

New River Valley Grotto

Meeting minutes for 1/17/2017

Members in attendance:

- Don Anderson
- Derek Eldridge
- John Fox, Treasurer
- Tom Gerow, Vice Chair
- Karen Kastning, Chair
- Jennifer Lemmer
- Dirk McComsey, Secretary

Meeting was called to order by Karen at 7:16 PM.

Chairperson Report

It was noted that due to the recent elections, jobs changed; hence we need to update the NSS I-O status.

Karen has signed up for the 17th International Congress of Speleology in Australia. There are over 200 people signed up with 2000 expected to attend.

Dave Socky from Blue Ridge Grotto is filming a movie. Vertical work and wet suits required. John mentioned that it tells a story in Culverson reek Cave. Dave manages the video salon for the NSS.

Vice Chairperson Report

Tom deferred to later agenda items. He briefly mentioned the possible James Cave cleanup.

Treasurer Report

The grotto has \$98 not including funds from the people who just paid their dues. The post office box has been renewed. The grotto received requests from 2 organizations for donations: American Cave Conservation Association and West Virginia Cave Conservancy. The membership voted to send \$25 to the West Virginia Cave Conservancy.

The WVCC meets in Lewisburg on the second Saturday in November.

John will print out a list of members.

John requested NSS numbers.

NSS members need to make sure that their addresses are updated by 1/31 in order to make it in the annual Member's Manual.

It was noticed that when Don dies, Karen will have the lowest NSS number in the grotto.

It was brought to our attention that Don is not going to die and when he does his gear will not be willed to anyone.

Old Business

Don got a call on his cell phone about caves from some spelunker. Don't give out his number.

Christmas Party at Karen's was great.

New Business

Dirk showed the new web site and discussed the need for content. Karen has some good brochures and other literature which would be good to add. "Living with Sinkholes" was discussed.

Discussed setting up an NRVG email list.

Some discussion occurred regarding the layers of the NSS.

Some discussion happened regarding the new bat logo and getting shirts made. We will bring up a vote on shirt designs at the next meeting.

John likes the NRVG reinvention. Karen said we should use the term "modernizing." Tom noted that the younger members don't want to step on the grotto's legacy.

John will bring the grotto banner.

We may need to make a trip to headquarters to get newsletters.

Karen told a story about caving in Deep Cave when she was 5 months pregnant.

Karen's son's first cave was when he was 7 weeks old. Another story about son starting school and looking sad about a new friend whose parents didn't cave on weekends.

Joanna Fox was in a cave at 3 years old.

James Cave cleanup was discussed. Don gets orange bags from highway. NRVG "adopt-a-highway" goes from route 11 to just beyond cave. Tom explained Boy Scout project.

NRVG dug out the sinkhole entrance. Karen was asked by a reporter about a local cave which was trashed. James Cave was brought up. Sunday night phone rings. The Farrells didn't know they were polluting the ground water. A cleanup project was agreed upon and 20 cavers showed up, 6 Scouts. There were 5 pickup trucks. Charlie Moss from the New River Resource Authority was contacted for assistance in tipping fees at the landfill

NRVG was allowed to use the dump in Pulaski for free. 5 pickup trucks were filled in 5 minutes. The next time, NRVG was able to convince the construction company to use their dump truck if the driver was paid for his time. Money was raised to pay the driver.

There were 12 washing machines in the entrance. Don mentioned none of them worked. A backhoe was needed. The digging revealed the bumper of a car and the car to which it was attached. Karen, Don, and John offered by a neighbor to dump everything in some sinkholes on his property.

Cleanups used to happen twice per year. During one of the cleanups, all the bags were piled across the road from the sinkhole. The police were called because a neighbor thought someone was dumping trash.

Burlington Industries was going to spray sludge fertilizer. Hydrology class went to meeting and offered to take the council through the cave. The council went to James Cave and then voted down the sludge offer.

Everything goes straight to water. John and Don built steps and added the gate sign. Is James Cave administered by NRVG? Yes. Do we need landowner permission for cleanup? It's a good idea. Someone would drive by and toss a bottle out in the same spot. Don thinks they were trying to hit the sign.

The Boy Scouts liaison with the VAR is Joey Fagan. Karen and her ex put together a 3 part scout safety program. The scouts had to attend a safety lecture, do a water related project, and then they could go into a cave. Tom and Dirk will be doing a caving presentation at their respective scout meetings.

There should be plenty of adults at the cleanup. We'll need vests and gloves for kids. The Highway Dept. doesn't give bags. Tom is to ask about bags from Christiansburg.

James Cave's landowner is Dave Farrell. John checked his phone for Mr. Farrell's contact information but couldn't find it. Don will call Tom with Mr. Farrell's information.

John said he could be there after 1:00. Karen can pick up trash in the morning. Raking is fine.

VSS stores information and determines if road projects will impact caves and ranks them. Current contact should be Rick Lambert. Each county had a directory. Don was director for Pulaski County. VSS needs director for Pulaski County.

A lot of WV caves have landowner-relations issues.

Clubs deal with landowners and make maps. Maps and information can be obtained by talking to other Grottoes. Cardinal Printing used to print them. If you are involved with mapping a cave, your name goes on the map.

There are lots of good maps and information in the 1995 NSS Convention Guidebook. John will look for and bring his copy.

Nick Socky would be the person to check with about recent surveying projects.

Mike and Andrea Futrell mapped a 20 mile cave near Starnes.

Don has a bunch of information for Pulaski.

Any surveying work may be presented at NSS convention, either in Cartographic Salon or in Session.

A cave on the way to Claytor Lake was mapped. There was about 1 mile of cave. The project changed hands from Nick and names didn't make it on the map. Farm is an absentee landowner. There are lots of sinkholes.

Make sure landowner is offered and gets maps and photos.

NRVG took Cecil(?) (the landowners) family through Colliers cave.

Granny Richard's Cave was mentioned.

Derek's cave was discussed.

Doug Dalrymple works with a guy who has a cave with a small drop.

Contact Wil Orndorff. He handles dye tracing for the state.

Karen told a story about being in Ellett Valley checking for stability for building houses. She could hear water underground.

Karen talked about another cave in Ellett where a dead man was found.

Don informed us that throwing in rocks and hearing nothing is common if there are leaves at the bottom of a drop.

Don is a charter member of VPI Cave Club. VPI has a turnover every 4 years. Best way to reach out to them is to just show up to their meeting.

Don is big on VPI Cave Club.

VPI Cave Club and NRVG worked together on the Pig Hole Fence and New River Cave Trail.

When Karen's son was in high school band he had to give up on caving. The recent meeting she went to, she only knew 2 people.

Dave Goodman is the contact for the Radford Outing Club.

Frank Taylor retired from Radford High School. He used to take students to Adams Cave in Wildwood Park, which has a gate and is now locked, but John has a key. It is a three room cave. No one checks on the cave. Tom suggested we check on it.

Spring VAR at Thorn Spring was discussed. John, Karen, Tom, Dirk and Derek are planning on attending. Bill Pond usually comes with his girlfriend. Bill has organized kids' trips in the past. John's first VAR doing

music was 1975. Cheryl told John that the music sounded like crap. The pavilion burned down. OTR used to be at the Old Mill. It was moved in 1974. There was dancing all night long. John now shuts down the music at midnight.

Trout, New Trout and Hamilton Caves are all near Thorn Spring.

It will be a little cool.

Don told of a picture of a sign on the mill which read "No Camping" with a field of tents behind it. Don was full of ideas. He suggested NRVG attend as a grotto.

Attending VAR provides one with a year's subscription to the Region Record. Karen has accumulated enough years' subscriptions that they will be supplied far in the future. \$5 of the fee to attend VAR goes to VAR, the rest goes for paying for the event.

John is taking off Friday to travel to Thorn Springs that afternoon.

Tommy, the organizer, is looking for people to lead caving trips.

Don mentioned that vegetarians may need to provide their own food.

Attendees must pre-register to secure a meal. This seemed to be important. It was mentioned a few times.

Announcements:

January 23rd is the 50th Anniversary of Karen's first wild cave trip.

Ken and Meagan are having a baby boy! Ken will be attending very few NRVG events for the near future.

It was brought to the secretary's attention that the agenda for this meeting was very long.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.