



Minutes of the Kansas City Area Grotto
April 2024 Business Meeting
Tuesday, April 16th, 2024 – 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, Corey Ellis, Dave Foran, Bill Gee, Rick Hines, Shane McCurty, Dustin Schmidt, Tracy, Kristen Vogel and Hou Zhong,

Officer Reports:

President: Bill Gee started the meeting off by introducing Corey Ellis to the stage. He is giving the grotto a presentation on his February trip to Carlsbad, New Mexico. See below section for details.

Vice President: Dustin Schmidt had no updates to provide.

Treasurer: Jim Cooley informed everyone that the current balances across all accounts as of April 16th. \$3,421.30 (Commerce Bank), \$240.26 (PayPal), and \$99.00 (Petty Cash) for a total of \$3,760.56. There is a \$100 deduct from the Commerce account from the last meeting. This deduct went to CaveSim to offset their traveling expenses to the NSS Convention. See the following site for detail regarding CaveSim "<https://www.CaveSim.com>".

Secretary: Matthew M. Hernandez had no updates to provide during the meeting. The previous meeting minutes for March 2024 were accepted.

Quartermaster: Nathan Taylor can be contacted about borrowing any equipment.

Novice Trips: Kristen Vogel is planning a trip tentatively to be on June 15th.

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.

Carlsbad, New Mexico: Corey Ellis recently took a trip in February to Carlsbad, New Mexico. The first cave they went to is Parks Ranch Cave located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. This cave features 14 entrances and is around four miles long. It is also renowned as being the second largest gypsum cave in the United States of America (USA). Corey was able to see various points of interest inside the cave including Chocolate Swirl Falls. The cave also features stagnant sulfur water. The following day Corey and the group went to a Selenite Mine and a Selenite Cave. Selenite is a form of Gypsum. Afterwards they all went to Halite Tunnel Cave. Corey speculated that the salt crystals featured in the cave grow at an impressive speed, especially since there appeared to be tumble-weeds that have crystals forming and encapsulating them. The last event for the day was a visit to an industrial waste Potash site. This site features a Potash reservoir that failed and subsequently covered all the local flora with Potash crystal formations. Day three was a visit to Carlsbad Caverns. They took the tour of the show cave, featuring an hour of switchbacks to get to the bottom. Corey noted that the recent lighting overhaul really showcased the formations. Later in the day they went to Wind Hicks Cave. This cave has seven distinct elevation levels surpassing a total depth of 375ft. There are five miles of Hypogean Maze

passages. The bottom of the cave features an area called the River of Blood. The fourth day was spent caving and exploring the local Guadalupe Mountains. Corey stated he would love to visit the area again and recommended everyone else to also pursue a visit.

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.

MSS/MCKC: Jim Cooley informed everyone that our proxy for MSS board meeting was not able to attend. There were two days of caving at the Paddy Creek Wilderness in Texas County to focus on mapping and inventorying caves in the Mark Twain National Forest.

Cloud 9 Ranch: Jim Cooley mentions that Peter Schnegelberger re-found a cave that was already documented. He is still ridge walking the area to find more caves.

Stark Caverns: Bill Gee stated that the survey and map work is done and published. The only thing lacking is some minor quality checks.

Devil's Icebox: Kristen had no new updates to provide.

Geronimo Cave: Seth Colston is still developing the map for the cave.

Trip Reports and Other News:

Eclipse Watch Party: Dustin Schmidt mentioned that it was his best caving trip which he was able to enjoy with his wife and kids. So much so that his wife is writing a detailed book on their experience.

Shannon County: Jim Cooley talked about his recent trip to Shannon County, MO. They installed a permanent ladder in a pit that is difficult to access through ropework. During that installation Dustin Schmidt noted they found the three Cave Fish, which is the first of its kind found on the property. Later, they were able to find a missing cave known as "Goat Cave" high atop a bluff.

Jacks Forks River: Corey Ellis talked about a recent adventure to Jacks Fork River. They spent four nights on the river and were able to enter 17 caves and monitored ten of them and surveyed one of them. Corey said the weather was wonderful and couldn't ask for a better trip.

Alexander Cave: Shane McCurty was able to visit Alexander Cave to do some vertical work and later during the eclipse they were able to camp out with their family and friends to enjoy the eclipse sighting.

Novice/Scout Trips:

Cleveland Cave: Jim Cooley mentioned Mark Fletcher will be taking a Mormon boys' group to the cave in June.

Lewis Cave: Jim Cooley mentioned there is a scout trip upcoming mid-week in the middle of July, by a California Scout troop.

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.

2024 April 19th-20th: MVOR at the Waynesville Shriner campground.

2024 May 21st: Monthly Grotto meeting at Gorman Discovery Center. 6:30pm CDT. There will be a Zoom conference as well, with details to be sent about a week ahead of time.

2024 June 15th: Novice Trip. Contact Kristen Vogel (Vogel_Kris@Yahoo.com) for information.

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

2025: NSS Convention in upstate New York.

2026: NSS Convention in Corydon, Indiana.