

**Minutes of the Kansas City Area Grotto**  
**April 2021 Business Meeting**  
Tuesday, April 20, 2021 – 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.  
Meeting Held Remotely 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, Ginny Friedrich, Bill Gee, Kristen Godfrey, Matthew Hernandez, Rick Hines, Gary Johnson, Jeff Page

**Officer Reports:**

**President:** Due to the increasing percentage of vaccinated cavers, Seth is considering holding in-person meetings in the near future, though each would have a Zoom option as well. The yearly picnic was also discussed, with Rick Hines suggesting holding it in either June or July. Rick is leaning towards an August meeting since the COVID-19 cases are still relatively high, but June would also work if others prefer it.

Anyone planning to attend Pic's celebration of life is encouraged to RSVP either to Seth or to the Facebook event. In addition, there is a GoFundMe set up for the Pic Walenta Campground at Carroll Cave. As of April 20, \$1,200 had been raised.

**Vice President:** Jim Cooley was absent during the initial officer reports segment of the meeting.

**Treasurer:** Bill Gee noted that essentially nothing happened in March.

April 2021 meeting - Treasurer's report

March beginning balance = \$2758.87 (Commerce Bank)

Deposit = \$

Checks = \$

Debit card = \$

Bank fee = \$5.00

End balance = \$2753.87

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Income:

Dues = \$

Apparel = \$

Expenses = \$

Bank fee = \$5.00

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March beginning balance = \$1268.48 (Paypal)

Merchandise purchase = \$

Dues = \$

Fees = \$

End balance = \$1268.48

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March beginning balance = \$67.00 (petty cash)

End balance = \$67.00

**Secretary:** The March meeting minutes were accepted. I (Ginny) will be moving out of town this year, most likely in May, so anyone interested in picking up the position of secretary from May to the end of the year is encouraged to contact Seth or me.

**Quartermaster:** No updates. As always, Seth can be contacted about any equipment.

**Novice Trip Coordinator:** No updates. Seth will lead a trip with the Belton scouts in late May at Perkins, with which he would appreciate help, and he may lead a novice trip in the summer if the coronavirus situation continues to improve.

**Fundraising:** No updates. Contact Seth Colston (swcy92@gmail.com) or Bill Gee (bgee@camper-caver.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 if future meetings continue to be held remotely. Please contact Seth Colston at swcy92@gmail.com if you are interested in giving a meeting presentation or have a topic idea.

**The Guano:** No updates.

**MVOR:** The yearly MVOR was held in Waynesville, MO at Ruby's landing on the weekend following the meeting. It included float trips, survey training, vertical training, and a formal cave trip.

**MeetUp:** There have been few events on MeetUp since there have been few recent open-invitation novice trips, but Seth (swcy92@gmail.com) can still be contacted for any trips to add to the MeetUp schedule.

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

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

### **Organization Updates:**

**NSS:** The 2021 NSS Convention will be held remotely from July 25<sup>th</sup> to July 30<sup>th</sup>. The list of presentations will be available ahead of time, and anyone interested can log into any meetings.

**Carroll Cave Conservancy:** In March, Bill, Seth, Kristen, and Hou visited the Mountain Room to replace the batteries in the bat roost logger and retrieve the memory card. The cavers then attempted to visit CL-7, an upper-level side passage known to contain many bats, but ended up in

a different side passage, where they found only one bat and no signs of guano. Vona Kuczynska received the memory card but hasn't yet reported back.

A surface work trip took place on March 28<sup>th</sup>. The participants planted around 40 trees, provided by Rita Worden, and set up a tentative position for the pavilion.

The CCC meeting this summer has not yet been finalized, but it will most likely take place in the last week of July and will probably occur via Zoom.

### **Missouri Speleological Survey (MSS) and Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy**

**(MCKC):** The MSS meeting will take place on Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Lake of the Ozarks State Park. A special campground will be set up on the south side of the lake for participants. The objective of the weekend is to survey Ozark Caverns, a show cave at the state park; the project will be led by Scott House, who wants to produce a *Missouri Speleology* writeup on the cave. Jim intends to lead a QC trip via boat in the area, and any interested cavers are encouraged to contact him.

### **Project Updates:**

**Hickory County:** On April 11<sup>th</sup>, Gary Johnson, Seth, Kristen, and Bill visited the Mule Shoe Conservation Area to investigate and map caves in the bluff that Seth and Gary previously visited. They intended to check out two openings in the cave, but when Bill attempted to rappel down the cliff, he discovered that, due to an overhang, he was unable to reach the potential lead. Gary expects that not much was missed since neither this lead, nor another unreachable high opening, looked particularly promising.

The trip participants mapped two caves, Mule Shoe Bend Cave and Mule Shoe Tunnel Cave. The former was very thoroughly dug up by "amateur archaeologists", and the latter was located higher up on a narrow ledge. There are two caves found on Gary's and Seth's previous trip that still need to be surveyed.

In an unexpectedly exciting turn of events, Seth dislocated his kneecap while rappelling at the end of the trip. Bill, Kristen, and Gary moved him to a safer area on the bluff, Gary found an article online explaining how to put a kneecap back into place, and Kristen carried out the procedure. The incident will be written up for *American Caving Accidents*. Quote of the day: "That's the power of the Web" (Gary Johnson).

**Cloud 9 Ranch:** Jim intends to lead a QC trip to Cloud 9 in summer or early fall.

**Stark Caverns Survey Project:** Bill has scheduled a survey trip for June 12<sup>th</sup>. He and Seth may survey at Geronimo Springs either the day before or the day after. Both involve small squeezes, and thus require small cavers, but Geronimo is much more difficult and quite chilly. The Stark Caverns trip will take place in tight areas off of the Grand Canyon region, with some additional survey in a stream crawl passage.

**Geronimo Springs Cave:** Seth intends to lead a trip in either May or June, depending on how quickly his knee injury improves.

**Devil's Icebox:** The pink planarian count took place on the weekend prior to the meeting, but no KCAG members participated. The next trips to Devil's Icebox will be in September.

**New Membership Nominations:** None.

### **Trip Reports and Other News:**

Jim led a trip in late March to a ranch in north Shannon County with Seth, Ginny, Matthew Hernandez, Julie Cottrell, and Becky Nelson. The participants surveyed in Cave Spring Cave and Two-Legged Cave, started on Lost Silver Cave, and found several new caves while ridge walking on a new piece of land owned by the landowner. The trip was cut short when, on the way back from ridge walking, Jim developed knee pain that worsened until he was “barely ambulatory.” Upon returning to KC, he was admitted into the hospital for three days for IV antibiotics for cellulitis. Despite this, Jim reported that the trip was very productive and very enjoyable.

**New Business:** The grotto is low on a few sizes of shirts, is out of orange hoodies, and is low on grotto hoodies. Seth is looking into different options for ordering more merchandise: Most likely, he will continue with the same system he has used in the past, in which Seth manages the ordering, but this means that there will likely be some unsold items.

One alternative option is to switch to a company that operates with fundraiser windows, in which KCAG members select and order items ahead of time, but this would mean that merchandise would only be available during limited time periods. A print-on-demand service is another option, but it would likely have too great an upfront cost and could result in higher prices for the items. Kristen Godfrey suggested that Seth use the same system as before but send out a survey asking who wants what in order to get a better idea of the demand for each item.

To finish, Seth showed a few great new design options, including a simplified logo on an orange shirt and a black shirt with the Kansas City skyline and a cave beneath.

**Unfinished Business:** Seth Colston confirmed that there was no unfinished business, and the participants logged off with dreams of a future grotto picnic and Rick’s ever-accumulating bonfire wood pile.

## Upcoming Trips and Events

COVID-19 update: Check with the trip leader before you set out to attend any of these events. Please make your own decision regarding your health. The caves are not going anywhere.

2021 May 23 – TENTATIVE! Celebration of Life for Pic Walenta

2pm to 5pm at The Legacy at Green Hills, 10243 North Green Hills Road, Kansas City, MO

This event is likely to change, so keep checking back

2021 June 12 – Survey day at Stark Caverns

Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net)

Will require cavers who can get into tight spots

2021 June 13 – Survey at Geronimo Spring Cave

The entrance to this cave is a water crawl 10 to 15 feet wide and about a foot high, for 120 feet

Small people only!

Contact Seth Colston [swcy92@gmail.com](mailto:swcy92@gmail.com).

2021 July 10 – Carroll Cave. Data logger service trip

Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net)

Fairly easy trip, suitable for newbies to Carroll Cave.

2021 July 11 – Carroll Cave. Biology and rescue cache service trip to Upper Thunder River

Tough trip, not for newbies

Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net)

As of April 2021, this trip is full

2021 July 26 to 30 – NSS National Convention in Weed California

This will be a VIRTUAL convention! <http://nss2021.caves.org/>

2021 July 23 to 29 – 18th International Congress of Speleology in Lyon, France

<http://uis2021.speleos.fr/>

2021 July either 24 or 31 – Annual members meeting of Carroll Cave Conservancy

Place and time are not yet determined. This will probably be a Zoom virtual meeting.

2021 August 4 through 8 – TAG trip

Lots of vertical caving! Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net) or [swcy92@gmail.com](mailto:swcy92@gmail.com)

We will drive on Wednesday, go caving Thu-Fri-Sat and return on Sunday

2021 Fall MVOR – To be determined.

2021 October. Date not yet determined. Cave gating project in western Camden County, Missouri. Contact Jim Cooley for more information.

2021 October 30 – Carroll Cave. Annual bat census trip to the Mountain Room

Tough trip, wetsuit required. Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net).

2022 January 8 – Carroll Cave. Data logger service trip

Contact [bgee@campercaver.net](mailto:bgee@campercaver.net).

2022 – NSS National Convention in the Black Hills of South Dakota

Probably June or July – The web site is not up yet.

2023 – NSS National Convention in Elkton, West Virginia

This is a retry from the canceled/online 2020 event. Dates are not yet determined.