



# Western Cave Conservancy

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## **Minutes for the Meeting of the Board of Directors of August 19, 2012**

*Held at the home of Ray and Gale Beach in Menlo Park, California*

### **Call to Order: 1:00 pm**

Attending were: Marianne Russo, Jerry Johnson, Mike Spiess, Bruce Rogers, Kelley Prebil, Kaedean Doppelmayer, Marc Hasbrouck, Ray Beach, Gale Beach, James Lakner, David Weaver, Pat Helton

Attending by phone: Neil Marchington, Tracy Audisio

### **Appoint a Recording Secretary for the meeting**

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda; seconded; all in favor.

### **Approval of Draft Minutes of May 12, 2012, Meeting**

Marianne Russo moved that we distribute the minutes (also the minutes for the August meeting) via email and approve via email in the next week.

### **Officer Reports Discussion**

Officers and directors briefly recapped their emailed reports and discussed any questions.

### ***President's Report: Marianne Russo***

Responded to email requests & correspondence; discussed the CND project with Neil Marchington (more later about this); the auction at Speleo-Ed -- she will send thank-you letters to the donors of auction items. The WCC did well at Speleo-Ed with the dinner & the schnapps tasting. She met with Martin Haye on 05/28 to work on the WCC member database. Talked with Peri Frantz about the upcoming convention. Thank you to Bruce Rogers and Pat Helton and to Gale and Ray Beach for hosting yesterday's retreat & today's meeting. (See Marianne Russo's report for more information.)

### ***Vice-President's Report: Mike Spiess***

Mike Spiess displayed & explained his report—an empty outline. He did nothing this quarter except for filing this report. ☺

### ***Treasurer's Report: Mike Spiess***

Good news: we're still in the black & solvent. The categories 'Property Maintenance' & 'Windeler' are the two main expenditures. He was concerned that there was income from the last meal but no expenses—and Kaedean Doppelmayer immediately turned in receipts of \$368 to be reimbursed. Mike developed a graph displaying WCC Income Analysis 2007-2012, showing that our income/membership has dropped off steadily in the past few years (since the Weller purchase). He also had a couple of bar graphs showing amount of donations and "WCC Member Giving"—again showing the spike of donations to the Weller Preserve purchase. The amount of donations clusters at \$25, ~\$100, and then drops again. We currently have ~\$30,000 in the bank.

**Secretary's Report: John Moreno**

John Moreno sent a quick email to Marianne Russo: He now has access to the various drop boxes—he will mail letters and reminders to expired members when he returns from his current travels.

**Committee Reports**

**Public Relations Committee Report: Kaedean Doppelmayr**

She just took this position in May. Her goal is to make sure there's a newsletter out by next meeting, even if we have to leave Clough Cave out of the newsletter. They put on a dinner at the Speleo-Ed in Bend (it was freezing) with help by Marc Hasbrouck, Gail McCoy, and others: they served 52 adults and children. The WCC took in \$1100, netting ~\$760. That's less than usually netted, but there were fewer people also. She also has 20 pounds of frozen ground beef left over, which she will use at the next dinner. She just received a copy of the WCC brochure yesterday.

There was some discussion about the upcoming Frogtown, CA Regional; the recent announcement about the discovery of a new spider species—it's a good opportunity with the PR about that, so we need to just get a newsletter issue out soon; we need anyone who can to write an article for the newsletter.

Marianne Russo: Kaedean had mentioned that this will be our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary—any suggestions?

Kaedean: She would like to make certificates or plaques or something for people (to present at Regional) who have done a lot for the WCC over the years: e.g., Martin Haye, Dan Snyder, Rolf Aalbu, as well as several of those present. Will there be any program? Slides of what the WCC has worked on? Kaedean doesn't have enough time during the event now (Matt Bowers has allowed ~15 minutes for our anniversary recognition at the dinner). She will arrange for others to serve dinner, while she acts as the emcee for this. She needs to talk later about how much money she should spend on the awards.

**Property Stewardship Committee Report: Kelley Prebil**

Kelley Prebil: Someone shot off the lock at Windeler Cave—they talked with the US Forest Service about it, and it's apparently not something unusual on Forest Service land. They appear to have shot from the road—shells were found there. The cave was totally undisturbed, though. Kelley has created a database with the names of all the visitors so that new trustees will be able to find out who's already been there (for instance, Steven Johnson has already been twice). She talked with Martin Haye about some projects to be done: welcome packet/forms/etc for new trustees; strengthening the lower ladder; a new gate which Chuck Lee has the design for; the stainless steel plate from Jim Hilderbrand is gone; and Ernie wants to modify the road gate to what it used to look like; who would pay for and do the work, even if the Forest Service approves?

WCC members cleared out some poison oak. The next trip will be led by Dave Bunnell on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, then Kelley's on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. They will be enforcing the "trustees must lead their trip each year or they'll no longer be a trustee" rule. If there's a slot open under one grotto, that slot could be filled with someone from another grotto. Right now the "unaffiliated" trustee is Mike White, who is stepping down next year and will be replaced with Dave Bunnell.

There was some discussion about using/not using vertical gear to get out of the cave: each trip must bring vertical gear and know how to use it to at least have with them in case it's needed. Some trustees don't use it, but we must insist they take it in case it's needed!

Marianne Russo said we should work with NCRC to evaluate the cave for litter carry-out, develop a pre-plan, etc. Kelley will talk with Martin further about this. Martin Hays suggested this to the Windeler Committee earlier, but they didn't feel it necessary. Marianne emphasized that it's the decision of the Board, and there was agreement here that we really need to consult with NCRC and develop that plan, taking all the steps we can to avoid a problem later. This is an issue of safety and insurance and liability and avoiding lawyers later. We probably should also have liability forms signed by all involved, on the date of the trip, much like the forms at the Weller Preserve.

Bruce Rogers asked Kelley about the type of lock that was shot at Windeler; he commented that the locks used at San Vicente Redwoods (CEMEX) are impressive, and he'll find out what type they are. Kelley will talk with Martin Hays about what type they have at Windeler.

Mike Spiess said he had prepared a database of visitation to Windeler, which he will resurrect for Marianne to use in Public Relations efforts.

#### ***Weller Preserve Manager's Report: Marianne Russo***

There has been lots of brush clearing. They couldn't yet get the fence posts installed on the southern boundary, but will do that as soon as the rains start & soften the soil. There's not much Scotch/French Broom left on the property, and they remove any they see. ☺ She submitted a receipt to Mike Spiess for the Roundup they bought for Weller. Mike Spiess will get a form set up for people who are submitting receipts for reimbursement, She'd tried getting someone out from NCRC to do an evaluation at Weller Preserve, but it never got done...so she'll try that again. She needs to get someone to do bolts on hangers when needed above the vertical entrance. Bruce Rogers said he can help install the bolts. They'll work on it.

#### ***Human Resources Committee Report: Jerry Johnson***

The membership database, now completed, is something he's wanted for quite awhile, so now he can begin to collect some info we need about members: is a member interested in being an Advisor? Being a Director? Do they have special skills that we can use? He's not getting as much junk mail as when he was listed as HR Director. He's working on the Board Manual. The info from Martin Hays yesterday at the Retreat will be very useful in developing the manual. (Martin has sent a 12 GB memory stick to Bruce Rogers with all the WCC's archives...it should arrive soon.) Jerry's planning to send a letter to each advisor, asking what they'd like to work on, what skillsets they have, etc.

#### ***Cave Next Door Report: Neil Marchington***

Why is CND called the Mistress Dig? See his report for some details. The dig is now getting promising. Could be more than a 1/2 mile long. What about safety concerns? They need to stay above the hauls. Marianne Russo: Did you get any clear idea of what they want from us?

Neil Marchington: There was an agreement with the US Forest Service, but it was revoked(?). Dave Hodges has a vision of putting the dig online so people over the world could watch the progress. Perhaps the Western Region could be involved to do the work, and WCC involved to help with inventory, etc.

Neil Marchington's proposing a meeting with David Hodges, US Forest Service, WCC, and maybe Western Region to discuss the project & the involvement of each. We would then help develop an MOU (or Special Use Permit) for this work to continue.

Bruce Rogers is in favor of involvement; picture it: a Webcam showing the dig, with the WCC logo prominently shown, and (per David Weaver's suggestion) and a PayPal link!

There was further discussion pro & con about our involvement. Why would we, a conservation organization, be involved in a dig? There was more discussion about this.

Neil agreed with Bruce & would like to see the WCC on board with the project.

Mike Spiess said we'd still have a liability, even with the MOU/Permit. We need to seriously consider that.

### **Acquisitions Committee: Bruce Rogers**

CND- see above report from Neil.

San Vicente Redwood (CEMEX)/Davenport property: He just (August 4) led the second trip into "White Moon Cave" for Peninsula Open-Space Trust (POST)/Sempervirens Fund (SVF). He learned from POST what the outcome of the property will be: they'll be selling the conservation easement to the property, and the result will be four entities as owners, which will help to protect the property.

They found bats inside one of the caves—no one had seen them there for 20-25 years.

At the beginning of this week, Nina at POST contacted him again about the Quest TV show wanting to film inside the cave. There will be two trips coming up to set up and then to film. Bruce would also like to have a biologist to go with him to discuss the critters they may find there.

Lake Shasta Caverns: it's still for sale. Mike Spiess asked what their revenue stream is...we don't know at this point. Marianne: It would be a perfect venue for our PR & outreach efforts.

Mike Spiess: It would be appropriate to ask them to see their books, not unreasonable if we're serious about possibly buying it. Bruce: Would Mike be willing to contact someone there & see if we can look at their books? We'd need to look at the MOU/Agreement with the Forest Service, when it will expire, etc. Mike would be willing to go with Bruce to visit there and talk with them this fall, after their busy summer season is winding down. Gale Beach: Is there a real cave manager who could go with us to evaluate the site? Greg Francek's name came up...he may be good especially since he's no longer with Black Chasm. The discussion sounded encouraging and we'll follow up on this. Any contacts inside the FS? Marianne Russo mentioned someone who Steve Hobson should know (he's a member of the grotto). Ray Beach: When you look at the books, look carefully at the maintenance records for the buses & boats.

David Weaver: D---- Cave, on private land (possibly Ordway's old property) near New Melones. The owner gives permission to visit the cave, but new owners of other nearby property (as of ~3 yr ago) refuse to give permission for anyone to cross their property and have been antagonistic towards cavers. There was some discussion about easements & access to property.

Tracy Audisio said that Dale Hartwig had taken someone there and that there's a new species(?) of spider & beetle that a couple of scientists at the CalAcademy would like to look for. Bruce Rogers asked her to find out their names & let him know.

We're working with Matt Bowers at the Regional regarding signage for Natural Bridges. This is a great opportunity for education/outreach to the visitors at that park.

David Weaver is interested in working with Bruce Rogers on the upcoming San Vicente Redwoods (CEMEX) committee.

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

### General Issues and Potential Projects:

1) CND (Ore.): (Neil Marchington)

Neil has visited the dig being worked by David Hodges near Oregon Caves. He has prepared a detailed report of his investigation and will share that and discuss it with us. This information will hopefully let us make a more informed decision about possible WCC involvement with this project.

2) Recording Secretary: (Marianne Russo/Bruce Rogers)

It has been suggested that we consider making this a more or less permanent position, thus freeing the person in the office of Secretary from the requirement of being a good note taker and allowing him or her to participate in the meeting without trying to multi-task.

It was agreed that Pat Helton will be appointed as Recording Secretary.

3) 3) Unfilled Directorships: (Marianne Russo/Bruce Rogers)

a) Science: Still needs job description – already discussed.

b) Special Projects: We have a candidate who has volunteered. Neil Marchington has agreed to do this for us, has good qualifications & contacts & skills, and there were no dissenters.

c) Special Events: Need job description if we keep this separate from PR.

This was developed for Kaedean Doppelmayer. She said she will develop a job description for this position if she does step down from PR.

d) Stewardship:

e) Education/Outreach:

We mentioned yesterday about revising our ByLaws to allow for more Directors, and this would permit us to have more flexibility in whatever directors are needed. Bruce Rogers has spoken with Chuck Chavdarian about his possible interest in becoming a director, and he's enthusiastic about the possibility. He's been an officer in the Diablo Grotto for some time, he's active in the Armenian community, led two trips to visit Armenian caves, he's been invited back by the Armenian government to help them develop cave tours, is active with the Hawaiian Cave Conservancy, and is an excellent public speaker.

4) Budget Tracking: (Marianne Russo/Mike Spiess)

There are several directors who need to use WCC funds for various goods and services to fulfill their responsibilities. For the January meeting an annual budget proposal needs to be submitted for discussion and approval; I think we are getting the hang of this. However, the

second part of this issue, which we are not managing very well, is submitting receipts to Mike in a timely manner and reporting on the status of our budget quarterly. We need to develop a simple method to do this and commit to following through. {Note: Discuss issue of Squarespace bill}

Kaedean Doppelmayer: Said that it's difficult when they have to front the full cost of food & other expenses to prepare WCC dinners for Speleo-Ed and the Regional. Discussion. Mike agreed that it's no problem for him to advance them some money beforehand.

*Motion: Mike Spiess: That we advance 75% of the estimated cost of expenses before a WCC dinner to Kaedean Doppelmayer & Marc Hasbrouck. Vote will be held at end of meeting.*

5) WCC as Education/Information Source:

During this last quarter we had two random requests for information come in on the [mail@westerncaves.org](mailto:mail@westerncaves.org) address. One of these came from a couple of grade school kids who wanted information for a diorama or other assignment on caves, and the other was from someone wanting information on geocaching in Nevada caves. The first request generated a lot of discussion on the board list. The second was taken care of quickly by referring the person to Steve Deveny, an Advisor and Nevada caver. People seem to think this was something we should take a closer look at and come up with some ideas about dealing with this in the future.

There was some discussion about queries received by the WCC and who receives them (currently Martin Hays, Marianne Russo, and Kelley Prebil; Martin will be removed from the list). Marianne will assign the query to someone appropriate to answer. We could also develop an FAQ portion of the Website to help answer some questions.

6) WCC Communication with Caving community: (Kelley Prebil/Bruce Rogers)

Kelley Prebil has expressed concerns about keeping the website more up-to-date and trying to develop more electronic communications with our members. Bruce Rogers has talked about doing more grotto presentations. These are great ideas and we need to figure out how we can get them moving.

Bruce Rogers & Kelley discussed about updates to the Website & the FaceBook page. We need to do more frequent updates. Kelley found more people "like"ing our FB page lately—not cavers. This was probably a result of the recent spider paper and publicity. Marianne Russo posts messages to the NSS West list & asks that others repost to the grotto lists. Kaedean Doppelmayer: More frequent updates will help the organization not look moribund. This will help with attracting new members. It's much less effort than putting together a newsletter. We could list cave trips to help generate publicity. Could post Weller Preserve work days announcements & thank-you notes.

There was some discussion about the photos used for Directors on the Website. Should they be in caving gear or more formal? How about showing them doing something? How about one of each: formal and action? There was discussion about the impression on potential donors or collaborative agencies. Bruce Rogers will talk with Ana Ulfeldt (who is a professional photographer) and see if she's willing to do some photos for us.

Re: restarting the grotto dog-and-pony show: Bruce Rogers wants to start that effort again. It's a great way to bring the WCC back in the fore. Marianne Russo cautioned that it's a lot of work and that it requires more than one person (the second to take checks/PayPal/forms/etc & answer questions).

We need an informational brochure (not one saying that we're trying to buy Rippled). Kaedeann Doppelmayer will come up with a layout & will ask Bruce Rogers for content.

Marc Hasbrouck suggested a promotional film/DVD/Utube video that could be distributed to grottos & others who may ask about our organization. Bruce Rogers will ask Frank Binney about producing a video like this. Kaedeann Doppelmayer will talk with John Hargreaves about it.

Aside: John Woods was given the Arts & Letters Award at the NSS Convention this year. (Unfortunately, this was announced after the winds took out the power & there was no amplification for the announcement. He may not even know yet!)

- 7) Spider discovery: This got a lot of press and publicity for the WCC! Recent emails from advisor Tracy Audisio informed us that the unusual spider discovered two years ago (August 2010) has turned out to be a very significant discovery. Articles and press releases have already been published and we may be contacted by media. The name and location of this cave is very sensitive, not to mention the landowner relations. We need to be extremely careful about what we say. Suggestion to switch the Website page to feature the spider discovery, which Kelley Perbil will do.
- 8) Cave Conservancies Roundtable Report: Peri Frantz attended the Conservation Roundtable at the NSS Convention and submitted a report to Marianne Russo. The Texas Cace Conservancy is is paid to manage caves in housing developments, and they give out educational advice. Peri included updates from other conservancies, with info that we can apply to ours. Check out Website for Karst Environmental Education and Protection, Inc. (KEEP) <http://www.gotkarst.org>. Peri represented us & said that we're trying to attract new younger members; other CC's are also having this problem. She pointed out that we're "in-your'face" with our dinners & tables information tables at the regional events. Others don't even do this.

There was some discussion about whether we could charge for admission to the Weller Preserve or require that visitors be WCC members; this could increase our liability or possibly(?) jeopardize our 501c3 status (Mike checked & doesn't think it's a 501c3 problem).

- 9) Email list problems: already discussed
- 10) Membership database problems: already discussed
- 11) Other items:

Gale Beach suggested: How about putting out a "wish list" for items we need (like Bat Conservation International [BCI] does)? Perhaps this could be included in the newsletter. They already donated the chairs that were needed at the Preserve. Bruce Rogers: An item for the

wish list: How about electricity at the Preserve? How much would it cost to provide that? Marianne Russo will look into the price (we'll need a pole, transformer, wiring meter, etc. in addition to the monthly bills). Jerry Johnson: This could be most important for research work, especially in the winter. The Weller Preserve is also a good site for WCC meetings, especially if we have electricity there. Mike Spiess: The Plymouth Eagle Scouts could take on a project to assist with enlarging the shed.

**\*\*Anyone responsible for spending money needs to have that to Mike Spiess several weeks before next meeting so that Mike can have a budget ready for next year.**

**\*\*and he really means it!**

Jim Lakner mentioned to Marianne Russo yesterday that we need to get the January public meeting settled early. He said that the Lexus dealership on Stevens Creek is the venue for next year's NSS BOG meeting—perhaps that should be considered. We'll need a phone connection & electricity, would be nice if we can bring our own food & beverages; wi-fi would be nice. Bruce Rogers will look into what facilities POST has that we could use.

**Break to craft motions; reconvened to vote:**

That we appoint David Weaver to the Advisory Board.  
Bruce Rogers moved, Mike Spiess seconded, all in favor

That we appoint Neil Marchington to the Board of Directors as the Director of Special Projects.  
Jerry Johnson moved, Bruce Rogers seconded, all in favor

That we appoint Pat Helton as Recording Secretary.  
Kaedeann Doppelmayr moved, Bruce Rogers seconded, all in favor

That we advance funds to a WCC Director for preapproved large expenditures at 75% of the predicted budget.  
Mike Spiess moved, Kaedeann Doppelmayr seconded, all in favor

That we amend our ByLaws to increase our number of directors to twelve. (That's Article 3, Section 1.)  
Bruce Rogers moved, Kaedeann Doppelmayr seconded, all in favor

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**Adjournment: 5:49 pm**

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