

Minutes of the Kansas City Area Grotto
September 2020 Business Meeting
Held Tuesday, September 15th, 2020 – 6:00 to 7:30 P.M.
Roe Park, 10400 Roe Ave, Overland Park, KS 66207
Remote Meeting Component Held Via Zoom

The meeting was called to order by president Seth Colston. The following members and guests were present: Seth Colston, Jim Cooley, Julie Cottrell, Bill Gee, Kristen Godfrey, Rick Hines, Jay Kennedy, Jeff Page, Nathan Taylor, Houmin Zhong. Additional participants may not be listed due to the compilation of meeting minutes from a recording after the fact.

Presentation: No presentation occurred at this meeting.

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: Bill Gee reported that there was an extra bank fee this year due to removing Pic, our late president, from the account. Apart from that, there has been very little activity.

August beginning balance = \$2706.37 (Commerce Bank)

Deposit = \$0.00

Checks = \$0.00

Debit card = \$0.00

Bank fee = \$5.00

Transfer to PayPal = \$25.00

End balance = \$2676.37

Activity:

Income: \$0.00

Expenses: \$0.00

Bank fee = \$5.00

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August beginning balance = \$427.16 (Paypal)

Seth Colston for Missouri Corporation Report filing fee = \$25.00

Transfer from checking = \$25.00

End balance = \$427.16

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August beginning balance = \$67.00 (petty cash)

End balance = \$67.00

Secretary: Not present at meeting. The August meeting minutes were accepted.

Quartermaster: The digital quartermaster's list will be available in the future. Until then, contact Seth Colston or Bill Gee to borrow gear.

Fundraising: No updates. Contact Seth Colston (swcy92@gmail.com) or Bill Gee (bgee@campercaver.net) for more information.

Presentations: A fair number of people have postponed presentations until they can be held in person, so KCAG is in need of presenters for future meetings. Please contact Seth Colston at swcy92@gmail.com if you are interested in giving a meeting presentation or have a topic idea.

Carroll Cave Conservancy: Jeff Page announced the work day that was held the Saturday and Sunday following the September meeting. Rick Hines reminded all present that the landowner trips would be held on October 10th and 11th and that the CCC has imposed a limit on the size of groups that can visit Carroll Cave.

Missouri Speleological Survey (MSS) and Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy (MCKC): Jim Cooley reported that the next business meeting would be held on the morning of September 26th at Berome Moore Cave, the second-largest cave in Missouri, in Perry County. Jim did not intend to attend this meeting and would therefore need to find an alternative KCAG representative to serve as his proxy.

International Year of Caves and Karst (2021): Contact Seth Colston if you have ideas presentations or want to lead a trip in 2021.

NSS update: None.

MVOR: KCAG has no current plans to host an MVOR, though some potential remains for a 2021 KCAG-hosted MVOR.

Novice and Scout Trips: Kristen Godfrey reported that there were no upcoming novice trips scheduled. The previous novice trip, at Lewis Cave two weeks previous, did not involve any novices.

Hickory County: Gary Johnson not present. No updates.

Cloud 9 Ranch: No updates from Lee Krout. Cloud 9 is a 6,500-acre private ATV and camping ranch that contains 32 caves and is located in Ozark County. The only concrete trip currently planned is the yearly bioinventory trip that will take place in mid-February 2021. Jim Cooley reported that he needs to finish the cartography for several caves before a QC trip can be scheduled.

Stark Caverns Survey Project: Bill Gee reported that no surveys have occurred, and no new surveys are scheduled due to the increase in coronavirus infections in Missouri.

Old Spanish Cave Restoration Project: No updates.

Cave Spring Park Association: No updates.

Devil's Icebox: Several trips to Devil's Icebox Cave were planned for September 2020, but all trips had a limit of 6 participants and were open only to institute members, not to the public. No KCAG members had been to Devil's Icebox this year as of September 15th, since Seth's trip scheduled for the previous weekend was canceled due to two inches of rain. Kristen Godfrey reported that she was scheduled to go on a trip the following weekend.

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

MeetUp: Contact Seth Colston (swcy92@gmail.com) or DJ Hall (rangerdjhall@gmail.com) to add trips to the MeetUp schedule.

New Membership Nominations: None.

Trip Reports and Other News:

A Lewis Cave novice trip, minus any novices, occurred September 5th through 6th. KCAG members Jim Cooley, Kristen Godfrey, Seth Colston, Ginny Friedrich, and Julie Cottrell attended, as did Isaac Smith (Meramec Valley Grotto) and Tyler Skaggs (independent caver). The participants completed a QC check for the map of Lewis Cave, covering the first half of the cave, and completed a detailed bioinventory for Lewis Cave and nearby Turtle Shell Pit. Turtle Shell Pit is a 30-foot-deep pit in the Mark Twain National Forest monitored by the Cave Research Foundation (CRF).

Jim Cooley and Julie Cottrell visited the Whitten Access on the Eleven Point River in Mark Twain National Forest and paddled upriver to begin the survey for Ravine Cave, which is very muddy. Jim and Julie intended to monitor a series of caves along the river, but Jim misplaced his field notes, so they only monitored one cave, at Boze Mill, a gray bat colony. Jim and Julie did not inspect the entire cave since there is a gray bat maternity colony on the other side of a tight squeeze a short distance into the cave. Jim reported that this passage was full of guano, so it is currently in use by the bats in significant numbers, which is good news.

On August 30th, Jim and Julie visited Toby Cave, one of the top gray bat maternity colonies in Missouri, to measure it for a flyover cave gate. This cave is located on private land in Camden County. Financial support for the gating project will be provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which is in charge of protecting endangered species such as gray bats. The USFWS has recently received some mitigation money that can be used on private land, so these funds will be used for the \$27,500 project. The gating project could potentially take place in the spring of 2021, but most likely it will occur in fall 2021. It will be an eight-day project that will require many volunteers to carry the structural steel down to the cave; volunteers will camp in the landowner's cow pasture. The finished gate will be 44 feet wide and 14 feet tall, and at last count the cave contained 109,000 bats. Jim added that Toby Cave, as well as another cave on the property, will be good candidates for novice trips for this winter.

Bill reported that Vona Kuczynska of USFWS will be able to loan the CCC an acoustic bat detector for one year starting at the end of October. Bill will place this instrument in the Mountain Room and allow it to collect data for a year.

Jim Cooley informed the group that he can issue permits for self-guided cave trips for a number of caves managed by the MCKC. All of the caves are gated, and Jim can give a permit and the lock combination to anyone that he deems qualified to lead a trip. Lewis Cave, described above, is one such cave, as is Cleveland Cave, the longest cave in St Clair County.

Jim was recently contacted by an individual with a cave on his property who was on a trip to Cleveland Cave. With some difficulty, Jim convinced the landowner to allow him on the property to view the cave. The cave in question turned out to be a 4.5-foot-high, 26-foot-long cave containing only dirt, rocks, rat midden, and the pelvis of a small white-tailed deer.

New Business: At Bill Gee's suggestion, the KCAG Christmas gathering was discussed. Rick Hines, who traditionally hosts the gathering, said that he would love to host it again but that it is dependent upon the

coronavirus situation this December. Seth is of the opinion that the pandemic will still be in full swing through next spring, so a gift exchange or other smaller activity might be a good idea as an alternative to the full gathering.

Unfinished Business: Seth Colston confirmed that there was no unfinished business. The participants presumably returned to their daily lives unobserved by the secretary who was out of state at the time.

Upcoming Trips and Events

COVID-19 update: Some restrictions have been lifted. Restrictions or not, please make your own decision regarding your own health. The caves are not going anywhere.

CANCELED! Bridge Day.

CANCELED! TAG Fall Cave-in.

CANCELED! Old-Timers Reunion.

November 1, 2020 (Sunday)

Survey trip at Geronimo Cave near Macks creek, MO

Contact Seth Colston swcy92@gmail.com for more information.

November 7 or 14 (not decided yet)

Restoration project at Washington State Park in DeSoto, MO

Camping is available at the park

Contact Alex Litsch alitsch6@gmail.com for more information.

November 17, 2020 - KCAG grotto meeting

Zoom URL is <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/268089722>

December KCAG Christmas Party: pending decision

January 9, 2021 - Carroll Cave data logger service trip

Contact Bill Gee for information

Attendance is limited due to coronavirus protocols.

January 19, 2021 - KCAG grotto meeting

Zoom URL is <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/268089722>

February 2021 - Biology trip at Cloud Nine Ranch