

*Mid-Appalachian Region of
the National Speleological Society*

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

February 27, 2016

The meeting was called to order by MAR Chair, Paul Winter, at 1:43 PM, February 27, 2016, at the Mount Laurel Church of God, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Introductory Remarks:

Paul Winter thanked the organizers for facilitating use of the meeting space at the Mount Laurel Church of God.

Secretary's Report:

The Secretary's Report was read by MAR secretary, Hope Brooks. The minutes were accepted without change.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer's Report was read by MAR treasurer, Elizabeth "Bette" White. Printed copies were distributed. Total income of the year was \$683.06, with \$2,005.84 in expenditures.

Net income loss for the year was \$1,322.78.

Vice Chairman's Report:

No report.

Chairman's Report:

The online MAR listserv was used for an online election for officer elections due to a lack of MAR Field Meets. Approximately 50 votes were turned in, most votes were for the current board, and there were a few write-ins.

MAR Breakdown:

The MAR Breakdown report was given by Gretchen "Red" Schock. The MAR breakdown was printed and distributed on schedule electronically. If you are not receiving notice of MAR Breakdown publication, please let Red know.

2015 Field Meets:

No report.

MAR Web Site and Listserv:

The MAR webmaster, Christopher Catherman, reported that the MAR website and listserv remain functional. In 2016, the web fee increased to \$22 from \$12. As we continue to digitize MAR Breakdowns and post high-quality pictures, our web fee may increase. Christopher would like to solicit reviews of the current MAR web site via email from users of the website.

MAR Bulletins:

Will White reported that *MAR Bulletin #22: Caves of the Middle-Susquehanna Valley* has been published and is on sale for \$16. The MAR bulletin of Huntingdon County is moving forward. Will also solicited further efforts to update the bulletins.

Pennsylvania Cave Database:

An update on the Pennsylvania Cave Database will occur at the PCC meeting following the MAR Annual Business Meeting.

Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC):

Karen Bange reported that she has been in contact with Greg Turner regarding cave closures due to Northern Long Ear Bats (NLEB). Greg has provided a provisional list of 85 caves which had NLEB and which entrance during hibernation will be considered a federal offense. Discussion about the potential cave closures, bat biology, and federal law ensued.

Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy (MAKC):

Dave Field reported that MAKC held their quarterly meeting. Hall cave was inspected by the PGC, and they found four bats. Harlansburg and Bear Caves are being studied by researchers at Mercyhurst College.

The MAKC library is in order, and the library cataloging is about 95% complete. Within the next few months, the catalog will be uploaded on their website. The library is used by a WVU graduate students. After the catalog is online, an announcement will be sent out to universities and colleges with geology departments in the tri-state region.

Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC):

Pat Minnick reported that there will be a PCC meeting following the MAR Annual Business Meeting.

WNS and Bat Health:

No further report.

New Business**2016 Spring Field Meet:**

Pat Minnick reported that Franklin County Grotto is hosting the Spring MAR Field Meet May 13th-15th, 2016 at Shade Gap, Huntingdon County, PA. Registration is online, and you can pay online. T-shirt was designed by Dave Riggs and can be ordered online. Price is \$25. The PCC will host a pancake breakfast on Sunday morning, and the MAKC will provide coffee on both mornings. An information flyer will be available by April.

2016 Fall Field Meet:

Sarah Ulrich Bidlespacher reported that Bald Eagle Grotto will host the Fall MAR Field Meet September 23rd-25th, 2016 at Woodward Cave, Centre County, PA. They are looking into setting up online registration.

MAR Direction Signs:

Steve Sharver still has the signs, and he will get them to Franklin County for the Spring MAR.

After Meeting Meeting (AMM):

Mark Wolfe announced that he will host an AMM after the PCC meeting.

MAR Mailing List:

George Bange reported that the MAR mailing list is working well, and 307 people are currently on the MAR mailing list.

Commander Cody Caving Club:

Michael Mostardi reported that Commander Cody Caving Club is hosting their 40th anniversary party at Thorn Spring Park in Franklin, WV on May 7th-8th, 2016. There will be catered food, and the price is \$25.

The Commander Cody Caving Club's address has changed, and Christopher Catherman will update the MAR website to reflect the change.

Valley Quarries, Williamson County:

Franklin County Grotto member Don Arrowood announced that access forms distributed by the Valley Quarries for access to the "P caves" have been updated. The new forms are annual. There will be no access to the caves during hunting season, and more details are coming.

MAR Bulletin #7:

Bette White reported that *MAR bulletin #7: Caves of Fulton County* has been reprinted with the good Bernard Smeltzer map.

New River Cave Nature Preserve:

Carol Tideman noted that enough funds have been secured and that the last payments will be made shortly.

Karst Information Portal:

Mike Spencer reported that the Karst Information Portal (KIP), which aims to create a central library of karst information, has created a controversial database which includes cave locations, cave owner contacts, maps, etc. published unredacted. The NSS cannot force the KIP to remove cave information. Also, NSS has posted a specific act mandating that convention guidebooks will be posted on the KIP 2-5 years after the Convention. Greater Allentown Grotto has put forward motions to the Congress of Grottos and the Board of Governors to figure out ways to deal with past and present publications. Mike Spencer plans to run for a position on the BOG

and KIP politics will be his sole platform. He recommended that the MAR put together a letter to the BOG, not just the president of the NSS.

Paul Winter noted that KIP has reached out to a large number of grottos. KIP is willing to have redacted newsletters, but grottos have to redact the information themselves (KIP will send them the scans) if they want that. Amos Mincin has also sent a letter out supporting Mike Spencer's view.

Dean Snyder moved and Judi Stack seconded to prevent MAR bulletins from being digitized and made public. The motion passed. Eric Pelkey noted that MAR Field Meet Guidebooks often use quoted portions of the bulletins and questioned how that might impact guidebook creation. Paul Winter raised the point that guidebooks should not be copying sections of bulletins without permission.

Christopher Catherman discussed the possibility of having a private section of the MAR website for the MAR Breakdown or any other need to limit sensitive information to the general public. Carol Tiderman raised concerns that our financial information is sensitive.

Meeting Location

Judi Stack wanted to know if the MAR would like to meet at the Mount Laurel Church of God in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The attendees at the MAR Business Meeting unanimously indicated they would like to return next year.

Rupert Cave

Rupert Cave was purchased 20 years ago, and Karen Bange made a scrapbook celebrating 20 years at Rupert.

MAR Field Meet Profit/Loss

Paul Winter raised the point that the MAR takes half the profit and none of the loss from Field Meets. Hope Brooks moved to retain the \$1 fee to the MAR from Field Meets and cut the Field Meet profit shared to the MAR from 50% to 25%. Judi Stack has seconded the motion. Motion passed.



Good turnout for the meetings (photo by Karen Bange)

Upcoming Events

- Spring VAR Field Meet – Endless Caverns & Campgrounds, New Market, VA – April 22-24, 2016
- 40th Anniversary Event of Commander Cody Caving Club – Thorn Springs Campground, Franklin, WV – May 6-8, 2016
- Spring MAR Field Meet – Harper’s Memorial Park, Shade Gap, PA – May 13-15, 2016
- Spring NRO Field Meet – Historic Valley Campground, North Adams, MA – May 20-22, 2016
- Kentucky Speleofest – Lone Star Preserve, Bonnieville, KY – May 27-30, 2016
- Butler Cave Conservation Society Memorial Day Project Weekend – Butler Homestead, Burnsville Cove Area, VA – May 27-30, 2016
- SERA Cave Carnival – Pigeon Mountain, Near LaFayette, GA – June 2-5, 2016
- NSS Convetion – Ely, NV – July 17-23, 2016
- Old Timers Reunion – OTR Site/Campgrounds, Dailey, WV – September 1-5, 2016
- Fall NRO Field Meet – TBD – Fall 2016
- Fall MAR Field Meet – Woodward Cave and Campground, Woodward, PA – September 30 - October 2, 2016
- Butler Cave Conservation Society Annual Meeting – Butler Homestead, Burnsville Cove Area, VA – October 1, 2016
- TAG Fall Cave-In – TAG Site (Little River), Lookout Mountain, Near Trenton, GA – October 6-9, 2016
- Bridge Day – New River Gorge Bridge, Fayetteville, WV – October 15, 2016

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hope Brooks

MAR Recording Secretary

Representatives at the MAR meeting:

- Bald Eagle Grotto
- Cave Hill Grotto
- Franklin County Grotto
- Greater Allentown Grotto
- Huntingdon County Cave Hunters
- Loyalhanna Grotto
- Nittany Grotto
- Philadelphia Grotto
- Seven Valleys Grotto
- York Grotto
- Baltimore Grotto
- Commander Cody Caving Club
- Central New Jersey Grotto
- Northern New Jersey Grotto