

CASI



Good evening everyone.

I hope you are all doing well and staying safe.

I come to you this evening with a very disheartening update.

Late last week, we were informed that Brewster Country will not be issuing any permits for the remainder of 2020. In essence, this means that without our mass gathering permit, the 54th Terlingua International Chili Championship has been canceled.

We, like you, are extremely disappointed that this is happening. Over the last several months, the BOD has talked about contingency plans; the first item we tackled was how to have a TICC scaled back to the bare bones. We adjusted budgets, we made cuts in ordering items, we looked at every budget line item to possibly be able to continue TICC. After considering all the avenues open to us, we simply cannot logistically, and most importantly financially, continue to plan for a TICC this year.

We considered possibly moving TICC to another location and that idea was abandoned. When you look at what it takes to have an event of this size, we take for granted what we have not worried about for years; namely the ease and accessibility we have at the Ranch.

To successfully run TICC, we have everything we need in place at the Ranch. Tables, chairs, pavilions and all the necessary small detail items it takes. When we thought about another location, there were many questions...most important...where? Where could we possibly move to? With everything in some sort of lockdown, there is nowhere.

Secondly, and for our organization more importantly, the financial side. The Executive Director does not only handle the day-to-day operations of CASI; the ED is also in part responsible for the financial health and well being of this organization. That is where my thoughts and concerns have been these last several months. If we move the event, we lose the income from the gate, the main bar, the Krazy Flats saloon and store and the main concession store. We lose the income from the Tuesday CCO. We lose the income from the ABC Contest.

We are going to take a huge financial hit to our ability to raise monies for the Scholarship Fund. The Friday events are the largest source of income for the Scholarship Fund and it's not only the Friday events, but the monies from the drawings that benefit the Scholarship Fund.

Also in that mix, the Terlingua School loses out on their fundraiser as well; the drawings they have for the beautiful quilts every year.

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Basically, it comes down to this...for CASI to continue into the 2020-2021 chili year, we cannot take on the financial responsibilities of TICC and survive. We are not broke. Let me make that perfectly clear. But with an organization that relies on 99% donations to survive and with nothing coming in, we cannot responsibly entertain having TICC. End of story.

The Executive Director and the Board of Directors are, simply put, the stewards of CASI. This organization belongs to the members. The upcoming Great Peppers' Meeting is the time that you entrust your Great Pepper to be your voice. You are CASI. You have selected us to guide this organization through all the obstacles that are presented to CASI, and you rely on us to make the best decisions possible.

We have listened to your suggestions, opinions and thoughts throughout these past six months. We have kept you abreast of every decision we have made. We have kept you informed on every aspect of how we are dealing with this crisis as it affects the organization that so many have devoted so much time and effort to. Remember, there are no guidelines here; there are no past experiences that we can draw from; we have to look at the current climate and make decisions based on what we know and what is being projected.

With this in mind, it is the intention of the Board to address the following issue in the best way we know how and what we believe is the best way to navigate the upcoming 2020-2021 chili year: TICC Qualifications and Points.

After this post tonight, the GPs will receive a proposal for a temporary suspension of the TICC Qualification Policy as listed in the Rulebook. The proposal will also be posted on the GPM page on the website. This action will be discussed and voted on at the GP Meeting in Gonzales by the voting delegates.

We are sending this to the entire organization so that the membership has time to meet and discuss before the GPs head to the meeting in September. Friday afternoon, September 18, we have scheduled an informal meeting open to all the members to discuss the proposal before we go into the meeting on Saturday. I urge all members who are able and/or interested to attend the GP meeting this year in Gonzales. If you have never attended a GP meeting, this is the time. This discussion will help us move forward into the new chili year.

I am not going to go into details of the proposal at this moment. I urge each and every one of you to get involved with your Pod and to express your thoughts and opinions to your Great Pepper.

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We hoped against hope that we would be able to have some sort of event this year. We planned and cut and made inquiries for months. Like you, however, we knew in the back of our minds what the outcome would be based on the ever-changing knowledge we received on an almost daily basis. But like all chili cooks, we don't give up unless we positively have to surrender.

We cook in the rain, snow, floods, hurricanes, blizzards, droughts; name a weather event and we still gather to make it happen. But with circumstances beyond our control, this year we just can't work a miracle.

We appreciate you all for everything you have done to support the organization and the Board of Directors these past six months. Thank you again and I hope to see many of you in Gonzales.

Thank you and have a good evening.