

February Meeting Minutes of the Niagara Frontier Grotto - 2/19/2010
6-Month Calendar of Events on Last Page

The meeting was held at Joe and Judy's.

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 pm.

Present: Greg Atwood, Peg Baltz, Derek Bill, Mike Elio, Dan & Marcela Garigen, Joe Giunta, Sharon Hanson, Sandor Hopenwasser, Judy Marshall, Mark Wade.

Treasurer's Report: (Published under separate cover, members only)

Derek paid \$15 for his 2010 dues at this meeting.

Reading of the Minutes: Joe read the minutes from the January meeting. In summary:

ADK Expo, on June 12, conflicts with Sally & Trevor's wedding

Gear-cleaning protocols

IO report

Administrative rights to the Google group for Joe

Website -- asking Allan to be web master

Joe asked Greg to follow up with the company that Greg reported is now making climbing rope

Officers meeting held the Sunday after last month's meeting

Old Business

ADK Outdoor Expo – June 12, conflicts with Sally & Trevor's wedding. We discussed who might be able to cover the Expo and who's attending/not able to attend. Sandor thinks he can cover the Expo, as do Dave and possibly Derek. Joe would like to be able to cover the Expo AND drive out in time to make it to the wedding.

Dan talked about updates he's making to the brochure – new pictures and updated text. Sandor can print the brochures. We'll need these for the ADK Expo.

Trip Dates – Joe plans to advertise two “newbie” trips at the ADK Expo on June 26 and July 24; he explained the idea brought up at the officer's meeting last month which was to ask for a non-refundable deposit for these trips at the time of sign-up (June 12) and asked for feedback from the group. The majority felt this would work in terms of commitment to a date. Some feel that asking for money at the time of sign-up could deter interested parties. We decided that we would allow interested parties to make a deposit to hold their space on the trip, but we won't disallow any interested parties who would like to pay later. Judy will provide a receipt book for the ADK Expo to record those who sign up and pay in advance.

Burroughs Trip – The trip to Burroughs, which Greg agreed to lead at last month's meeting, will be held the second weekend in September (September 10-12).

IO Report – Judy submitted the updates for the 2009 IO report.

Website – At this point Joe called Allan so he could participate in the meeting. Allan stated he's added some photos & updated officers to our website. He plans to do additional work this weekend. Joe has requested links to our Facebook page and Google Group, with Facebook acting as a "front door" which would link back to the website. The Google group is where we post the active information.

New Business

Joe Armstrong agreed to lead our group on a trip through the back of Howe Cave on May 22.

Climbing Training – Dan Garigen will start up a ropes course as his schedule allows, if there are enough interested parties. Joe said he will also have a rope available for climbing practice if anyone's interested. He suggested starting after the ADK Expo.

NCC – Joe brought up an issue concerning NCC for feedback. Information was received that the NCC paid \$12,000 in legal fees to fight the Quarry's purchase of Howe (NCC lost). The question was raised as to whether that was a good use of NCC monies. The group feels we don't contribute enough money to NCC to have a say in this, and is not opposed to continue paying the small sums we traditionally pay to the NCC as donations.

The recent news of the Center for Biodiversity's proposal to the government to close caves due to the WNS problem was brought up. The group was divided in terms of whether or not they think the petition will be successful. However, rather than write a letter on behalf of the grotto, it was decided that we should all write individual letters of opposition. Joe feels a statement does need to be made on behalf of the grotto and we'll discuss it at the next meeting.

Meeting Agendas – Joe is considering asking an attorney friend to come to one of our meetings to discuss liability issues in taking people on trips, as this has been a question in the past. Other presenters are Joe Armstrong, who agreed to speak in the near future on work he's been doing collecting samples of microscopic cave life, which he has been recording under microscope at Cobleskill College. Judy asked Jamie Sledd from Toronto to speak, and he agreed to come to one of our spring meetings to discuss caving in Canada.

Spring NRO – Judy handed out posters for Spring NRO which will be held May 14-16 in Central Bridge. There will be vertical training and a geology field trip in addition to cave trips of all kinds. Judy announced that our squeezebox has been requested for NRO, so anyone who's going who has a large enough vehicle to bring the squeezebox, please work it out with Dan as that's where the box currently resides.

Survey – Joe brought up a survey class for anyone who’s interested. Mike, Dave, and Mark are interested, and are to see Joe after the meeting about dates.

Officers Meeting – Joe gave a brief summary of the officer’s meeting held last month. Dave will be contacting some colleges once we have a printed brochure and are certain the website has been brought up-to-date. Dan suggested we also drop off some brochures at Rock Ventures; Derek suggested hanging up a poster or putting brochures at EMS and offered to take some to the EMS in Buffalo. We also discussed a name change at the officer’s meeting to “Western New York Cavers.” Feelings were mixed, but the group leaned toward using both names, one as an official name when referencing our association with the NSS, but the WNY Cavers being used as a “working name” with new cavers especially. Conversation veered in the direction of it being more of a priority to be planning and leading trips. Greg opined that every experienced member should be leading at least one trip a year.

Derek was asked if he’d be willing to lead another WV trip, possibly in late summer. He will check his availability and let us know. Dan will try to put together a TAG trip. Sandor wants to lead a trip to McCallisterville in late fall. Dates of these trips, if they can be arranged, will be announced.

The March meeting will be held at Dan and Marcela’s, 294 Phelps Rd., Honeoye Falls, on Thursday, 3/18, at **7 p.m.** Yes, that is 7 P.M.

Derek motioned to close the meeting at close to 10 p.m. and your secretary couldn’t hear the second because it was actually a unanimous shout. However, many hung around for another hour reminiscing, talking about the region’s karst, caves in the Adirondacks, and giant rabbits (ask Greg).

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Marshall, Secretary

↓ Calendar of upcoming events, next page ↓

Calendar of Events

March
3/18 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Dan & Marcela's
April
4/15 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Location TBA
4/16-18 – Floyd Collins Fest - American Cave Museum, Horse Cave KY
May
5/14-16 – Spring NRO, Central Bridge
5/20 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Location TBA
5/21-23 - Spring VAR (Virginia Area Region) Meeting - Hosted by Bubble Cave
5/22 – Howe Cavern trip with Joe Armstrong, Schoharie
June
6/12 – ADK Expo, Mendon Ponds Park
6/17 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Location TBA
6/26 – Newbie trip, Schoharie
July
7/16 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Location TBA
7/23-25 – Newbie trip, Schoharie
August
8/2-6 – NSS Convention, Essex Junction, Vermont. Check out the convention Web site (Ctrl-click to follow link)
8/20 – Meeting, 7 p.m., Location TBA