

Chouteau Grotto Minutes from December 7, 2005

Present:

(President: Marck Schneider, absent)

Vice-President: Eugene Vale

(Treasurer: Kevin Feltz, absent)

Secretary: Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire

Other Members: 9

(This version of the minutes has personal phone numbers and e-mails deleted for privacy reasons)

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

REPORTS:

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes for 2005 are all current and should all be posted on website and posted as a file on the Yahoo account. Minutes from last month were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Kevin was ill so no report current on current balance.

Membership Dues Reminder: Membership dues need to be renewed. The option was given to get a check to Eugene who will mail it to Kevin or pay dues at the January meeting.

MSS LIASON REPORT:

Rita Worden, MSS Liaison, was not present at beginning of meeting, but gave a quick report when she arrived. The next meeting MSS Meeting is Jan. 21 (the third Saturday), which conflicts with the scheduled Winter Campout date. Kirsten reported that following the meeting will be a baby shower which she plans to attend as she is coordinating it. Rita said she plans on going from the meeting to the Winter Campout.

FORESIGHT REPORT:

Kirsten's computer is still at the doctor; the kidnapped Foresights will be released when the computer is back on its feet.

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT:

Mike Morgan, quartermaster, mentioned that Kirsten will be returning the compass and clinometer at the January meeting as she is still using it. Kirsten is considering buying a new compass and clinometer to donate to the grotto so that she can continue to use a set and not tie up the grotto's (though no one else has really asked to use it). Mike said he would look up the costs of a new set. Eugene mentioned that he was glad to see the grotto equipment being used. Mike agreed, provided that it was being used by grotto members for grotto-related purposes, and not loaned out to supplement other institutions' equipment.

OLD BUSINESS

REPORTS

Eugene asked if anyone had any trip reports to turn it to Kirsten. We also discussed the Annual Report, which the president fills out and sends to both NSS and MSS. We'll make sure to send a year's worth of minutes as proof that Chouteau is alive and well. Kat mentioned that the new Secretary will also have to fill out an I/O report, and that she would send instructions to the new Secretary.

Trip Reports: The Grotto Trip in November was to both Schoolhouse Cave and Bruce Cave. The owner of Schoolhouse tagged along to Bruce Cave. Kirsten gave kudos to David Webster who had not visited Schoolhouse since he mapped it 45 years ago.

Reminder: Please continue to send trip reports to Kirsten or Steve.

WINTER CAMPOUT: Will be 20-22 in Pioneer Forest near the big sawdust pile. Mike is trying to have a copy of the map scanned and posted to the website with directions as the site is difficult to find. Mike is still checking on what caving opportunities are available in that area. He would like to do a little digging on a site he and Joe Dom started on a few years ago.

GROTTO ELECTION:

Mike Morgan moved that all the nominees be elected. It was seconded and passed. Officers for 2006 will be

President: Eugene Vale
Vice President: Marck Schneider
Secretary: Vince de Marco
Treasurer: Kevin Feltz

We discussed the change to the bylaws that enacted 2-year term limits for some of the officer positions. No one has yet been able to find which set of minutes such action was recorded. However, at least three people affirm that it was done, possibly during Rick Walk's last term as President. It was decided to bring the issue up again at the January or February minutes and perhaps affirm that it was done.

STREAM TEAM

The grotto stream team coordinator, Amber Spohn, has been busy enough with Carroll Cave that the grotto should consider appointing a new Stream Team Coordinator and getting equipment back from Amber. Eugene will contact Amber to see what equipment and paperwork she has, and what kind of monitoring capabilities we have, and which streams we are responsible for. When Mike Morgan checked with Tom Raterman of County Planning and Zoning, Tom said it would cost about \$30 per sample to analyze. Perhaps Amber has some equipment (HACH kits, etc.) so that we can do some of the monitoring ourselves.

Bonne Femme Watershed Partnership

In addition, Scott Schulte mentioned that any work within the Bonne Femme Watershed should be recorded and turned in to the Bonne Femme Watershed Partnership. Kat can provide forms if you send an e-mail to rock.bridge.memorial.state.pakr@dnr.mo.gov or you can e-mail the information directly to Scott Schulte. Please include # of people, # of hours, date, time, place and type of activity. Chouteau Grotto is a partner in the BFWP and needs to commit some hours so BFWP can qualify for the EPA grant. Activities can include stream team monitoring, trash clean ups, ridge walking, cave bio studies or mapping, and more.

MSS 50th Anniversary: Update

Kirsten Alvey is in charge of planning the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Missouri Speleological Society (MSS). It is currently scheduled for June 23, 24, 25 at Meramec State Park. MSS is the first and longest running survey of caves in the United States.

Kirsten reported that ½ of the cabins are already reserved, as well as 8 of the 24 electric sites and 15-24 of the rustic areas. Kirsten plans on reserving a second rustic area. If anyone has any collections to display for the event, please contact her on her cell phone. She also reminded the group that the event will include a geocache competition. David Webster and Scott Schulte, who were both present, accepted the grotto's offer to sponsor them as qualified "old-timers" and pay for their lodging. Jim Huckins, another potential sponsor-ee was not present due to illness; he was diagnosed with West Nile Virus. Jim suspects that he picked it up from MVOR when he encountered a lot of mosquitoes after entering one of the caves.

IMPORTANT "TO DO": Someone suggested we contact other MVOR people to see if anyone else was displaying similar symptoms as the disease can be difficult to diagnose, and they might not know they have the illness. There's also the need to make people aware that there may be West Nile Virus associated with that particular cave. (I can't recall if anyone volunteered to do this, and no one mentioned exactly which cave it was, so if you have the ability to make such a contact, please do so).

Chouteau Grotto Yahoogroups:

This is a reminder that due to technical difficulties, the grotto is no longer using Coolist. Instead, we have switched to Yahoogroups. Access is by invitation only. To receive an invitation, contact the Chouteau Webmaster, Matt Nevels, through the Chouteau webpage. Access to Yahoogroups requires that you have a Yahoo account (which is free), and Matt can help you get set up.

Grotto Trip Scheduled for New Year's Day: We decided to check out several caves in Cole County near Jeff City: Arch Cave, Crabtree, Crevice, Loudmouth as well as a new cave Kirsten and Steve found. We may also be able to check out Bode Cave, Bode Annex and Bode Natural Arch in St. Elizabeth. All of these caves are easy caves with walking passage. One has an entrance 6-8 foot above the ground and requires a cable ladder to get into but is easy once you're in. There is also one very steep hill. There are not a lot of formations, but expect some spectacular views, and places with lots of historical interest. Please confirm with Steve Taylor or Kirsten Alvey if you plan on coming. Eugene will also put it on the grotto calendar so that you'll get a reminder notice.

Directions: We will meet at 11 a.m. (which will give people time to recover from their New Year's Eve activities) at the convenience store in Brazito: From Columbia, take Hwy 63 south to Hwy 54 (as if you're going to the Lake of the Ozarks). Continue about 10 miles west on Hwy 54

to Brazito to Route E and look for the only convenience store in Brazito. If you pass Route E, you've gone too far.

NEW BUSINESS

February Cave Trip: Kirsten proposed a February grotto trip to Three Creeks Conservation Area to check out some of the caves there. The exact date will be decided later, perhaps at the January meeting, so bring your calendars and some dates to consider. Matt asked if anyone had pushed the back of Crevice Crack (upstream of Hunter's). There's some passage too skinny to let most people fit in and a mud slide down to the creek that requires a rope to get back up.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **River Cave Tours at Ha Ha Tonka State Park:** Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb. 4 These free, hour-long tours of River Cave will require participants to wade through 40 degree chest-high water and climb up and down slippery terrain. Participants can expect to see a variety of cave deposits, grotto salamanders, hibernating bats and southern cavefish. **Reservations** are required and can be made after Nov. 1. by calling **Ha Ha Tonka State Park at 573-346-2986**. Kat is planning to go Jan. 7 on the last tour of the day. There may still be spaces available. Kat would also like to get a permit to check out Island Cave (a small easy cave) but needs three others to go with her.

- **Next Missouri Caves and Karst Meeting:** December 10, 2005 at Alicia Lewis' basement.

- **Grotto Trip New Year's Day** (see above).

- **2007 National Cave Management Symposium** will be in Missouri hosted by Powder Valley Conservation Area.

- **50th Anniversary celebration of the Missouri Speleological Society (MSS)**. It is scheduled for June 23, 24, 25 at Meramec State Park.

CAVE REPORTS

- **Greene County: Natural History Museum of the Ozarks at River Bluff Cave.** Kirsten Alvey and Steve Taylor visited the museum. Rita attempted to but could not find it. The museum opened Nov. 17. This is the cave Kirsten reported on earlier that was discovered when a road crew blasted into the side of a bluff one Sept. 11. In SW Greene County near Springfield. Directions: from Springfield, take Glenstone to Cox Road near Wildwood Haven golf course. At the sign for the golf course, before the gold course entrance, turn right onto a gravel road and follow it back to the museum. The museum does not have a sign on the main road indicating the turn off, and is not visible from Cox Road.

- **Camden County, Bridal Cave** Vince de Marco and his wife visited the cave and said it is like a walking photograph.

- **Perry County, Schnockenber (spelling?) Karst Window** Scott Schulte visited this site as it is also a geocache site.

OTHER BUSINESS

MEETING ADJOURNED: at 8:10 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathryn Devany DiFoxfire, 12/09/05