



TCMA



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NCRC training, new showers at D&P

The Texas Cave Management Association partnered with the South-Central Region of the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) in September to host an Orientation to Cave Rescue (OCR) at our Deep and Punkin Cave Nature Preserve - but not before we completed a massive shower construction project.

The two-day NCRC workshop was designed to help cavers build skills and proficiencies and become better prepared to deal with injuries and other cave emergencies. A combination of classroom-style lectures and hands-on exercises preceded a mock rescue in one of the two caves on the property.

This summer, more than a dozen volunteers joined Preserve Manager Don Arburn in constructing a shower building near TCMA's Carta Valley fieldhouse. The improvements went beyond just completing the building, with volunteers moving water tanks, digging a ditch, spreading rock and making other needed repairs and changes.

Among participants were Michael J. Gibbons, Gill Ediger, Robert Bisset, Amy Cantrell Morton, Tom Rogers, Galen Falgout, Dale Barnard, Denise Prendergast, Courtney McClymont, Trevor, Bryce Smith, Cruz St.Peter, Matthew Zappitello,

Ezell's continuing mission

By Ron Ralph

This is a small cave with an important mission. Ezell's is known as a window to the Edwards Aquifer and, through the years, many cave biologists have peered into its depths in a quest for understanding of Texas' threatened and endangered cave-dwelling species.

So far this year, Ezell's Cave Preserve has been
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Arron Wortheim, Rachel Ginger Reddig, Grace Borengasser, Kevin, Sheryl Rieck, Kathryn Huchton, Kraig L. Fenton and Lee Jay Graves. Volunteers' multiple skills were engaged in the effort - like carpentry, painting, chainsawing, jackhammering, cooking and more.

"These people were awesome and are to be thanked profusely," Don said.

The showers are eco-friendly, using a rainwater collection system at the field station. Well done, everyone!



"Crash" at work on gate at Ezell's Cave Preserve

Support TCMA at TCR!

Please DON'T MISS our:

- **Silent art auction** on Saturday
 - Camping gear **raffle** all weekend
 - Annual **members' meeting**, 9 a.m. Saturday
 - **Breakfast** at 7:45 a.m. Sunday
- And join TCMA if you're not already a member. Stop by the TCMA tent and get to know us!

TCMA's future: So bright ... got my shades!

By John Brooks, TCMA President

This is my final “manifesto” on cave conservation and the TCMA. There are a few months left in my term on the board and as president of the TCMA. I hope my work has advanced the cause of cave conservation and helped the TCMA grow.

During my four-year tenure leading TCMA, we acquired one cave and came very close to buying another amid negotiations that stretched out over a half-year. Additionally, we are poised to make a number of cave acquisitions in the coming months involving some caves that, while small, are significant for groundwater recharge.

I am also proud that TCMA has been a great steward of its preserves – and expanded its influence by networking with other Texas land conservancies and conservation groups. Along with this progress, this is what I think the TCMA needs to consider as it moves forward:

1. The bylaws need to be amended to address several operational issues. A Bylaws Committee is proposing these recommendations at our Fall Members meeting. It is hoped that these By-Law revisions will be brought before the Members at the Spring Members Meeting.

2. In addition to repeating the 5 year Strategic Plan effort: The TCMA needs to develop a strategic long range plan specifically to address the funding needs to acquire significant cave resources. The last effort in 2012 resulted in a good road map for us to follow. I feel we accomplished some of our goals. And there are a few goals that we are still working towards. Creating a Strategic Plan points the TCMA in the right direction. It is my opinion that the Board should engage the membership to participate in the Strategic Planning process.

3. The TCMA needs to establish a long-range financial plan. We know which classic Texas caves to buy – but these caves are typically on larger tracts of land. And



John Brooks: leaving a strong legacy of leadership

teers. The TCMA needs you to get involved. If you know how you would like to help – speak up. If you would like to help – but don't know what's needed – ask a director.

6. I feel the TCMA should consider becoming a regional cave conservancy. There are significant caves in Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas and Mexico. Growing by acquiring preserves in these States may create a larger pool of constituent members.

7. The TCMA should look to create strategic alliances and partnerships with similar conservation organizations. We should continue to consider alternative land uses for our preserves. Some of these alternative uses could be a source of revenue for the Preserve and organization.

8. The TCMA “leadership” needs to continue to work in an open, transparent and collaborative effort. We are all working towards the same goal – and the TCMA benefits when people set aside petty differences and work together. It is obvious – but it needs to be said.

9. I feel the TCMA should restructure or re-organize its “committee” system. Many committees do not seem particularly active. And others are constantly doing something. I felt that the committees did not fully reflect what we were doing or where we were going. We tried to stream line the committees – but could never fulfill on how these groups should be organized.

Well, that's it. I have more thoughts. But my “other” career as an architect requires my attention. It has been fun.



Brooks leading board breakout session at UT Austin this summer

the cost to acquire significant acreage limits our ability to acquire these caves. If the TCMA is to ever reach the point where these types of acquisitions are possible – we need to begin planning and raising money now. I suspect we may need to look outside of the caving community to find the expertise we need to help us grow.

4. The TCMA needs to continue to look for and acquire caves and land that match our Mission.

5. Get involved. The TCMA needs each of you and thrives because of its dedicated members and passionate volun-

TCMA Passages

Ezell's Cave: Window on the Edwards Aquifer

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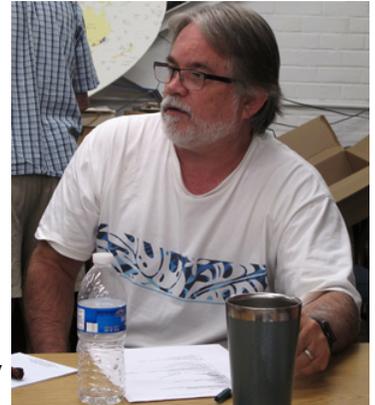
a big focus of activity by the Texas Cave Management Association. As the summer began, the TCMA Preserves Committee met with Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) in San Antonio to discuss public education and ongoing management plans.

Also, the old gate was totally removed and a slight breach of the new gate was repaired in April by Jim Kennedy. Brick, mortar and concrete is piled outside the gate and will need to be removed in the future. The new gate was installed to encourage bats to re-colonize the cave and provide nutrients for extant species in the lake below.

On the scientific front, the EAA continued its ongoing water quality recording this year. Monitoring has not shown any bat activity to date. Also this year, the responsibilities of managing the preserve transitioned from Ron Ralph to Michael Cicherski.

Although TCMA has no plans for major improvements at the preserve in 2017, work will continue. The property is looking fine and will require only minor scheduled maintenance at this point. The trail from Brown Street downslope to the chain-link cave gate is minimal and the mulch covering is holding well.

There has been no erosion to speak of so far. The upper area is well populated with wildflowers and shrubs which have grown through the mulch zone. Several clean-up projects have been conducted at Ezell's but additional removal of invasive species is needed. A huge stand of bamboo in the southeastern corner of the property will require a great deal of labor and may have to be contracted. There will be another maintenance day early in 2017 using caver



Michael Cicherski

volunteers. An announcement will be sent out well in advance. In the EAA meeting, Michael Cicherski, Jim and Ron represented TCMA. We discussed preserve fencing, security camera and additional signage. We also explained our mission statement and our desire to educate the public concerning caves, karst and the creatures that live there. Ron gave a short PowerPoint as background and then provided a statement on the ongoing goals at Ezell's.

Texas Cave Management Association - a 501(c)3 nonprofit since 1986

Visit us online! <http://www.tcmacaves.org/>

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Membership information

Membership Fees:

Regular - \$15.00

Associate (Students under 21)
- \$10.00

Institutional (Non-profit) -
\$50.00

Corporate - \$100.00

Life (Regular Rate) - \$500.00

Joining is easy! Go online at
www.tcmacaves.org - or send a
check to:

Texas Cave Management
Association Inc.
PO Box 7427
Austin, TX 78713

Officers/Board of Directors

John Brooks, president
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Jay Jordan, secretary
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John Brooks
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Denise Prendergast
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Committee Chairs

Acquisitions – Travis Scott
Archives - Denise Prendergast
Budget - Ron Ralph
Communications – Jay Jordan

Database - Saj Zappitello
Finance - Michael Cicherski
Fundraising – Pam Campbell
Insurance - Michael Cicherski
Membership – Bennett Lee
Nominations – Galen Falgout
Organization/Efficiency – TBD
Preserves Management - Jim Kennedy

Preserve Managers

Deep and Punkin - Don Arburn
Ezell's Cave – Michael Cicherski
Godwin Ranch – Andrea Croskey
Lost Oasis – Drew Thompson
Robber Baron – Joe Mitchell
Rolling Oaks – Bennett Lee
UT Lands (Amazing Maze, O-9 Well) –
David Ochel
Austin caves – Matt Turner

TCMA: <http://www.tcmacaves.org/>

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TCMA board elections: Candidate statements

Elections for TCMA's Board of Directors are rapidly approaching. Watch for more information on CaveTex or TCMA's Facebook page about the timing of ballots. You can also visit the TCMA website at <http://www.tcmacaves.org/> ... Here are candidate profiles *Passages* has received so far:

Christi Burrell

I was born in Georgia but moved around a lot during my early years. We arrived in Texas when I was in middle school and I finished high school in San Antonio – then went to Texas Lutheran College for two years before transferring to Louisiana State University.



In 1987, I moved back to San Antonio and that same year started caving. My first cave was Robber Baron followed by Logan's and then Benders Water Cave (Now Twinkie's Cave). I visited all three of these caves in a two-week period. I guess you could say I was hooked. I have since explored caves

all over Texas and Southern New Mexico and other states. It did not take me long to realize how much I loved caving and the caving community.

I have always been an "outdoors" person. I also enjoy hiking, camping, backpacking, rock hounding and canoeing. I feel like getting in touch with nature is the best way to get in touch with your own true self.

I am married to Mike Burrell, also a caver. We live on the property of Cave Without a Name in Boerne, where Mike has been working for several years. I work at First Presbyterian Church San Antonio, about two blocks from the Alamo in downtown San Antonio. My work for the church is in the finance department. In fact, I have been working in nonprofit finance for almost 20 years.

Why run for the board? I previously held office in the TSA because I think that sometimes you have to get more involved instead of just sitting back and letting everyone else do all the work. It has been many years since I held any positions in caving organizations. However, I feel that it is time for me to get involved again. I truly appreciate all of the conservation work that has been done by the TCMA. I feel that with all of my years working for nonprofit organizations, I have a unique knowledge of the legal and financial boundaries of nonprofit groups. Hopefully, this knowledge will be of some help as the organization continues to grow. One thing I will tell you, if I do not know the answer, I will know where to look or who to ask so that we can keep things on the "up and up."

Lindsey Adamoski

Lindsey has been an avid caver with the Bexar Grotto and a member of TCMA since 2015. Lindsey won the 2015 Chuck Stuehm award for new and exceptionally exuberant cavers.

She has participated in several service projects including Bamberger Ranch, the LaChance Dig, private cave survey, the Texas Hydrogeo Workshop, and the Robber Baron Open House. Lindsey is punctual, organized, committed, and she



is deeply concerned with cave preservation. Lindsey would be an ardent contributor to the TCMA mission and vision.

HUGE fundraising raffle!

By Bennett Lee

This is really HUGE! TCMA will raffle camping gear at **TCR**. The winner gets EVERYTHING shown below: Columbia tent, portable picnic table with umbrella, huge Coleman



cooler, and a camp stove. Tickets are only \$20! But tickets are limited, so come to the TCMA tent early to buy your tickets so you don't miss out!

Drawing will be held Sunday during the TCMA breakfast. You don't have to be present to win, but you do

Pam Campbell with raffle details

have to buy tickets if you want an opportunity to grab this great gear!

Also, don't miss our **silent art auction** and **members' meeting** on Saturday as well as our **breakfast** on Sunday. Thanks!