

# THE MSS LIAISON

## VOLUME 64 NUMBER 7-8

July - August 2024

### AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS:

CAIRN – CHOUREAU – DAEDALUS – KCAG – LEG – LOG – MCKC - MMV

MSM – MVG – OHG – PEG – SEMO – SPG - Stygian

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### Missouri Speleological Survey President's Message - September 2024 by Dan Lamping.

The Fall 2024 MSS Meeting is quickly approaching. It will be held at Pleasant Valley Nature Preserve in Jefferson Co., just south of St. Louis (6701 Twin River, Rd, High Ridge, MO 63049) on Sunday, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. This is the site for Pleasant Valley Cave, which is owned by the Jefferson County Parks Department, but as of recently has come under the management of the Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy (MCKC). As a caver, it's highly likely that you have a yellow bat sticker on your vehicle. This is a symbol used by cavers across the U.S. and has international recognition. So, the story goes, the design for the bat stickers was created by caver Earl Biffle in the 1960s who made it a letterhead for MMV Grotto. While the design was rejected for the grotto letterhead, it would later be used as a fundraiser to help purchase Pleasant Valley Cave to help protect it. Eventually, the cave was purchased by the Nature Conservancy, who donated it to Jefferson County Parks. Last year MCKC worked out an agreement with Jefferson County Parks to take over management of the cave with plans underway to do a cave clean-up, install a bat friendly gate, resurvey the cave to make a complete map, and open the cave to limited recreational caving. The plan for the weekend includes cave trips into Pleasant Valley Cave on Saturday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> to work on clean-up of the cave by removing trash and possibly begin the resurvey. For the Saturday trip, meet at the pavilion (go through the gate) at 10:00 AM. For the Sunday Board meeting, the gate to the pavilion will be open by 9:00 AM. The pavilion is located here **38.462621, -90.571731**. Note, this cave does have a vertical, pit entrance. You must be proficient in SRT to enter and exit the cave. It is likely we could use surface support as well, to haul out trash, so if you'd like to help, but don't possess the skill set to safely enter/exit, your help could still be needed. Camping for the weekend will be available on Friday and Saturday nights at West Tyson County Park, a short drive from Pleasant Valley. The campsite is located here **38.510023, -90.587697**. Enter West Tyson Park and go right at the first intersection. The campsite is on the left just past the maintenance shed, with bathrooms a short distance beyond. Note, none of the MSS officers will be staying at the campground and there are no current plans for a group meal but there are numerous restaurants nearby in Eureka. There are plans to eat at a local Mexican restaurant following the cave trip on Saturday. County Parks do lock the gate at dark, so if you are planning to camp there, be sure to arrive before dark. If you are planning to camp and/or go to Pleasant Valley Cave on Saturday, please RSVP to Dan Lamping ([danieljlamping@gmail.com](mailto:danieljlamping@gmail.com)) and Tony Schmitt ([tonymary2601@yahoo.com](mailto:tonymary2601@yahoo.com)).

For the upcoming meeting, we actually do have some business to attend to. The current framework for the MSS website is expiring and will no longer be supported. Joe Light has managed our website for the past 10 years. He'd like to pass that torch on to someone else. So, the MSS is

looking for someone with web design experience who can help build a mobile friendly website using WordPress. Please let me know if you are interested. We also need to formalize our Cave Files Committee. This has been an ad hoc committee for some years and has worked well. But we really should include the committee in our Constitution. Elections will also occur for president and vice president. If nominated, I would be willing to serve another term. The treasurer position will also need to be reappointed.

At the most recent NSS Convention in Sewanee, TN, I attended a state cave survey round table discussion, with representatives from Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Virginia, and West Virginia, along with cavers who are organizing a cave survey for California. It was interesting to



hear how each state operates. There were definitely similarities and regional differences. Ultimately, I came away feeling pretty confident in how we operate in Missouri. I hope to see you all in Jeffco in September.

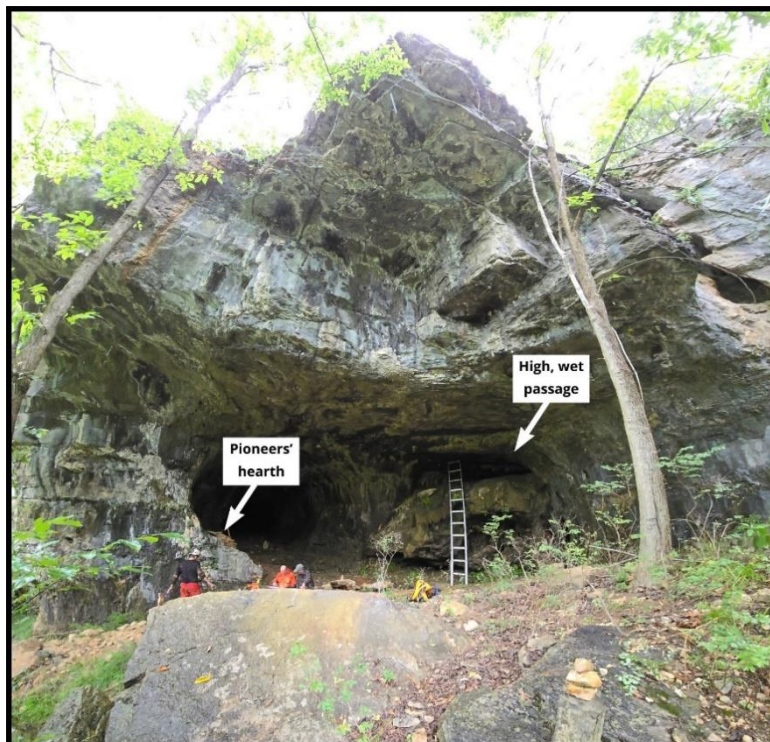
**Missouri Speleological Survey Files Report for September 1, 2024 - By Ken Grush.** If you have **new information** on any Missouri caves, my email address is [slak@grush.org](mailto:slak@grush.org). We need your help to improve the database and make it more complete. I can and do work with Facebook entries, but for information or photos to be incorporated, I need to be “private messaged” with the cave name and county. **Karamea Christofferson sent:** -8 Faunal records in her Narrative for Tom Moore Cave in Perry Co. **Jim Cooley sent:** -Maps of Cedar Bluff Cave (CL=105 ft) and Turner Bluff Tunnel (CL=34) in Oregon Co. Also sent a map of McGillicutty Cave (CL=57) -4 new caves in Carter Co.: Danged Overhand, Penningtons Spring, Penningtons Arched Shelter and Cannard Slot Caves. All came with brief descriptions and 2 with survey lengths. **Nathan Curran sent:** -A survey report on Clay Fill Cave in St. Louis Co. Report included a brief description and 6 Faunal records. Map to follow. -Three new caves for St. Louis Co.: Koch Cave, Oakwood Fissure and Bussen Pit. Photos, GPS and brief description were included. **Spike Crews sent:** -A geologic report on a visit to Fisher Cave in Franklin Co. **Josh Cooper sent:** -Report of 146 Grotto Sculpin on a Door-to-Door trip between Tom Moore and Berome Moore in Perry Co. -New caves: Vincent and Travis Caves in Perry Co. **Ken Grush sent:** -A map from Lang Brod’s files that was never finalized for Hoene Hole in Jefferson Co. Field notes were scanned from the hardcopy cave archives. -Map of Corner Shot Cave (CL=101) drawn from Matt Bliss’ field note on this new cave in Perry Co. **Scott House sent:** -Maps for Balcony (CL=118), Bobcat (CL=103), Indian Cave Shelter (CL=54), Plinko (CL=39), Slot (CL=55) and Tiny Pillar (CL=15) Caves; all are in Texas Co., part of the MSS weekend trip to Paddy Creek, just before the April MSS meeting. -A list of MoDoT caves and possible impactful caves, which ultimately was an audit of our records. About 160 caves received modifications/updates to their records. This was a big project including existing maps and how close they come to MoDoT ROW. **Mark Jones sent:** -Via Scott House, 6 Narratives and Use Monitoring form along with 12 Faunal records for 6 caves monitored from Winona for ONSR and MTNF. **Candace Kovacs sent:** -4 Faunal records and 3 photos for Kieswetter Cave in Pulaski Co. **Joe Light sent:** -Report on a public outreach program cave trip to Cliff Cave in St. Louis Co. He reported two Faunal Records also. -Map showing 2 previous unknown openings to a known cave in St. Louis City. -Report on Hamilton Spring Cave, along with 3 Faunal records. -Report on Bailey Pit (see Swain), from a notable biologist in St. Louis City. -Report on Greens Cave in Washington Co. -Report on Fogelbach Cave in St. Louis Co., 11 photos, and 2 Faunal Records. -An 1818 newspaper clipping from

the Missouri Gazette for an incident at a Saltpeter Cave on the Gasconade River. **Dani Lotz sent:** -A GPS locations for Mammoth Cave and Cave Under the Tree (new) in Washington Co. Directions and brief description were sent for the new cave. This is her first reporting. **Kohl Mitchell sent:** -A Trip Report for a cave in Hannibal, Marion Co. -3 Reports on his activity in Ralls and Pike Counties including 3 Monitoring forms, 16 Faunal records and one new cave and map, Waterline Cave (CL=24) for Ralls Co. -A map of Oscar G Cave (CL=172) and Dean G Cave (CL=131) in Lincoln Co. -Report on survey work in Marion Co. **Bobby Swain sent:** -Map of Skylight Pit (CL=31, ED~12), a new cave for St. Louis Co. He sent a Narrative of the cave along with the map. -Map of Sedition Cave (CL=61) in St. Louis Co. -A Narrative of Bailey Pit in St. Louis City, it does have bad air! But they were able to do a quick assessment of the status of the pit. **Jim Vandike sent:** -About 1000 cave photo files for about 50 caves that he has visited. He actually sent 2500 files, but much was in duplicate, some in 2 formats and lots of site visits that weren't directly related to cave that he made as a geologist. **Richard Young sent:** -A report on one of the Beer Caves in Perryville, Perry Co. He included 2 photos showing access to the cave back when the sidewalk was being repaired/replaced and covered up that entrance.

**Chouteau Grotto – Aug. 10:** Kohl Mitchell, Bryn Downes-Ward, Caleb Mundwiler and Gunnar Wurst surveyed about 150ft in Magee Cave, Lincoln Co. This completes the survey of Magee Cave, which finished at 751 feet of passage. **Aug. 18:** Rita Worden, Kohl Mitchell and Tiffany Stoots performed map QC and continued the survey in Spanish Steps Cave in Phelps Co. About 70ft of new passage was added, finishing at 210 feet in length and 60 feet of depth, stopped by sump at water level. Dryer weather could add footage. --Rita Worden

**Kansas City Area Grotto (KCAG). July 13:** Bill Gee led a stream-level data logger service trip to Carroll Cave. He had eight people signed up, but after three cancellations, including one due to

COVID-19, the team included Martin Carmichael, Marty Griffin, Mike Kovacs and Kristen Vogel. Bill Gee arrived at the silo early to change batteries and rig the pit. Carmichael arrived early as well. Soon after they arrived a massive thunderstorm with extremely intense rain and very high winds blew through, causing lots of water over the roads and downed trees. Power was knocked out at the silo. Mill Creek Road was totally blocked in both directions by both downed trees and temporarily by high water, making Griffen, Kovacs and Vogel over an hour late for the 9:00 a.m. rendezvous time. Finally, everyone got into the cave at 11:00 a.m., only to find water rising rapidly in Thunder River and also in Carroll River passage downstream from the Bear Claw Passage. The team was able to upload



*A Home for the Winter: Massey Cave (CTR-031) EW 60', EH 30'.*

some but not all of the data loggers, and exited the cave after only three hours. **July 20-23:** Jim & Julie Cooley led a trip consisting of Bill Gee, Dustin Schmidt and Seth Colston which continued the



*High, wet passage in Massey Cave*

surveys of several caves on private property in Shannon Co. **July 24-25:** Jim Cooley provided logistical support and led groups from a Scout troop from California (the state of California, not California, Missouri) through all the way to the back of Lewis Cave, to cap the troop's week-long high adventure float trip on the Current River. **July 27-30:** Jim Cooley led a survey trip to the privately owned Midco Iron Works in Carter Co., which led to an invitation to ridgewalk and survey caves on a nearby 1,200-acre private property. The survey team consisted of Cooley, Mike and Candace Kovacs, Richard Orr, Dave Turley, and Bert Pennington. This resulted in three new caves being found: CTR-100 Pennington's Spring Cave, CTR-101 Pennington's Arched Shelter, and CTR-102 Canard Slot Cave. A survey was done of the shelter. Several other solid leads were developed as well. A survey was begun in CTR-031 Massey Cave, which was reported in the last *Liaison* as a new cave called Three Deer Cave. Further investigation with local sources leads us to believe that this cave was actually the lost Massey Cave, which was used as an over-wintering home for a family in the mid-1800s that were heading west in a covered wagon. Identification of the cave was based on what we believe are artifacts from their encampment. This

cave required a Vevor telescoping ladder to safely access a high, wet side passage. We also rather precariously deployed that ladder to access and begin a survey of the new cave reported in the last *Liaison* as High Overhung Cave. This cave has been rechristened CTR-099 Danged Overhang Cave – all 23.4 beautiful, remote feet of it.-- Jim Cooley

**Springfield Plateau Grotto (SPG).** **July 21--** Mike and Candace Kovacs, Joey Kessack, Charley Rey, Lauren Slater and Sean Fay visited Island Cave (Camden Co.) at Ha Ha Tonka. The group met at the Visitor Center/Park Office slightly before 10 and got geared up. After getting their permit signed, the group drove up to the Marina parking lot and walked the short trail to the cave, entering around 10:45 and exiting at 12:15. The cave was quite beautiful with large ceilings and a low floor. Lots of climbing and some crawling opportunities were had. No bio was seen in the cave. The formations were beautiful. --Report by Max White, Content by Sean Fay. **Aug. 31--** Sean Fay, Ashley Mitchell, Jarod Ozee, Sarah Peterson, Heather Pyle, and Max White monitored Garrison Cave (Christian Co.) to the Waterfall Room. The team entered the cave at 10:30am and exited 4pm. The team counted 12 Bristly Crayfish, 5 Grotto Salamanders, 8 Lava Salamanders, 3 Isopods, and 1 Beetle during the trip. Along the way, the team members went through the 1st and 2nd watercrawls, past the flowstone dams, Pete Fountain and the Waterfall Room before heading back out. Beautiful rimstone pools, pearly white draperies, and extraordinary fossils were seen at certain spots within the cave.--Report by Max White, Content provider by Ashley Mitchell.

**Lake Ozarks Grotto (LOG).** July 19<sup>th</sup> – Grotto Chairman, Ken Long, joined Klaus Leidenfrost and Jean Knoll at Goodwin to do mowing and cleanup work. **Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>** – Ken Long, Christen Easter, Buzz Caldwell, Gary & Alberta Zumwalt went to Kiesewetter Cave to work in the entrance, doing repairs on the lock to the cave gate. **Goodwin** - Ken Long, Klaus Leidenfrost and Jean Knoll spent 3 hours mowing grass/weeds the end of August. — Alberta Zumwalt

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**Research Committee** -Dr. Robert Lerch, Dr. Michael Sutton, Dr. Doug Gouzie and Jeffrey Crews.

**Cave Files Committee:** Scott House (Chairman), Ken Grush, Mick Sutton, Dan Lamping, and Jeffrey (Spike) Crews.

**NOTE.** Organizations that have not paid their 2024 MSS affiliate fee are **CAIRN, Daedalus, MCKC and MMV**. The fee was due in January. Failure to pay this fee within 2 months of the due date, can result in the **loss of representation on the Board**. Please send check or money order to: MSS Treasurer, Don Dunham, 6104 Valley Creek Ct., Imperial, MO 63052 or pay at the upcoming MSS meeting. It might be a good idea to pay for 2024 & 2025.....

**Calendar:**

**September 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> – MSS weekend. Pleasant Valley Nature Preserve. Meeting on Sunday, 10 am.**

**Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> - Next Liaison deadline**