

Chouteau Grotto Minutes from June 1, 2005

Present:

President : Marck Schneider

Vice-President: Eugene Vale

Treasurer : Kevin Feltz

Secretary : Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire

Other Members : 7

CALL TO ORDER : Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m.

REPORTS :

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Previous months' minutes still un-typed due to house-moving priorities.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Current: 1127.13 which represents an increase from the previous month.

MSS LIASON REPORT:

Rita Worden reported that MSS discussed buying a Pagemaker program.

Carroll Cave Conservancy mapped 8.7 miles in the new survey area including Bearclaw side passage and some of Upper Thunder. Old survey report totaled 11.3 miles without side passages. New survey may be pushing 35+ miles, which could make it the longest cave in the state.

Some cave files are going to be moved to Land Survey data vault in Springfield (at Southern Missouri State?). This is one of the satellite sets that Paul Johnson had kept, not the main files which are located in Rolla.

FORESIGHT REPORT :

Passed out some hard copies of the Foresight which included the press release of the 6000 caves.

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT:

Everything has been returned. Nothing is currently checked out.

OLD BUSINESS

ST. LOUIS CLEAN WATER CONFERENCE:

Marck Schneider is still looking for someone to attend the Conference this fall, possibly to present a portable cave or some other program. It will be located at the St. Louis Science Center and would be an excellent opportunity for the grotto to do some education and outreach.

MVOR

Five from Chouteau attended MVOR at the Tick and Chigger Ranch (Rita, Ernie, Maddie, Nick and _____). The most impressive part of the weekend was the bonfire. It was built of old slab wood and consisted of two tall towers perhaps 20 feet tall with corridors, bridges and rope walks. As it burned, it was possible to see some of the architecture techniques.

During the weekend, they also checked out Honey Branch Cave in Douglas County, 18 miles from camp (Little Honey Branch was gated). Both used to be tour caves. One side passage, Crystal Passage, was beautiful with some formations. They also took Meander Canyon to Waterfall Passage which then led to a bigger waterfall. At one point, they had to chimney up, and lifted Maddie up.

There was also much discussion of vertical caving with comparisons between European styles of vertical vs. other styles and various methods of using knots, ascenders and footloops.

GROTTO PICNIC

Mark it on your calendar: Rock Bridge's Special Use Area for the third weekend in Sept. which is the 17th-18th (Sat-Sun). The fee is \$1 per person per night.

NEW BUSINESS

Ken Thompson Research Award:

Criteria for the Ken Thompson research award was established to help fund fees for presentations of research papers at symposiums and such. It could help fund someone with lots of experience doing research or someone with not a lot of experience. Preference would be given to non-academics who often do not have a source of funding for presenting their research. MSS, MCKC, MVOR, MVG and others have made contributions. Rita suggested the grotto make a donation to the fund. The motion was tabled until more details about the award could be made available. Jo Schaper was working on it; check coolist for details.

Sculping monitoring: The Missouri Dept. of Conservation (MDC) announced that it was going to start a sculpin monitoring project in cave springs in Perry County. Most known populations have already been wiped out. This study requires further watershed research.

6000 caves patch: The official 6000 th cave is Sextus Mille Cave which was probably named to mean 6000 th cave but which technically means 6 th mile cave if you translate the Latin correctly. It was mapped by Scott House and Ben Miller. Luella Owen's book, "Caves of Missouri," is being reprinted. In it, she mentioned Devil's Icebox Cave, though she calls it Connor's Cave.

Holton Cave presentations : Pamela Marquis, owner of Holton Cave just north of Columbia, has requested kid-friendly presentations on caves. It would be good to keep on good relations with her, and good for the kids as well. Anyone interested, contact Ernie Bhend or Marck Schneider.

Explore Rock Bridge cave program: Marck has been asked to do a program and service project in conjunction with the Friends of Rock Bridge monthly "Explore Rock Bridge" series on July 23, 2005.

Grotto policy for Devil's Icebox: Kat announced Rock Bridge State Park's new policy concerning scheduling grotto trips into Devil's Icebox Cave. It is printed below:

Grotto Trips

If requirements are met, an official grotto caving organization can make arrangements for a Wild Cave Tour

(WCT) for their group. This is a special service provided in recognition of the support and volunteer service grottos have provided to Devil's Icebox Cave and other caves over the years. Aside from this policy, those interested in WCTs must sign up individually. After learning of the interest and abilities of members of his/her grotto, a grotto leader should call the park office to discuss possible trip dates and other details (573-449-7400). The date chosen for the grotto trip will be dependent upon the availability of a park certified WCT leader and other factors. This park leader will be in-charge during the trip. The grotto leader can request a certain difficulty level trip and destination - again something not an option for the general public. However, to have a C or D level trip, all participants must meet the pre-requisite requirements as described in the WCT brochure. What qualifies as "prior wild cave tour experience and be in excellent physical condition" is subject to the judgement of staff. Staff have the final say on destination which will be determined ahead of time.

The grotto leader must provide each caver's name, address, birthdate, phone number(s), e-mail address (if applicable) and provide the fee for all participants. Fees vary by difficulty level, \$25 for B, \$30 for C and \$40 for D (per person). Registration information and money must be received at least 7 weeks in advance of the opening date of the season. This provides time for staff to arrange a Devil's Icebox Cave certified WCT leader to guide the grotto group and time to adjust the WCT schedule prior to it being advertised to the public. The deadline for grottos to register the spring season (April 15 to May 16) is Feb. 25 and the deadline for the summer/fall season (Aug. 1-Oct. 8) is June 12. All other WCT policies apply (see WCT brochure available at www.mostateparks.com).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **June 11, 2005, MCKC Annual meeting** : At MDC's Powder Mill Nature Center. Bring your own food.
- **June 18, Hamilton and Little Hamilton Cave in Meramec State Park.** Contact Eugene Vale for details. Cavers under 18 years old will need signed permission slips.
- **July 9 and July 30: Bats on Parade** : Kat also announced some opportunities to watch endangered gray bats fly out of Devil's Icebox. The dates are July 9 (ages 6 and up) and July 30 (ages 8 and up) at 7:30 p.m.. Programs are free but pre-registration is required.

CAVE REPORTS

- **Green cave.** Eugene and Jo met a Urkanian cave diver who knew the recently-departed Don Rimbach.

OTHER BUSINESS

- *None*

MEETING ADJOURNED : at 8:05 p.m. Some members proceeded to the Alpine Shop for the Grotto Shopping Discount Day.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire, 06/19/05