Kansas City Area Grotto
Minutes of Monthly Business Meeting
Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Cooley at 7:05 p.m on May 12, 2010.

Attendance

The following members were in attendance: Secretary Cyle Riggs, Pic Walenta, Mike Smoker, Bill Gee, David Foran, Michael Hartley, Bryon Carmoney, Heidi Carmoney, David Mead, Pam Rader, Jerry Cindric, Terry DeFraities.

The following guests were present: Brandy Rich, Juliane Shaw.

Previous Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes online ahead of the meeting. No edits were requested.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer reported a balance of $868.45. In the last month a check of $20 was issued for MSS dues, and another check for $31 was issued to Jeff Page to reimburse his sponsorship of Ron Powell's MVOR trip.

Old Business

Membership Roster:
An edited roster list has been collected for review. It will be reviewed at the next business meeting. Jim Cooley reported that the old roster was so out of date that some listed members were deceased. Bryon Carmoney noted that some deceased members were honorary members.

New Business

Memberships:
Brandy Rich was voted in as a new member.

Grotto Helmets:
Jim Cooley has the grotto helmets. On the last trip in which Cooley used the helmets a number of problems were found with the lights. Jim Cooley raised the issue of the broken lights and mentioned that some new lights by Princeton Tech had been priced out by Jeff Page. Bryon Carmoney made a motion to create a committee to perform further research into possible models to be used as replacements. The motion passed. Bryon Carmoney and Cyle Riggs volunteered as members of the committee.

Website Committee:
Jim Cooley announced that the calendar has been updated on the website. The roster download has been disabled on the website until such a time as a current roster can be assembled and verified.

Cyle Riggs raised the question of how to register for or be notified of new or updated calendar events. Sam Clippinger said that this functionality is already in the calendar system. Jim Cooley suggested that a notice be sent out to grotto members notifying them of this feature as others may be wondering how to do the same.

White Nose Syndrome:
The Cave Research Foundation has gained access on a per-trip permit basis to the Buffalo National River for project caving.

Jim Cooley raised the issue of his continued attendance at the WNS Working Group meetings, which are sponsored by Bill Elliott of the Missouri Department of Conservation and Paul Houck of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, stating that it was becoming quite an expense. Michael Smoker moved that the grotto subsidize the cost of sending a KCAG representative to the WNS Working Group, to a maximum of $50 per trip. An amendment to the motion was presented that only the next three trips be covered so that there would be a limit to the cost to the grotto, with the intent of reviewing the issue again after three trips had been subsidized. An amendment to this amendment was proposed to subsidize the trips through the end of 2010. The motion to amend the amendment passed, the amendment passed, and the motion passed. The grotto voted to cover the cost of trips, up to a maximum of $50, through the 2010 year, by a vote of seven to four.

Jim Cooley brought to the attention of the grotto a draft of a letter being circulated by the Chouteau Grotto, addressed to Missouri Governor Jay Nixon, purporting to represent the entire organized caving community in Missouri, and describing the closure orders enacted by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources in response to WNS as "irrational, ineffective, unenforceable, and discriminatory" toward organized cavers. Jim Cooley moved that in response, the grotto authorize him to write a letter to Governor Nixon stating that the Kansas City Area Grotto supports the policies developed by state agencies in Missouri in response to WNS. After some discussion, the motion passed.

Scouting Activity:
Jim Cooley said that there was no movement yet with the Heart of America Council of changing their website. Bryon Carmoney mentioned that attempts to fix this information had been made in the past. Sam Clippinger said that he has made some recent new contacts with the local BSA administration and would take on this issue as a project. Cyle Riggs agreed to send all known information on the issue to Sam Clippinger and Bryon Carmoney.

Sam Clippinger has developed a new presentation for scouts which needs to be converted into a more portable format for distribution.

KCAG T-Shirts / Patches:
Michael Smoker modeled a t-shirt sporting an unofficial KCAG logo featuring a bat wearing a caving lamp which had been designed by Juliane Shaw. Juliane Shaw announced that the t-shirt was available for printing in various styles at a shirt company in lawrence.

MVOR Committee:
Ron Powell, owner of Perkins Cave and a landowner who may be will to host a KCAG-sponsored MVOR in the future, elected not to attend the spring MVOR due to rain. He plans to instead attend the Fall MVOR and cover the registration fee on his own since the grotto covered his registration for the spring MVOR and he was unable to attend.

The Guano:
Editor Bill Gee announced that he expects to release the next issue in June.

Hickory County Survey:
Gary Johnson reports the following:

- On April17 Gary Johnson, Brandy Rich, Cyle Riggs, and Michael Smoker made a float down the Little Niangua River locating several leads, one resulting in a new cave and the other requiring further investigation. At the end of the float on the take-out property a new cave was found, which contained walking passage that led to what appeared to be a colony of gray bats. This cave should be considered off-limits until fall, when another trip will have to be mde to survey it.

- A survey trip for Calf Trap Cave and a photo trip to Williams Cave are planned in June.
- Gary Johnson will be making a solo trip in May to visit various landowners in Hickory County.

Carroll Cave Conservancy:
A cleanup project was completed removing much of the trash around the property. A load of lumber was unloaded at the schoolhouse as well, most of which will be usable.

Grotto Gear:
Jim Cooley has the grotto gear.

Trip Reports:

Skaggs Sierra Club Trip:
Jim Cooley reported an immensely successful trip, despite torrential rain, with 12 people visiting the cave on April 24, and nine visiting the cave on April 25. We camped at Onyx Cave on the Mark Twain National Forest. Another trip with the Sierra Club may happen in August or September at Ennis Cave.

High Guads Resto:
Jerry Cindric reported on his trip to the High Guads in New Mexico and Texas. The group participated in nine consecutive days of permit caving in addition to hauling cement into Ft. Stanton Cave.

CRF Float/Backpacking Trip:
Jim Cooley, Pic Walenta, Dave Mead, Mike Smoker, and Craig Hines of KCAG were joined by Chandra Ruff, a Sierra Club member, Max White of Springfield Plateau Grotto (SPG), Kayla New of Little Rock Grotto (LRG), and Mick Sutton and Sue Hagan of Cave Research Foundation (CRF), for project caving on the Eleven Point Ranger District of the Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF), May 6th-10th. Pic and Jim canoed and Mike kayaked in from Greer Access, while Dave, Craig, Chandra and Kayla backpacked in, and Max, Mick and Sue hiked in for day projects. Mick completed a biological inventory of Thanksgiving Cave, discovered by a KCAG/CRF team last November; Mike Smoker discovered a new cave, which was named Wild Ginger Cave; and Pic, Jim and Dave installed a CAVE CLOSED sign for the MTNF on Black Dagger Cave, a suspected Indiana bat (***Myotis sodalis***) hibernaculum discovered by a KCAG/CRF crew on April 1. Then, Kayla, Jim and Dave completed (we hope) a survey of this cave, while Pic, Max, Craig and Chandra did ridgewalking in some very promising area, although they did not find any more new caves. Max and Pic were able to re-locate Poison Ivy Cave, which was first discovered in 2006 by a KCAG/CRF expedition led by KCAG's Gary Johnson. Pic and Dave nearly stepped on a large timber rattlesnake hiking in from the canoe stash point, the second sizable ***Crotalus horridus*** we've encountered in the past 12 months.

Upcoming Events:

2010 NCRC Weeklong:
May 15 - 22 in Mentone, AL.

Missouri Caves & Karst Conservancy
Sunday, May 16, 2010, 1:00 p.m. – Meeting in Rolla

Missouri Speleological Survey
Sunday, May 16, 2010, 10:00 a.m. – In Rolla. CRF cave surveying that weekend on the Paddy Creek Wilderness Area.

Grotto Picnic:
June 5, 2010 – The grotto picnic will be held at the Hines residence in Stilwell, KS on June 5th.

SERA Cave Carnival:
June 17 - 20, 2010 – Montaegle, Tennessee. http://www.caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountaingrotto

Indiana Cave Capers:
June 25 - 27, 2010 – Delaney Creek Park near Salem, Indiana.

Carmoney Indepence Day Party:
July 4, 2010 – Carmoney Residence. Bryon Carmony has invited the grotto to his house for a party on Independence Day.

2010 NSS National Convention:
Aug. 2 - 6 – Essex Junction, Vermont.

Black Hills Cave Restoration Camp:
Sep. 13 - 17 – Contact marc_ohms@nps.gov or call 605-745-1182 by Friday, July 30, 2010. Space is limited.

Fall 2010 MVOR:
October 2010 – Near Hannibal, MO. Dates are uncertain, but probably Oct. 16-18.

Upcoming Trips:

May Vertical Training:
May 22, 2010 – The grotto will be hosting another vertical training day in May which will be led by Terry DeFraities, on the cliffs near the golf course at Truman Lake in Warsaw, Missouri. Camping will be available Friday and Saturday nights at the Deer Creek Sportsman's Club, same as last year.

Kelly Hollow Cave Gating Project
Jim Cooley will be serving as Project Leader for a Cave Research Foundation effort on behalf of the Mark Twain National Forest to gate Kelly Hollow Cave (ORE-007), the largest cave in Oregon County (a six-hour drive from Kansas City), from June 14th (Monday) through the 22nd (Tuesday). In five days, we will construct a 53 foot long, ten foot high Bat Conservation, International-standard cave gate to protect the resource from ATV riders and vandals, as well as to shield an Indiana bay (***Myotis sodalis***) hibernaculum. (A restoration trip may be scheduled in the distant future to remove trash and graffiti.) We will be camping on a 1,700 acre horse ranch with electric hook-ups and running water, including a flush toilet and hot shower located in a horse barn. Pic Walenta will be running the chuck wagon, so everyone will eat like royalty. The CRF can help defray travel expenses for volunteers. Construction will commence Wednesday, June 16th and conclude Sunday, June 20th. Trips into this large borehole cave are allowed, in spite of the MTNF cave closure order, as a thank you from the Forest Service, provided rigorous WNS decontamination protocols are followed. We need firm commitments from hard workers. Please contact Jim Cooley @ coolstoi@kc.rr.com if you are interested, and for more details.

Hickory County Project
A survey trip for Calf Trap Cave and a photo trip to Williams Cave are planned for June. Contact Gary Johnson @ garyj@imagesjournal.com for more details.

Presentation
Vertical Day Preparations
Terry DeFraites prepared participants for the upcoming vertical day by presenting a light schedule and some safety warnings.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. Afterward, several members convened at Waldo Pizza on Wornall to enjoy libations and cheesy comestibles.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyle Riggs, Grotto Secretary