

MINUTES OF THE KANSAS CITY AREA GROTTO MARCH 2018 BUSINESS MEETING

HELD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2018 – 7:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.

ARTHUR MAG CONFERENCE CENTER – 4920 CHERRY ST, KCMO

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by President Pic Walenta. The following members were present: Jay Bridgewater, Bill Gee, Cliff Gill, Rick Hines, Laura Jaynes, Gary Johnson, Kyle Lewis, Jack Peters, and Pic Walenta. Guests present: Kirsten Alvey-Mudd, and Becca Marlin.

Presentation: Our guest was Kirsten Alvey-Mudd, Executive Director of the Missouri Bat Census. Founded in 2012, Missouri Bat Census set out to establish and maintain bat locations and populations on private and government land. Kirsten shared about several aspects of MBC's work, such as research, bat rescue and rehab, educational programs, karst/cave restoration, bat houses, mapping, and watershed services. MBC has the state divided into five regions; Northeastern Missouri is where Kirsten does much of her work.

The Northeastern region is comprised of 17 counties, 129 caves, and 11 quarries, so Kirsten stays busy! Winter surveys are important for identifying summer follow ups, i.e. to assess Gray Bat ceiling stains or guano piles (in Missouri, large guano piles are almost always from Gray Bats), etc. Infrared filming, and tracking devices are often applied in evaluating population size and movement.

A notable accomplishment, on February 6, 2012, Kirsten discovered the largest endangered Indian Bat hibernaculum with over 20 miles of passage (common for the area) in Hannibal, MO. This became Sodalis Nature Preserve, a 185-acre park given to the city to preserve endangered bats.

Kirsten works with several universities and government agencies, and participates in research involving species diversity, and White Nose Syndrome. UV light can be used to identify WNS before it is fully visible. Typically, bats have quite efficient bodies, utilizing condensation reabsorption and euthermic body temperature regulation to effectively hibernate. WNS affected bats rouse more, tending to move toward entrances or leave the cave during freezing weather. At Cameron Cave, experimental treatment of WNS affected bats has been incredible. They utilized white and black light photography to document the bats, weighed, measured, sexed, tagged and sorted them. Bats were then loaded into coolers, and treated with *Rhodococcus Rhodochrous*, a bacterium found to inhibit growth of *Pseudogymnaoscus destructans*, the fungal species responsible for WNS. In May 2015, the first bats ever treated and deemed WNS free were released back into the wild. Larger scale treatment via nebulization is being worked on.

MBC puts great effort into education and outreach opportunities, and often takes students/classes underground, they have 50 helmets/headlamps. They also do live bat programs. Kirsten even brought a couple bat friends to the meeting; they had been rehabilitated and were set to be

returned to the wild soon. MBC encourages people to become “batyard” conservationists! There are over 900 registered bat houses in Missouri.

Cave management and karst watershed cleanup are also focuses for MBC. At the Frankford Cave Cleanup in June 2009, a fridge, freezer, dehumidifier, and tires were among the objects removed. Restoring water and air flow and clearing the flight path can aid in population restoration!

Bat rescue— some fall from mothers or are orphaned and are often still hairless, requiring special care. Many bats are found injured; barbed wire fences are a common culprit, but this problem can be easily prevented by using straight wire on the top rung, without reducing effectiveness of the fence. Bats can live 25-40 years! A big brown caught 3 years ago was 43, it has been caught 3 times.

Kirsten shared some great facts on bats. There are 1300 species of bats worldwide, 16 in Missouri. In Missouri, 8 species dwell in caves, 4 in bat houses and other structures, the rest in the tree line. Less than 0.05% of Missouri bats test positive for rabies. Bats are the only mammal that fly; they are “hand winged”, and the bones in their wings are actually fingers and a thumb. Their wings have a “pleathery” feel, if they are crepe papery, the bat is probably dehydrated. They have three vocal iterations: chirp, guttural grunt, and trill. If a bat comes to you, it is being aggressive. Most will try to get away. Missouri bats are insect eaters, including crickets, moths, mosquitos, and corn earworms.

MBC is always looking for volunteers for quarry bat surveys in the Kansas City area, however, Grotto members are welcome to volunteer anywhere in the state. To follow Missouri Bat Census and learn more about their projects, visit <https://www.facebook.com/MissouriBatCensus/>.

Officer Reports

President: Pic Walenta shared about her recent trip to Mammoth Cave with CRF Eastern Operations. She brought back some free gloves.

Vice President: Jack Peters had nothing new to report.

Secretary: Laura Jaynes had sent out last month’s minutes via email. There were no objections; a motion was made and passed to accept the minutes.

Treasurer: Bill Gee reported \$2037.57 in the treasury as of February 28; the PayPal balance is \$196.14. As of the meeting, 12 tickets for the fundraiser had been sold.

Quartermaster: Remains the same.

Fundraising: The concert and auction is May 12. Please promote our event; tickets can be purchased through the KGAG website, specifically at <https://www.kcgrotto.org/tripsandevents/>. Contact Pic at picwalenta@aol.com for more information or questions. Please continue to keep watch for emails regarding tickets, opportunity for involvement, etc.

Presentations: Anyone who wants to give a presentation, let Pic know.

Carroll Cave Conservancy: Rick Hines reported that it does look like we will get the donation of cave rights/access to the silo from the road, either through easement or purchase/donation of the 3 acres between the silo and road. Rick also mentioned planning a trip to Ennis Cave, and to let him know if interested. Bill Gee planned to lead a trip to Carroll on March 31st.

Missouri Speleological Survey (MSS) & Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy (MCKC): Jim Cooley was not present. The next MSS and MCKC meeting will be held on Sunday, May 6th at Berome Moore Cave in Perry County, Missouri, giving the weekend the theme of "Sinkhole de Mayo." Expect survey opportunities in Berome Moore Cave and perhaps in City of Perryville caves on Saturday, and a taco fiesta that night. Please contact Cooley coolstoi@kc.rr.com for directions and more information, or see www.mospeleo.org. Berome Moore is the second largest cave in Missouri, and is owned by cavers (i.e., the MCKC). Survey trips will be available the entire weekend of May 4th-6th. MSS newsletters (i.e., "The Liaison") are now available to everyone in the world on-line at <https://www.mospeleo.org/newsletter>.

Novice and Scout trips: A scout trip to Cleveland Cave was set for March 16th, 2018. Breakdown Cave is set for April 14th. June 5th will be a trip to Cleveland with Heidi and a girls group.

Hickory County: Gary Johnson shared that the permits have been renewed for 2018, which is great news for finishing up the Vanderman Cave survey. He is working on a trip soon, once he receives the permits.

Cloud 9: Lee Krout was not present. Kyle Lewis and Kirsten Alvey-Mudd attended the February trip, which was successful.

White Nose Syndrome: See <https://caves.org/WNS/> for the most current map of WNS's reach.

Trip Reports and Other News

Cleveland Cave Novice Trip: Went well!

Rolla area: Kyle Lewis had recently made a trip in search of a cave of which the location has been unknown for decades, but no luck.

Mammoth Cave: Pic Walenta made a trip out to Mammoth Cave to survey and cook for a CRF Eastern Operations expedition. She reported it was a great time all around.

Unfinished Business

Meeting Place after 2018: We will no longer be able to meet at our current location upon the end of the year. We are in search of other viable options near the area, suggestions are welcome.

New Business: None.

Pic Walenta verified there was no further unfinished business. The meeting adjourned, whereupon members repaired to Minsky's Pizza, 5105 Main Street, KCMO, for good food and great company.

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UPCOMING TRIPS & EVENTS

March 16th, 2018: Cleveland Cave scout trip. Contact Jack Peters at jack@peters2000.com.

March 22nd-26th, 2018: Big Piney Float, cave monitoring.

March 31st, 2018: Carroll Cave trip to re-anchor the new data logger and to rehang the rope light in the shaft. Contact Bill Gee at bgee@camvercaver.net.

April 9th-15th, 2018: Butler Hollow Cave Gating, Mark Twain National Forest, Seligman, Missouri. We will build two horizontal cave gates on mined caves, in an area where we have already built ten mine closures. If interested, contact Cooley at (816) 753-8111 or coolstoi@kc.rr.com.

April 14th, 2018: Breakdown Cave, 10:00 AM, near Springfield, MO. Contact Jack Peters at jack@peters2000.com.

April 20th-22nd, 2018: Spring MVOR, Indian Springs Campground, Steeleville, MO. The Grotto has reserved a group camp spot right on the river. April 6th is the pre-registration deadline (to receive a t-shirt and partake in Saturday banquet).

April 22nd, 2018: A group will be leaving from MVOR to backpack the Ozark Trail, Courtois Section II, hiking about 10 miles. They will be camping on the trail that Sunday night. Contact Pic Walenta at (816)665-5588 or picwalenta@aol.com, or Shawn Williams at (314)583-7039 or sosifrk@yahoo.com.

May 11th-19th, 2018: NCRC week long training in Mentone, AL.

May 12th, 2018: KCAG Fundraiser Concert and Auction. At the home of Rick & Kay Hines, Stillwell, KS. Featuring Violet and The Undercurrents. Tickets are on sale now! Visit <https://www.kcgrotto.org/tripsandevents/> to purchase.

May 25th-28th, 2018: Speleofest hosted by the Louisville Grotto in Booneville, KY. Visit <http://louisville.caves.org/speleofest.shtml> for more information.

June 5th, 2018: Cleveland Cave trip with Heidi Fletcher and a girls' group.

July 30th-August 3rd, 2018: NSS convention, Helena, Montana.