

Passages



Monthly newsletter of the
Springfield Plateau Grotto
of the NSS

January 2011
Volume 6, Number 1

SPG Officers

President: Jack Rosenkoetter

Vice President: Todd Twilbeck

Secretary: Kasi Rodgers

Treasurer: Roy Gold

MSS Director: Max White

Minutes of the Springfield Plateau Grotto

January 12, 2011 Business Meeting

Respectfully submitted by Kasi Rodgers

President Jack Rosekoetter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There were 15 members and one guest present.

Jack introduced the officers and guests.

Officer Reports

President, Jack Rosenkoetter introduced the officers.

Jack asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the December meeting as printed in Passages, Kasi made the motion, Jon seconded, all were in favor.

Vice President, Todd Twilbeck had no report.

Treasurer, Roy Gold read the detail of the Treasurer's Report. Roy also announced that decals and patches are available for purchase, and that yearly dues are past due. Jack inquired about deadlines on when money needs to be spent. Roy explained that there are no timelines on the funds except the MCHF Restoration fund, which is being slowly spent.

MSS Director, Max White, said the next meeting in Rolla will be on January 22, 2011 with the MCKC meeting to follow the MSS meeting. The MSS meeting starts at 1 p.m. and the MCKC meeting will start after the MSS meeting is finished. There will be a presentation about Carroll Cave at 10 a.m.

Subterranean Journeys editor, Maria Thompson, was not present, but Jack said that if you have any stories, articles and/or photos, please email them to her. She anticipates a new issue will be out in a couple weeks.

Passages editor, Maria Thompson, was not present, but Jack asked if everyone was receiving Passages.

Webmaster, Zach Copeland, was not present, but Jack said that he is looking for pictures for the website and said that he has put up instructions on WNS decontamination.

Librarian, Melvin Johnson, said his hours at Valley Water Mill park are Tuesday and Thursday from 1 p.m.-5 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m.-12p.m. Fridays are a bit irregular in the winter, so please call before coming on Fridays. You can also email or call him and make an appointment.

Future Cave Trips

Charley Rey talked about a possible lead on a cave he's going to explore this weekend on Saturday, January 15th. Meet at the Strafford McDonald's at 10 a.m. He said he'd get a location while he is there. If the cave is too small to explore, there are other caves in the area to check out.

Melvin said that soon DNR will be placing a probe in Giboney Cave and if you would like to see the spill that is now occurring, get in touch with him. He said they don't know much about the chemical that is appearing, except that it is high in calcium and sand. They dye tested in possible locations with no leads so far. The same substance was found in Jordan Creek last summer.

Charley Rey said he's doing a vertical workshop at Ash Grove Cave. Meet at 10 a.m. at the convenience store on the way to the cave on Saturday, January 22nd. Get in touch with him if you'd like any other information.

Charley Rey is making a trip to Farwell Cave in Barry County in February. He says it is very much like an Arkansas-style cave. He said there is also a healthy bat population. Meet at 9a.m. on February 5th at the Cassville McDonald's. Vertical experience is a must.

Other upcoming trips may include Banker Cave in Shannon County to photograph icicles, Tumbling Creek Cave, Giboney Cave, Jones Spring Cave, Toombs Cave, Devils Slide Cave, Ash Grove Cave and Huff Spring Cave.

Old Business

Greene County Project – Jon talked about the progress with the project. He said that the fall and winter are excellent times to locate caves. Charity said Eric Hertzler is working on the project every Friday and finding a new cave almost every Friday and if you're interested, just give him a call. Jon Beard talked about locating the Bell Caves, which are a series of five caves on a hill. They dug into an entrance and found Bell Cave #2. He said they are hoping to enter Cunningham Cave, which is now clogged with leaves and twigs. Jon said he, Jerry and Bobbilynne checked out Wilsons Creek Cave as well. Jon is asking the City and County to get a letter that will allow them access at all times.

Jack Rosenkoetter mentioned that the MSS Cave files from Jefferson City are at the Hertzlers' house. Charity said that if you have anything to add at all, please let her know. The focus is Greene and surrounding counties.

Jack Rosenkoetter said Lysol IC that is used for decontamination is available. Contact Jon Beard if you would like some. One ounce per gallon of water is the proper dilution, and a 15-minute soak should be used for equipment. There is a video on our website on how to disinfect properly.

Jack Rosenkoetter brought up the SPG brochures that the grotto voted to print and asked if there was an updated version of the brochure available. Charity said she is having them sent out to be printed.

Roy Gold said the slide scanner is being shipped.

Charity Hertzler talked about the upcoming banquet and asked for donations to be auctioned. She said she sent out invitations. The banquet is from 6 p.m.-10 p.m. There are free door prize baskets including patches, stickers, books, car wash gift cards, Andy's gift cards and t-shirts, among other great gifts! Dr. Ashley is coming to give a slideshow on cave biology and Jon is also giving a presentation. Jon announced that he will be auctioning a copy of *Caves of Missouri*. Charity's number is 417-209-0792. Please contact her to RSVP and let her know what you can bring for the potluck.

New Business

Roy Gold proposed that Jim Huckins be given full membership to SPG. Jon Beard seconded the motion. Humorous discussion ensued. The motion passed.

Jack Rosenkoetter talked about a contact from MSU that would like to know a place to take the Outdoor Initiatives group.

Who Went Where

Jerry Vineyard brought a guidebook to Roy Gold that talked about the impact crater north of Springfield and the High Road Horror Hole near Branson. MODOT helped Jerry and Roy find

the cave, Roark Valley Cave, and two smaller caves near the Roark Valley Cave. Then Charley Rey, Max White, Jon Beard, Charley Young and two Arkansas cavers made a photo trip to Garrison Cave #2 on December 11th.

Bill Heim said that on Sunday, Dec 19th, he took a few members on a trip to Crystal Caverns and Dunphy, which turned out to be Farwell Cave.

Charley Rey said he took another teacher out to Ash Grove Cave on the December 27th.

There were also multiple trips to aid the Greene County Project.

Announcements

The SPG Banquet is January 29th from 6-10 p.m. at the Executive Conference Center.

Jack reminded everyone of the next meeting on February 9th at the Library Station. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

Logo items are available, including decals, patches and t-shirts.

Dues are overdue at this point.

MCKC's purchase of Berome Moore Cave is now final.

Meeting Adjourned

Treasurer's Report

Springfield Plateau Grotto

December 8, 2010 to January 12, 2011

Balance December 8, 2010

General Fund,

Speleothem Restoration Fund, L-A-D Grant

and MCHF funds **\$13,649.69**

General Fund

2011 Dues **152.00**

Total Income **152.00**

Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$4275.31</u>
<u>Speleothem Restoration Fund</u>	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$977.94
Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$977.94</u>
<u>Cave Gating Fund</u>	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$6,984.95
Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$6,984.95</u>
<u>Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation</u>	
Additional Projects	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$.00
Balance January 12, 2011	\$.00
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation	
Caring for Karst	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$0.00
Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$0.00</u>
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation	
Cave Restoration Equipment	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$613.79
Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$613.79</u>
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation	
Gate Management and Repair	
Balance December 8, 2010	\$0.00
Balance January 12, 2011	<u>\$0.00</u>
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation	
Public Outreach	

Balance December 8, 2010 **\$0.00**

Balance January 12, 2011 **\$0.00**

Balance January 12, 2011

General Fund, Speleothem

Restoration Fund, Cave Gating Fund,

and MCHF Funds **12,851.99**

Who Went Underground in December 2010

December 1 -Charley Rey took his high school geology class to **Ash Grove Cave** (Greene Co) on an educational field trip.

December 3 -Eric Hertzler and Jon Beard traveled down to the Neosho area in Newton County, first looking at **Big Spring**, which is barely enterable as a tight bellycrawl in rushing water. Across the way, they looked at **Abbott Cave**, obtaining a GPS reading, entrance dimensions and photographs. After this, they drove to **Kenney Cave** to resume Eric's survey. They surveyed a few hundred feet in the southern section of the cave. While Eric sketched, Jon checked out some of the lower level, a gooey bellycrawl beyond the point where Jon belly crawled. A bristly cave crayfish was seen and photographed. About 800 feet has been mapped thus far.

December 4 -Roy Gold and Jon Beard helped Bob Taylor complete the survey of **Ku Klux Klan Cave** (McDonald Co), only recently documented. The three took a few photos. Fauna observed were 6 tricolored bats, a small gray mouse, a few cave crickets. After the survey, the three drove the roads in the area, noting several apparent caves in the bluffs only some of which are documented. They spoke with the owner of **Bluff Dwellers Cave**, the only show cave developed by John "Dad" Truitt in the area still in operation. **Truitt's Cave** is for sale.

December 5 - Max White and Jon Beard checked the level of the First Watercrawl in **Garrison Cave #2** (Christian Co), scheduled for an upcoming photo trip. The water level was at 5 inches minimum air space, so Max opened the faucet on the "Leo Thompson Siphon" to test the siphon (which was still primed). The faucet was left open enough to let a small dribble pour to prevent any freezing of the line. They checked the lowermost entrance for bristly cave crayfish, finding one. They also noted several juvenile cave crickets in the uppermost entrance passage along with 11 tricolored bats. After this, they checked the entrance to **Countryman Cave**, and then briefly visited Garrison Spring.

December 6 - Todd Twilbeck, Rob, BJ Gray and Jon Beard canvassed caves in the Battlefield, MO area in Greene County to GPS, photo and measure cave entrances and talk to landowners and distribute copies of "Caring for Your Karst." **Swallow Hole Cave** was visited first. Only a section of the entrance crawl was attempted, but the explorers did climb into a tall dome. Later, they talked with another landowner who said that the entrance to **Carter Cave** was filled in the 1970s. After this, they visited the entrances to the three **Taylor Spring Caves**, guided by the landowner. The last cave entrance of the day was **Campground Springs Cave** which appeared to be a short bellycrawl type of cave.

December 10 - Eric Hertzler and Jon Beard began the day opening the siphon valve to lower the water level of the First Watercrawl at **Garrison Cave #2** (Christian Co) before traveling to the southern portion of the county to map **Moonshine Cave's** 100+ feet of passage. The cave is up to 22 feet tall despite its diminutive entrance and some impressive flowstone, although dry. The cave ends as a lowering crawlway in its upper section, encountering water just as the passage became too low.

December 11- Charley Young, Max White, Charley Rey, Kevin Helton and Jon Beard from SPG, Brian Wilbanks of OHG and Kayla New and Josh Shock from Little Rock Grotto spent the day in **Garrison Cave #2** (Christian Co) photographing speleothems, bristly cave crayfish and fossils including at least 10 nautilus near Three Rivers. Speleothems photographed were the Crystal Bowl, Castle in the Sky, fish hook helictites and soda straw forests and some in the Second Divinities. The cavers exited the cave to strong winds and single digit wind chill. Good times.

December 15 - Charley Rey guided his high school geology class through the karst features of **Lost Hill Park** (Greene Co), a newly established city/county park with several short caves, natural bridges and other karst features.

December 17 - Eric Hertzler and Jon Beard obtained entrance data (GPS location, entrance measurements, photo) on the following Greene County caves: **Kensinger Cave**, **Horton Cave** (a historical cave allegedly an illegal moonshine site blasted shut many years ago), **Plastic Man Cave**, **Broad Creek Cave**, **Wasp Cave**, **Sterile Cave** and lastly the previously undocumented **Zio's Pit**, a short climbable solutional pit which Jon surveyed with Eric's assistance.

December 19 - Charley Rey and Bill Heim checked on **Crystal Caverns** (Barry Co) before going to **Farwell Cave** in the same county. Bob Taylor et al mapped Farwell Cave to 227 feet (3rd deepest known in Missouri) in the 1970s, but because of dry conditions, Charley and Bill, below the Flowstone Grotto, found a lower water table. The lowest point was low in water and passage could be seen up as well as downstream. The gang was short rope to go down the belled-out passage, but plans were made to return and explore what appears to be unmapped passage.

December 19 - Jon Beard guided Chris and Sarah (his son and daughter-in-law), Jasmine and Kasha (his granddaughters) through much of **Fitzpatrick Cave** (Christian Co). One big brown bat and 20 tricolored bats were seen, several cave crickets, several pickerel frogs rounded out the biology seen.

December 26 - Eric Hertzler and Jon Beard spent the day checking potential cave leads in Christian County, finding and documenting **Upper Busiek Cave**, a previously unknown part of the Busiek Cave complex that includes three other caves previously surveyed by Eric. The new cave find was mapped to 20 feet, developed in the very cherty Reeds Spring Formation. The cave is located about 60-70 feet above the other caves. While Eric sketched, Jon wrote a description and took photos.

December 27 -Jerry Vineyard, Bobbilynne Shackelford and Jon Beard set out to straighten out the location of **Tube Cave** (Greene Co), a cave Jerry and Jim Williams mapped about 40 years ago. The cave no longer exists due to expansion of the Southwest Treatment Plant, but in the database, the legal location placed it in one section, the latitude/longitude location placed it in another section, but Jerry's 40-year description placed it in yet a third section. By obtaining a GPS on Oval Sink and pacing 250 feet, the location was established! After this, they hunted for and found **Wilson Creek** and **Skeleton Caves**, two side-by-side caves mapped by Bob Taylor way back when. Wilson Creek Cave has an impressive beginning--20 feet tall, but only 50 feet long.

December 30 - Roy Gold and son Duncan visited **Hall Branch Cave** (Greene Co) to photograph some of the cave's speleothems.

December 31 - Eric Hertzler and Jon Beard spent the day in the Clear Creek Park area of Greene County to straighten some puzzling cave locations. Steve and Tye Holdren visited the area earlier in the year, found some of the caves, but not others. First Eric and Jon found the location of **Cunningham Cave**, and just as Steve and Tye found, determined the entrance too small to enter without digging. After this, Eric and Jon unsuccessfully looked for **Mill Cave** and **River Bottom Cave**, either bad locations or the caves have been filled or destroyed. Using a lead they learned from a local elderly man, they found not one but three caves (all short) in close proximity and nowhere near the previous others. Eric and Jon traded tasks in mapping two of them that may be connected via animal burrowing with hopes of mapping the third later. One is an impressive unroofed cave about 300 feet long with the last 50 feet being partially roofed with two skylights, in essence a set of three parallel small natural bridges. So the result of the day was that three caves appear lost, but another three caves apparently "new." The new caves appear to be segmented parts of the same cave system. Except for one opossum and some cave crickets, no fauna was seen in any of the three caves.

Report by Max White. Material provided by Jonathan B. Beard, Eric Hertzler, Charley Rey and Bob Taylor.