



**Minutes of the Kansas City Area Grotto
October 2022 Business Meeting
Tuesday, October 18th, 2022 – 6:30 to 7:30 P.M.**

**Meeting at the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center,
a Missouri Department of Conservation facility at 4750 Troost, Kansas City, and via Zoom**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Bill Gee. The following members and guests were also present: Jeff Bowman, Jim and Julie Cooley, Corey Ellis, Matthew M. Hernandez, Rick Hines, Dustin Schmidt, and Nathan Taylor.

Officer Reports:

President: In absence of a President, Bill Gee started the meeting off with a presentation of his recent trip to the annual Bridge Day festival in Fayetteville, West Virginia. The New River Gorge Bridge spans 3,031 feet over the New River Gorge at an elevation of 826 feet. Each year since 1980 the bridge is closed on the third Saturday of October to commemorate the completion of the bridge. Teams are allowed to Base Jump and Rappel off of the bridge. This year Bill was on the safety team, making this his third time attending the festival. The high point of the trip was when Bill successfully drop-tested his flashlight. Hillbilly Jim say: “When Billy do a flashlight test, he don’t come half-steppin’!”

Vice President: Jim Cooley had no updates for this meeting.

Treasurer: Bill Gee informed everyone of the ending balances for the month of September 2022. The treasurer’s report was sent out prior to this meeting.

Secretary: Matthew M. Hernandez had no updates during this meeting. The previous meeting minutes which were sent out by Jim Cooley for September were approved.

Quartermaster: Nathan Taylor is the new Quartermaster; He can be contacted about any equipment. There were some discussions on digitally archiving a set of old slide photos. Additionally, there will be raffle at the summer picnic to win a kayak.

Novice Trips: Kristen Vogel was not present.

Presentations: Please contact Bill Gee at bgee@campercaver.net if you are interested in giving a meeting presentation or have a topic idea. For online meetings, presentations should be in the half hour range rather than an hour long. For in-person meetings up to an hour is available.

The Guano: No updates. Anyone interested in contributing a submission to the publication is encouraged to contact Julie Cooley (oragami_fold@yahoo.com).

MeetUp: Kristen Vogel was absent, so no updates. Still getting strong activity/involvement.

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

Organization Updates:

Carroll Cave Conservancy (CCC), now run by MCKC: Rick Hines talked about the upcoming work day on November 8th and 9th. This work day is focused on the framing and concrete for the pavilion shelter. Specifically eight post holes needs to be drilled for the posts to be erected.

Additionally gravel needs to be spread, concrete forms need to be placed, and rebar placed prior to concrete being delivered.

MSS/MCKC: Jim Cooley talked about the fall MSS meeting which was held on October 2nd at Devils Ice Box Cave in Rockbridge State Park. The minutes for that meeting were sent out to those who are in the KCAG mailing list. Next meeting will be sometime in March, probably at the Missouri Geological Survey offices in Rolla, exact date yet to be determined. This meeting will feature lots of presentations.

Hickory County: Gary Johnson was not present, so no updates were discussed.

Stark Caverns Survey Project: Bill Gee had no update for Stark Caverns. There will be an off-trail upcoming photography trip scheduled for December 17th, with Rick Hines served as head photographer, supported by an army of slaved flashes. This would be a GREAT opportunity to go to school on a cave photography master.

Cloud 9 Ranch: Lee Krout was not present and Jim Cooley had no updates to report.

Devil's Icebox: Corey Ellis talked about a recent trip he had in Devils Icebox. There will be trips in September and April. You have to be a member of the Devil's Icebox survey group to participate.

Geronimo Cave: Bill Gee had no updates for Geronimo Cave. Everything but a small squeeze passage has been surveyed. The map is currently being developed.

Trip Reports and Other News:

Slough Bottom Hollow Cave: Jim and Julie Cooley reported on a trip to Ozark County with Peter Schnegelberger to change out one of Bill Gee's intrusion detectors and QC the map in Slough Bottom, a gray bat (endangered species) cave. We also showed seven U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) rangers and biologists the cave, and surveyed two other caves on USACE land. The intrusion detector caught two unauthorized visits over the summer, and was still functioning on two batteries when changed out. A new, improved detector is in place.

Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF) trip: Jim and Julie Cooley reported on their recent trip with Cliff Gill and Peter Schnegelberger, where they floated down the Eleven Point River to the White's Creek float camp for four days of canoe camping, mapping and cave monitoring on the Irish Wilderness. On day three, Julie was joined in camp for half an hour in the morning, and then again for about 15 minutes on his way home from work that evening, by a very calm, gentle four-point buck, who approached to within seven feet of her on numerous occasions. Monitored were White's Creek Shelter, Creekbed Cave, Porifera Cave, Coffin Cave, White's Creek Cave, Thorn Cave, and River Level Cave. Cliff & Peter discovered that River Level Cave was the home of what was first identified as a 15-foot-tall, vicious, ravenously hungry 1,200-pound short-faced cave bear (*Arctodus simus*), which on closer examination proved to be an unusually robust and quite friendly 40-pound *Castor canadensis* specimen (his tail gave him away). Caves completely surveyed on the Irish Wilderness included White Cave and Niche Cave, with substantial further progress made on the survey of Amphitheater Cave. All caves surveyed were discovered by KCAG in 2008-2009, along with many others. In addition, yet another new cave was discovered out on the Wilderness, Scree Slope Cave. Its obscure pit entrance was hiding on the same bluff line only 60 meters away from another long-known cave. On the same trip, elsewhere on the MTNF, they mapped Bluff Spring Cave and monitored an Indiana hibernaculum

in Carter County, where they installed another of Bill Gee's Super Heterodyne Occult Intrusion Detectors. They then visited privately owned Lewis Cave in Ripley County, which KCAG now manages for the landowner (permits available!), to retrieve the obsolete "Managed by MCKC sign" and to do a critter check. There, Cooley and Schegelberger able for the first time to actually SEE and verify a blind cave fish, which were known to inhabit this cave.

Shannon County: Jim & Julie Cooley reported on a trip that included Peter Schnegelberger, Andrew Erickson (Philadelphia Grotto) and Bryn Dawes-Ward (Chouteau). They continued the survey of several privately owned caves in Shannon County. Survey work was done in Enloe Cave, Lost Silver Cave, Cave Spring Cave, Quarry Cave, and Quarry Ballroom Cave. Enloe and Quarry Ballroom were not flooded, the first time in a couple of years that was the case.

Grotto Christmas Party: Rick Hines will be hosting the Grotto Christmas Party potluck on Saturday, December 10th at 6:00 p.m. at his home at 16525 Orchard Lane, Stilwell, KS 66085. Please RSVP to Rick at your earliest convenience at rickhines@aol.com.

New Business: None.

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business. The meeting was adjourned. Participants then had pizza at Minsky's Pizza at 51st and Main.

Upcoming Trips and Events

COVID-19 update: Check with the trip leader before you set out to attend any of these events. Many of the "stay at home" restrictions have been lifted. Restrictions or not, please make your own decision regarding your health. The caves are not going anywhere.

2022 October 29th – Carroll Cave Annual Bat Census. This trip down Carroll River passage to the mountain room, or close to it. This is a long and fairly difficult six-mile round trip. Wet-suit recommended.

2022 December 17th – Stark Caverns Photography Trip. This trip will have several teams working in various parts of the cave. Contact (bgee@campercaver.net) for more information.

2023 January 7th – Carroll Cave Data Logger Service Trip - We will download data from all of the data loggers in the cave. This is a fairly easy trip suitable for Carroll Cave first-timers.

Contact (bgee@campercaver.net) for more information.

2022 April 28th through 30th – Spring MVOR – Waynesville, MO. The place and date are not 100% certain, so stay tuned just in case. The flyer should be out in early to mid March.

2023 June 26th through 30th – NSS National Convention in Elkton, West Virginia. This is a retry from the canceled/online 2020 event. <https://nss2023.caves.org/>