

Chouteau Grotto Minutes from July 6, 2005

Present:

(President: Marck Schneider, absent)

(Vice-President: Eugene Vale, absent)

Treasurer: Kevin Feltz

Secretary: Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire

Other Members: 5

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m.

REPORTS:

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Nothing to report..

TREASURER'S REPORT

Current: 1127.13 same as last month.

Kirsten sold four decals, Rest are missing. They may have been packed up with someone else's stuff. Kirsten will check at the MSS meeting in September and will either pay up or subtract from Kirsten's membership dues which are currently overpaid.

MSS LIASON REPORT:

Liaison Summer edition will feature the 6000th cave announcement. Presently there are 6038 caves in MSS record. The one that was selected as the 6000th cave is Sextus Mille, which is a poor Latin translation of "six thousand." After the MSS meeting, there was a campout for cave research.

During the work session: There are 1931 cave leads that no one has yet followed up on yet, including a letter from Jerry Vineyard to Alfred Burle about a cave in Callaway county. Alfred Burle was Curator of Resources Museum for State of Missouri at the time.

The Cave Research Foundation: 20+ people had assignments all over Mark Twain National Forest. Amber, Bill, Kirsten and others were involved in cave mapping. Hidden Well: 800_ feet in main passage mapped, cave is maybe 1000 feet long. Knife Cave, was also mapped and lots of others.

The Karst Conservancy (TKS), a new organization based out of Florida is seeking to manage karst lands by purchasing them, requested cave locations from the MSS files. They were denied. They may seek to get on the NSS agenda.

FORESIGHT REPORT:

Is ready. Will send out within a week.

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT:

One person used one helmet, collected a \$5 user fee and given to Kevin. Returned deposit. 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.

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. Kirsten and Mike will be there. Mike wished to note that the picnic DID happen last year. Rick and Diane Walk showed up. Due to the rain they went to Rick's house and watched movies.

ALPINE SHOP

Paul Lowry forgot to arrange for the Alpine Shop to be open for Grotto members after the June 1 meeting. Instead, as an apology, he offered a one-time 20 percent discount to grotto members anytime during the month of June. Kirsten got her discount, so did Kevin. Some of the staff at the Alpine shop were unaware of the discount, and did not even know that Chouteau normally gets a 10 percent discount.

HOLTON CAVE PRESENTATIONS: Pamela Marquis, owner of Holton Cave just north of Columbia, has requested kid-friendly presentations on caves. Kirsten volunteered and said she will contact Pam.

NEW BUSINESS

DEVIL'S ICEBOX SCHEDULE: Will be published later this week. Someone asked if anyone had given any thought to pushing the terminal siphon again since we're in a severe drought season. Kat replied that there are no plans currently to do so, and that only staff and leaders are likely to be able to go to the siphon.

MCKC: Pulaski County (?) Owners of Rollins cave are willing to donate the cave to MCKC for tax reasons. Details are still being finalized. Does not include spring, mill or old lodge. They approached Kirsten first for possibilities. MCKC may investigate setting up Land Trusts for landowners to donate their land upon the death of the landowner.

CAVING OPPORTUNITIES

Moniteau County, Tanyard Cave near Wooldridge. It would be nice if Chouteau could finish surveying the cave. 1967 map surveyed the cave to the sump. No side passages until after siphon. The sides are scalloped, the cave contains black chert. There's no clay. It's all a well-worn sluice through bedrock, though sediment is ankle deep in places. In some places the floor is very much like the Icebox. Water is sometimes not very deep, but when it is there's very little air space.

Boone County, Three Creeks Conservation Area, Spring Cave: July 23, Meet at 9 a.m. at Three Creek's southern parking lot off of Meyer Lane (same parking lot as for Hunter's Cave).

Last trip to Spring Cave was Fall, 2000. It's not completely surveyed. Maybe get a mapper to come along (Amber Spohn?)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **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 County, near Springfield, River Bluff Cave:** Kirsten. Strictly a limited access research cave. This cave was discovered by a Green County road construction crew, who found that in the midst of terror miracles can happen, too. During the Sept. 11, 2001 Twin Towers terrorist attack, the road crew had received instructions to halt all blasting. They had planned to set off 10 charges and had already drilled and filled two charges. Since they could not remove the two, they received permission to blast those two charges. The explosion opened an entrance into an incredible cave system. The blast destroyed about 250 feet of cave but what remained was amazing. It's a good thing all 10 charges weren't set. The mapped main passage currently contains 2200 feet. The left passage is all aragonite so it has not been explored. The cave, which once had a natural entrance that had since collapsed, contains the longest known set of peccary tracks in existence, a preserved turtle shell, aragonite crystals, a small-nosed brown bear and imprints from the bear's belly fur, leg bones of horses, and bones of mammoths.

The cave has been closed to the public but will be fully-rigged with fiber optics so that visitors to the museum that has been set up around the cave will be able to watch the work being done on the cave. The entrance is a 16 foot drop down a manhole and secured with 5-6 lock systems. Installations included steel supports, 35 conduits, and steps and bridges to prevent damage. National Geographic and the Discovery Channel have or will be doing features on the cave.

- **Springfield, Fantastic Caverns, Crystal Caverns :** Kirsten Alvey. Was delivering 6000 cave patch. Got free tours. The gentleman who owns the cave is 87 years old and spends ¾ of the day in the cave leading 4-6 tours per day. He attributes his long, healthy life to the clean air in the cave. He and his wife are part of the Manceister family.

- **Meramec and Onondaga Cave State Parks: Big Hamilton, Little Hamilton, Onondaga Cave:** Eugene Vale, Jo Schaper and Vince de Marco. Little Hamilton had tons of cave salamanders.

- **County? Reed Spring Park. Who?** Bunch of small park caves. 115 salamanders and frogs and crickets. The entrance was all trashed.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Emergency Response Team set up. If a person (landowner, developer. Etc.) needs cave information, they can contact County Planning and Zoning. P&Z will contact Scott House who will contact the appropriate person for that county. Kirsten has Cole, Callaway, Miller, Osage, Moniteau and Cooper.

Rita will probably want Cooper, Moniteau and Boone.

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