, so passing the hat will help her to recoup the costs.
- Michael announced the 16<sup>th</sup> ICS in Brno, Czech Republic this year. It seems like we have a really good interest from Texas cavers to go, so if you are considering going to that, registration jumps considerably at the end of January.
- Thanks to Ron for bringing donuts this morning.
- Jim encourages everyone to come out for more CBSP weekends. He announced that we found two new caves yesterday. "Support your TSA and go to project weekends."

**Adjourn Meeting:** Don made the call to adjourn. Jim seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:31am