

2024 SERA Winter Business Meeting

February 17, 2024

Werner Park Nature Center

Hosted by Nashville Grotto

Officers: President: Chrissy Richards, Vice President: Shari Lydy, Secretary/Treasurer: Calla McKee

--Roll Call:

Overall attendances roughly 30

Grottos/Organizations Present: Cullman Grotto, Huntsville Grotto, Dogwood City Grotto, Sewanee Mountain Grotto, Chattanooga Grotto, Clarksville Underground Grotto, Nashville Grotto, Smoky Mountain Grotto, Spencer Mountain Grotto, Upper Cumberland Grotto, Georgia Speleological Society, Tennessee Cave Survey, East TN Grotto. **Flittermouse Grotto (Shari is member)**

--Old Business:

Reviewed 2023 Meeting Notes, no other old business

--New Business:

Bylaws were updated to refer officer positions as board members for purpose of 501C3 requirements

Creation of New SERA Bank Account

Looking for NSS Representative for SERA Activity Reports

No 2024 Cave Carnival, Grottos to host 2025 (**Cave Carnival:possibly ETG and/or Smoky Mountain Grotto**) and 2026 Cave Carnival and Winter Business Meeting still to be determined

--Grottos Gave Reports and Announcements about recent activities

--Presentation from Maureen Handler about the upcoming 2024 NSS Convention held at St. Andrews School, Sewanee TN.

--Formed SERA Award Committees

--Officer Elections

Discussion of candidates being chosen every year instead of traditional Vice President to move up as President, this tradition is not included in the bylaws, to specifically update the bylaws there will be a planned executive meeting then reviewed by membership organizations through an online meeting

There is a bylaw amendment dated 3/1/69 The Vice-Chairman will automatically step into the position of Chairman after term is up. The action is included in the bylaws and not a tradition. Executive committee can discuss further, let the member grottos know it is in the bylaws, and ask if member grottos want the EC to propose that candidates are chosen each year

-->Elected Secretary/Treasurer: Calla McKee

-->Vice Chair: Chrissy Richards

-->Chair: Shari Lydy

--Presentation by Ed Yarborough about the History of SERA with wonderful slideshow including Speleoneers Covers of his own talented drawings and comics

--Break for Lunch

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--Award Announcements:

Francis McKinney Award Presented to Bill DeVan

Many attributing factors make him a wonderful candidate to win this award with multiple nominations. Bill DeVan has committed over 20 years to serving the Smokey Mountain Grotto, East TN Grotto, SERA, and the NSS in many officer positions. *“Bill is a very humble person who thoughtfully performs all the hard background work involved in any major caving project without a peep of complaint.”* Bill has assisted with the 2000, 2002, 2007, 2015, and 2017 Cave Carnivals including guidebooks and chair positions. In the Fentress, Cumberland, Anderson, and Knox County areas Bill has contributed to many cave explorations, mapping projects, cave clean ups and led many trips for new cavers. He is admirably valued among his friends and considered a wonderful attribute to the caving community.

Larry S Adams Landowner Award Presented to Donnie Jewett

A deserving landowner of this award who owns the current deepest cave in TN. *“Mr. Jewett has provided very open access for many years for exploration and survey. Owned caves are Happy Top Horror Hole, Jewett Cave, Jewett 2, Jewett 3, Jewett Spring Cave, Hinchman’s Noose, Journey to the Center of the Earth, among others.”*

Richard Schrieber Award not Presented
Alexis Harris Conservation Award not Presented
Avis Moni Hospitality Award not Presented
SERA Meritorious Service Award not Presented

Brent Aulenbach announced Map Salon Winners, 30th Annual Map Salon!

- Merit Awards: Warren Wyatt, Journey to the Center of the Earth Cave
Dane Garreau, Graham Spring Cave
- New Cartographers – Jesse Butcher, Pleasant Surprise Cave
- Vertical Caves: 2nd Place John Zetterberg, Aberration Chamber
1st Place Dane Garreau, Severed Well
- Horizontal Caves: 2nd Place Zeke McKee, Cave of Caerbannog
1st Place and Best of Show Ryan Hoffman, Lidar Lead 12 Cave

Annabelle Dempsey announced Photo Salon Winners

Report is online, we hope to establish a digital display for entries next year