



**Minutes of the Kansas City Area Grotto
October 2023 Business Meeting
Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 – 6:30 to 8:30 P.M.**

**Meeting held 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 grotto president Bill Gee. The following members and guests were also present: Jim and Julie Cooley, David, Corey Ellis, Corey Ellis's Mother, Matthew M. Hernandez, Rick Hines, Mike and Candace Kovacs, Kohl Mitchell, Dustin Schmidt, Nathan Taylor, Joe and Terri Wynne, and Hou Zhong.

Officer Reports:

President: Bill Gee started the meeting off by calling Corey Ellis to the stage to give a presentation on the "Ellison's Cave System: History and Photos." Please see the information regarding the presentation below. Bill also gave an update on his previously built "π-Pistrelle" bat detector. He has tested the device in both a cave and an open field. He has made a total of 10 detectors and has enough circuit board to make 12 more.

Vice President: Dustin Schmidt had no updates to provide.

Treasurer: Jim Cooley informed everyone on the current balances across all accounts as of October 17th. \$3,256.50 (Commerce Bank), \$104.53 (PayPal), and \$199.00 (Petty Cash) for a total of \$3,560.03.

Secretary: Matthew M. Hernandez had no updates during this meeting. The previous meeting minutes for September were approved. Bill Gee has posted those minutes to the KCAG website.

Quartermaster: Nathan Taylor is the Quartermaster; He can be contacted about borrowing any equipment.

Novice Trips: Nathan Taylor has an upcoming trip to Cleveland Cave for his Church group.

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.

Ellison's Cave System: History and Photos: Corey Ellis provided the grotto with a presentation on the Ellison Cave System located in Walker County, Georgia. The cave system is located on 20,657 acres of state-owned wildlife management land on the Crockford-Pigeon Mountain. The principal explorer and mapper of this cave is Richard Schreiber. He coined the term TAG (Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia). The cave features a 586-foot pit (Fantastic Pit) which is the deepest unobstructed pit in the contiguous United States. There is also a 440-foot pit (Incredible Pit).

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

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

Organization Updates:

Carroll Cave Conservancy (CCC): Bill Gee talked about an upcoming work day to install siding on the pavilion. (See Upcoming Trips and Events) There is also a workday to help place a 20-foot shipping container on the property for storage.

MSS/MCKC: Jim Cooley had no major updates to provide other than that there was a meeting on October 14th-15th at Berome Moore cave.

Stark Caverns Survey Project: Bill Gee talked about an upcoming invite only trip scheduled for October 29th. It will be a photography trip and a small lead push. The map for the cave is pretty much done. There are only a few minor touch-ups left.

Cloud 9 Ranch: Bill and Jim talked about some recent discussions around hosting a weekend-long cave rescue seminar on the ranch. Jim also talked about some recent sinkhole development on the property and a cliff face that had collapsed on the property.

Devil's Icebox: Kristen was not present so there were no updates to provide for the meeting. Bill Gee said there have been several trips going on since September.

Geronimo Cave: Bill Gee had no updates for Geronimo Cave. Seth Colston is still developing the map for the cave.

Trip Reports and Other News:

New Cave: Jim Cooley mentioned they had finally found a cave in north Shannon County they had known about but have been unable to locate the past seven years, thanks to Tristin Whetstone, a rock climber, free-climbing a very steep bluff. The approximate length is 135 feet.

Roubidoux Cave: Bill Gee talked about a recent trip where he had retrieved an intrusion detector in a cave he had never been to before. The batteries had long gone dead; data files were last recorded in February, 2022.

Cleveland Cave: Nathan Taylor talked about a recent Eagle Scout Project trip to Cleveland Cave. The focus was to remove some of the graffiti that was in the cave. Everyone was divided into teams accompanied by an adult and an assortment of abrasives to assist in the removal of the graffiti. The scouts also installed a couple of sitting benches onto the property. A subsequent note from our landowner expressed very warm appreciation for ALL of our efforts to help manage this cave and make it available to the caving community.

New Business: No new business.

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business. The meeting was adjourned.

Upcoming Trips and Events

Check with the trip leader before you set out to attend any of these events.

2023 October 20th-30th: Cave survey on private lands in southeast Missouri. Sketchers especially sought. Contact Jim Cooley at coolstoi@kc.rr.com if interested.

2023 October 21st: Bridge Day. More information at <https://bridgedayrappel.com/> There are important restrictions and qualifications for this event.

2023 October 28th: Carroll Cave annual bat census. Contact Bill Gee at bgee@campercaver.net for more information.

2023 October 29th: Stark Caverns. Photography and small lead push. Invitation only.

2023 November 6th: Carroll Cave Work Weekend. We are anticipating delivery of shipping container to be used as storage shed. Contact Rick Hines for more information. rickhines@aol.com

2023 November 18th-19th: Carroll Cave Work Weekend. Siding and Electrical work on campground and pavilion. Contact Rick Hines for more information. rickhines@aol.com

2023 December 9th: KCAG Holiday party at 6:00 p.m. Detail to be announced soon. Setup and cleanup help is needed. Contact Rick Hines for more information. rickhines@aol.com

2024 January 6th: Carroll Cave data logger service trip. Contact Bill Gee for more information. bgee@campercaver.net

2024 April 5th-8th: Cave survey and monitoring in southeast Missouri (Carter and Ripley County) with full solar eclipse viewing on Monday. Activities on the weekend will include a tour of a famous local historical site on private property, the Midco Steel Works – an abandoned steel mill dating from World War One, of all things! We will camp dead in the middle of Monday's full eclipse path on private land in Ripley County. Contact Jim Cooley at coolstoi@kc.rr.com if interested.

2024 July 1st-5th: NSS Convention in Sewanee, TN. <https://caves.org/convention/2024-nss-convention/> for more information.