

Meeting Minutes for KCAG - July 21, 2026

Attendees – In person:

Bill Gee
Jim Cooley
Julie Cooley
Jack Rufener
Rick Hines
Cory Ellis
Kristen Vogel
Shane McCurdy
Jocelynn Morris
Quentin Brown
Bailey Martinez

Ethan Lenhardt
Rylan Buxton
Noah Ayers
Freddy Benning
Tracy Ward

Attendees – On Zoom:

Andrew Karum
Steve Wahlen
Gracie (?)
Daniel (?)

6:34 pm – Called to order

6:34 pm – Newcomers introduced themselves:

Noah Ayers

6:32 pm – Jack Rufener gave a presentation on his week long 2026 NCRC Nationals - Level 1 training, that took place in Alabama.

Day 0 was the Entrance exam, which includes demonstrating competency with 11 knots, and SRT vertical skills. The NCRC uses the day before the week-long class officially starts to vet the skills of new attendees and remediate any possible gaps, before class instruction takes place. Days 1 and 2 were in class lectures, along with familiarization with different roles necessary to conduct a cave rescue and the skill sets that those roles include. Day 3 was vertical exercises out in the field, at DeSoto Cliffs, where they practiced rigging and maneuvering a patient in a Ferno style stretcher. Day 4 was more of the same vertical exercises, at Pettyjohn's Cave, but practiced in the cave. Day 5 was Transportation, Evacuation, and IRT practice, at Howards Waterfall Cave, where some exit examinations were also conducted. Day 6, after a quick Patient Packaging exit exam, was Mini-Mock Exercises at Pettyjohn's Cave. Day 7 was the full Mock Rescue, at Raccoon Mountain Cave, where four separate mock-patients were staged at separate unknown locations throughout the cave, where the objective was to locate and extract the patients using the skills they have learned all week.

Jack passed the course successfully, and has ambitions to further his education along these lines. He has also initiated the organization of a Mid-MO (middle-Missouri) rescue network along with a ready gear cache.

7:21 pm – The Business portion of the meeting began

7:23 pm – The Presidents update

The Zoom account will be canceled in August, due to increasing costs. We will give Microsoft Teams a try next.

CaveSim donation for the NSS Convention: Bill proposed KCAG donates \$100 to CaveSim, to help offset the expenses they incurred in route to the 2026 NSS Convention. The motion was put to vote and unanimously agreed to.

Bill Gee heard the idea was floated to hold the 2030 NSS Convention in Perry County, MO. It is completely speculative at this point, but a conversation about how feasible this would be was had, as well as revisiting the challenges that were faced the last time the convention was held in the area.

Help may be needed to set up and clean up at the KCAG picnic, Saturday August 8th. A few people volunteered to help. A signup list for the picnic was passed around the room to RSVP and for confirmation.

7:37 pm – Vice President Report

No update, as he's away traveling

7: pm – Treasures Report

KCAG TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 7/21/2026 GROTTO MEETING				
BANK ACCT	Check#	To/From	Amount	Balance
6/16/2026		STARTING BALANCE		\$3,929.53
6/25/2026	Chk# 137	MCKC	(\$100.00)	\$3,829.53
7/20/2026		ENDING BALANCE		\$3,829.53
Paypal		To/From		
6/16/2026		STARTING BALANCE		\$46.97
		No activity		
7/20/2026		ENDING BALANCE		\$46.97
Petty Cash		To/From		
6/16/2026		STARTING BALANCE		\$244.40
7/20/2026		ENDING BALANCE		\$244.40
		Total KCAG balance:		\$4,120.90

7: pm – Secretary Report

No update

7:31 pm – Project updates and Committee Reports

Carroll Cave - Rick Hines, Bill Gee

MSS/MCKC - The next meeting of the MSS will be held at Cuivre River State Park in Lincoln County from September 11-13, 2026. Elections for president and vice president will be held at the MSS meeting. Dan Lamping, is stepping down as president after over a decade of service, and Kohl Mitchell, the current vice president, is running to fill that position.

Novice and Scout trips -

There are currently two spots left for Kieswetter Cave trip on this Saturday July 25th.

Dillon Bond is taking a scout trip to Cleveland Cave on Sept 19th and 20th.

Perkins Cave has a scout trip scheduled for Aug 8th

Cloud Nine Caves - no update

7:34 pm – Quartermaster Report

Nathan said all the helmets were loaned out

7:50 pm – Trip Reports

Carroll Cave data logger service and bio count trip. Both Bill Gee and Kirsten Vogel lead a small team trip at the same time. One team focused on the data logger service and the other on the bio count.

NSS Convention - Three KCAG people attended: Bill Gee, Shane McCurdy, and Josh White. Bill Gee arrived early to the convention, where he was invited to join an impromptu cave trip. He later did a Heiser's Mystery Well cave trip, which is officially recognized as the deepest cave pit in the state of Indiana, at over 250 ft.

Kieswetter Cave - Dillon Bond led a trip, and the landowner decided to join this time. Tons of soda straws and salamanders reported.

TAG - Shane McCurdy, with two members of TROG, visited the National Cave Museum and Diamond Cave, on the way to Cavers Paradise. They visited Stephens Gap, Secret Cave, and Balcony Sink. Shane had to leave early, but the TROG guys stayed behind and caved with other cavers staying at Cavers Paradise.

Jim Cooley, Julie Cooley, and Noah Ayers reported on their trips to a long list of caves in Benton, Camden and Morgan Counties, which included Robbers Cave, Spring Cave, Limb Line Cave, and Elisha Estes Caves in Benton County. They also joined Mike Kovacs and Jess Wilson to "ridgewalk" new caves near Noah's cabin on the Lake of the Ozarks. This resulted in the discovery, exploration, and mapping of six caves new to the MSS: Double Ought Tunnel Cave (MGN-032), Hissy Bird Nursery cave (MGN-033), Hideaway Cave (MGN-034), Wing Tunnel Cave (MGN-035), Ivy Bend Cavehouse Cave (MGN-036), and T.J. Painter Memorial Cave (CAM-209). Juvenile turkey buzzards were seen in Hissy Bird and Painter. The Painter

cave is named in honor of a cliff diver who drowned in 2021, after jumping off the bluff that the cave is located in.

7:58 pm – Upcoming trips and events

2026 August 8 – KCAG Summer Picnic at the home of Rick Hines. More details will be sent out to the grotto email list as the date approaches.

2026 September 11-13 – MSS/MCKC meeting at Cuivre River State Park

2026 September 18-20 – Fall MVOR at Riverview Ranch. More information will be available around early August.

TBD - Finish Roanoke Cave Survey

2026 September 22-26 – “The Hypogea 2026 International Congress will be at Tbilisi, Georgia (Europe) Sept 22-26 under the patronage of the Union International de Speleologie (UIS). For more information: <https://hypogea2026.com/> “

2026 October 17 – Bridge Day. <https://officialbridgeday.com/> for more information.

2026 October 31 – Annual bat census trip at Carroll Cave. Contact bgee@campercaver.net for more details.

2026 November 5-9 – International Technical Rescue Symposium in Golden, CO. Co-sponsored by Pigeon Mountain Industries. More information at <https://itrsonline.org/>

2026 November 1-13 – 22nd International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology. Held in the Canary Islands. Registration should open in May 2026. Contact Dave Foran for more information.

2027 June 14-18 – NSS National Convention in Del Rio, Texas.

8:25 pm - Jim Cooley mentioned he is looking for some smaller cavers for a survey in Robbers Cave around the weekend of Aug 1st.

8:28 pm - Quentin Brown and Noah Ayers were voted in as a KCAG members

8:30 pm - Adjourned