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AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS:

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

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

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Missouri Speleological Survey President's Message November 2024

by Dan Lamping

The Fall 2024 MSS Meeting was held at Pleasant Valley Nature Preserve in Jefferson County, just south of St. Louis on Sunday, September 15. On Saturday, the day prior, 24 people volunteered 80-man hours of work to haul a large amount trash from Pleasant Valley Cave. Over the past year the Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy has taken over management of Pleasant Valley Cave. Plans are currently underway to remove the existing gate and decrepit ladder in order to install a new, bat friendly gate. Current estimates for the project are about \$25,000. At the meeting on Sunday, the MSS board voted to donate \$1,000 towards helping fund the new gate. While typically the MSS does not donate to such causes since we really don't have a steady source of income and since our primary purpose is to serve as a data repository and to manage cave data for the state, the project is certainly consistent with our stated purpose. Discussion was held regarding this donation being an exception, rather than a precedent, given the unique history associated with this cave. In total MCKC raised \$2,500 in donations towards the gate, the weekend of the MSS meeting and is currently at around \$16,000 and still working towards that goal of \$25,000. Many thanks to Tony Schmitt for arranging the weekend and for taking on leadership over the whole Pleasant Valley Cave project. Anyone who is interested in donating can send funds to the [Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy](#). Just click on the link.



MSS cooperators who showed up in support of MCKC's efforts to clean up Pleasant Valley Cave. ~ Photo by Dan Lamping

In other news from the meeting, Kohl Mitchell was voted as Vice President of the MSS and I agreed to serve for another term. I'd like to thank Krista Bartel for her service as MSS VP and would like to congratulate Kohl. While cavers were working in Pleasant Valley on Saturday, members of the Cave Files Committee including Scott House, Jeff Crews, Ken Grush, and myself met for several hours addressing a list of items. Mick Sutton, also on the committee, was unable to attend. Several workflow items were addressed when it comes

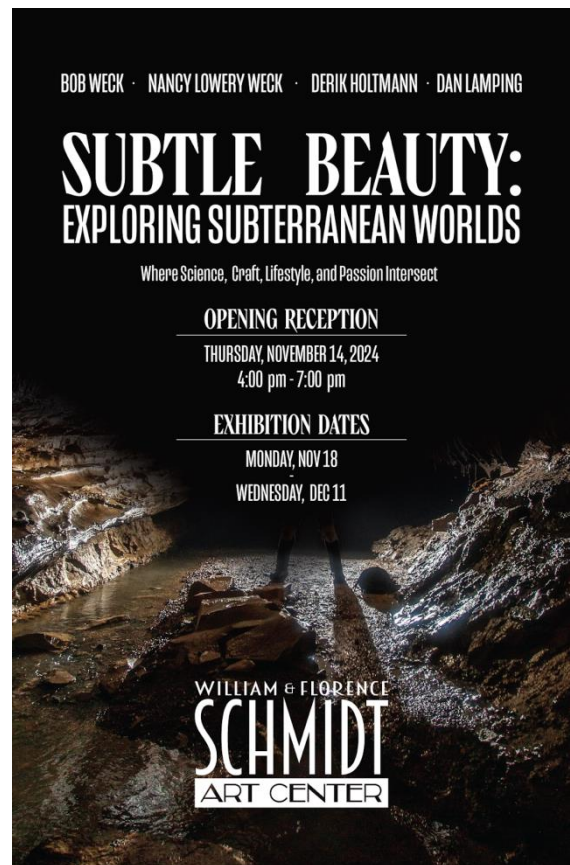
to data management and a process for MSS data sharing along with a confidentiality agreement were finalized. Attendees at the meeting who've been recipients of cave data from the MSS were asked to sign, others who

were not in attendance, but who've received and use MSS data will eventually be asked to sign and any new data requests will be expected to follow the protocol. See the document following this report. Currently we are working on a form for people to use to submit data requests. Additionally, we are working on a New Cave / Cave Trip Report Form using Google Forms, which should get published soon, and will hopefully make it easier for those reporting caves or cave data to know what's really needed along with making it easier and more streamlined to integrate into the Missouri Cave Database.

Also proposed at the meeting was a bylaw change to the MSS constitution which will formalize the MSS Cave Files Committee. The committee has been a function of the organization for years with prior acts of the Board authorizing the committee to manage the Missouri Cave Database (MCD) and to sign agreements with agencies that are also stakeholders in the MCD. The intent is simply to formalize and clearly define the process which has been an organizational function for years, creating a specifically defined role in the bylaws rather than being an ad-hoc committee. The MSS Board will vote on this measure at the next meeting, which can be seen at the end of this article.

Currently we are working on plans for the next meeting. An inquiry was sent to Meramec State Park about meeting there and focusing on some particular cave related work objectives, but we never received a reply. Meanwhile, the Ozark National Scenic Riverways asked CRF if it would be possible to amass a crew to do trail work in Round Spring Cave. So, we're looking at holding the Spring 2025 MSS meeting in Shannon County, likely at a pavilion at Round Spring, with work trips into the cave, and availability of the work station in Winona for cavers to stay for the weekend. More information will be coming out soon as we work on setting a date.

Lastly, I will say that I feel fortunate coming up in the caving community as a Missouri caver. I really think much of what we do and how we do it, is exceptional in the caving community including the gargantuan body of data in the Missouri Cave Database, produced largely by cavers, and the diverse range of stakeholders and partners in the endeavor, the relationships and rapport that Missouri Cavers in CRF Ozark Operations have with state and federal agencies, and finally the high-quality culture of our cave mappers. When I first started caving in the early 2000s, I got into cave mapping right away and took to cartography pretty quickly. I learned what cave maps should look like by studying the maps of master cartographers like Scott House, Mick Sutton, Bob Taylor, Doug Baker, Jon Beard, James Corsentino, and others. Currently, I'm ecstatic to the work being produced by some of our newer, younger cartographers like Kohl Mitchell, Nathan Curran, and Andrew Mayer. Making maps is something I really enjoy, much more so than writing reports, going to meetings, and responding to the endless barrage of emails. It's something which I find relaxing to do as I zone out on a specific task and come away with something to show for it. All that said, I'm honored to get to showcase some of my cartographic work along with accomplished artists who also invest much of themselves to capture and communicate the beauty of caves. The exhibit will showcase cave themed art, primarily pottery and other works with clay, created by Nancy Lowery Weck, photography by Derik Holtmann, and large format cave maps made by me, with the support of many others. Cartography is the art and science of making maps and while I know this, I've not really ever considered myself an artist. So, it's pretty cool for others to see art in the maps that I've made. Many thanks to Bob Weck and Nancy for organizing it and many thanks to Aaron Addison for putting in the time to print the maps for me. I hope to see some of you at the reception on November 14. If you can't make that, but are interested in seeing the exhibit, it runs from



November 18 to December 11 at the Schmidt Art Center on the campus of Southwestern Illinois College, 2500 Carlyle Avenue, Belleville IL.

Missouri Speleological Survey, Inc. DATA SHARING PROCESS

Any person or group who receives MSS data is hereby considered a cooperator.

Any cooperator or group who receives data from the MSS must sign the DATA SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT, unless another legal data sharing document such as cooperative agreement or MOU which superficially defines the terms of data sharing and confidentiality, supersedes it.

The MSS Cave Files Committee must be notified and in agreement of any significant data sharing with individual cooperators or organizations. Significant data sharing includes going beyond answering questions regarding specific caves or quad level areas, but would include counties, regional or statewide data.

Data sharing should be based upon specific, stated project needs or goals and may be shared at the quad, county, regional or state level depending upon the stated project needs or goals and level of contribution made to the MSS on behalf of the requestor.

Data reciprocity is an expectation.

Missouri Speleological Survey, Inc. DATA SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

This document serves as a record of agreement for data sharing and confidentiality between the Missouri Speleological Survey, Inc. and _____.

The Missouri Speleological Survey, Inc. (MSS), serves to protect, conserve, locate, record, explore, and study the caves and karst resources in the State of Missouri by providing a permanent, non-profit, non-sectarian, cooperative organization for the pursuit of speleology. It further seeks to establish and nurture a professional atmosphere among speleologists active in Missouri and cooperate with all individuals and organizations consistent with the foregoing purposes.

The MSS has granted permission to _____ to have custody of certain cave data subject to the following conditions:

- The data remain the property of the MSS and/or the cave owner and cannot be disseminated further without permission. This grant does not supersede copyright law.
- In particular, detailed cave locations cannot be published in a publicly accessible form, although less detailed locations (e.g. county, township/ range or rounded off point values) may be acceptable for publication, including web sites. Questions should be referred to the chair of the Cave Files Committee.
- The data are subject to the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act and are exempted from Freedom of Information Act requests.
- The data may not be used for recreational caving or commercially-led trips.
- The cooperation of the MSS shall be acknowledged in any reports, presentations, or publications that result, at least in part, from use of these cave data.
- There is an expectation of data reciprocity. All new data or data improvements will be shared with the MSS, to be incorporated into the Missouri Cave Database.

The granting of this data request does not constitute permission to visit the caves. Site visits should be arranged with the current owners as appropriate. This agreement does not imply that the MSS believes that the requestor is qualified to safely visit caves.

I have read the above document and agree to abide by all conditions herein.

CHAPTER XVII: CAVE FILES COMMITTEE

The MSS shall establish a Cave Files Committee to coordinate database efforts, to solicit and disburse data and to publish findings through Missouri Speleology and other media. This Committee shall consist of a five-member voting panel, which includes the MSS President. One member, selected by the Committee, will serve as Chair. The Committee shall appoint its own replacements with Board Approval. Appointees to the Cave Files

Committee should have appreciable investment in the Missouri Cave Database and be knowledgeable of MSS institutional history.

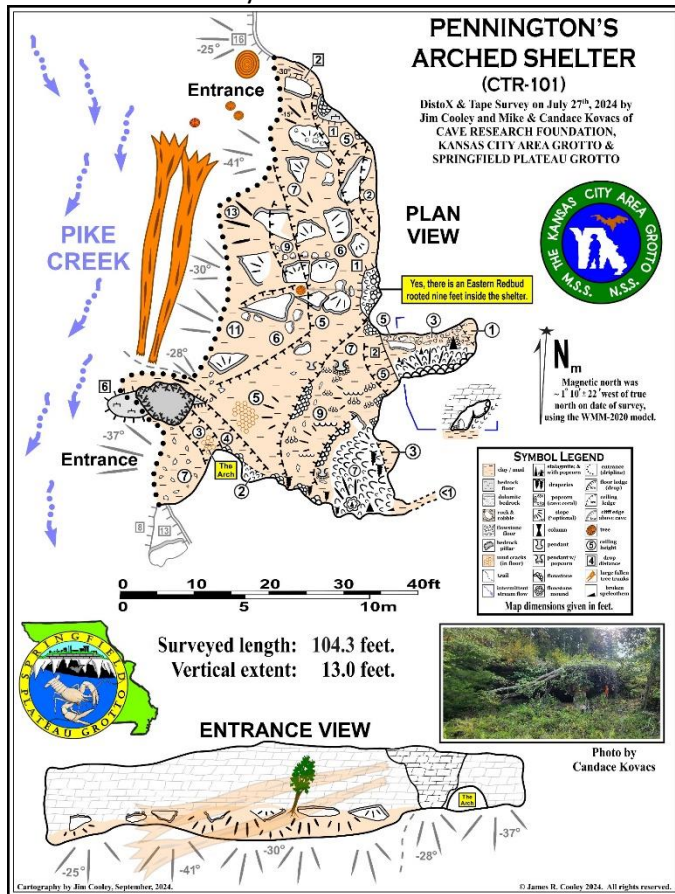
Missouri Speleological Survey Files Report for November 1, 2024 - By Ken Grush. If you have **new information** on any Missouri caves, my email address is slak@grush.org. We need your help to improve the database and make it more complete. I can and do work with Facebook entries, but for information or photos to be incorporated I need to be “private messaged” with the cave name and county.

Mark Brooks sent: -An update on a map he’s been working on in Howell Co., now the longest cave in the county. **Karamea Christofferson sent:** -8 photos and 8 Faunal records for Soehl Cave in Perry Co. **Jim Cooley sent:** -Two new caves in Carter Co.: Classic Dry Cave and Tunnel and Tube Cave. Cooley recently pushed Carter Co. to have over 100 caves now. -A report on Lee Hollow Glade Pit in Carter Co. He included several photos, detailed directions and description. -6 Use Monitoring forms for Ravine, Cedar Bluff, Turner Mill Pit, Surprise Sinkhole, Turner Bluff Tunnel and Turner Bluff slab Caves in Oregon Co. About 70 Faunal Records were included for 14 caves in Carter, Shannon and Oregon Counties. There were also 9 Related Records/Narratives for some of the Carter and Oregon Co. caves. -A map of Penningtons Arched Shelter (CL=104 ft) in Carter Co. -Another new cave for Carter Co., Lee Hollow Glade Pit. He included a set of Directions and Brief Description for the database. -A report on another mine for Clay Co. that proved to be good bat habitat. -Updates on ownership and management of 4 caves that KCAG manages: Cleveland (St. Clair Co.), Flippen (Benton), Joe (Camden) and Lewis (Ripley) Caves. **Josh Cooper sent:** -7 Faunal records for trips to Tom and Berome Moore Caves in Perry Co. And sent 5 more for Mystery Cave, also in Perry. **Nathan Curran sent:** -Survey Narrative for an urban cave in St. Louis Co. His report included 8 new Faunal records. -A follow-up report on the urban cave, postulating possible connections to many of sinks and a spring in the immediate area. -Five detailed reports of caves along the bluffs of St. Louis: Salamander Spring, Railroad, River Overlook, Scutigera and Doroto Spring Cave. The last is a new listing. Curran is updating a lot of the records in St Louis Co. and doing a thorough reporting, including 30 Faunal records and 20 photos for these caves. We had no photos for these caves and in 2 caves no faunal records. **Mike Kovacs sent:** -A map of a “resurrected” cave, and how appropriate, Roberts Cemetery Cave (CL=761 ft). Cave was first reported filled in 1971 and confirmed in 2010, but still there it is today. At 761 ft of surveyed length, there are only 500 caves reported longer in Missouri. Then he followed up with a nice set of directions and a brief description of the cave; both went straight to the database. **Dan Lamping sent:** -8 Use Monitoring forms and 30 Faunal records for 8 caves visited by MVG Grotto while working for CRF on the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (ONSR). -An update of the U1 sheet of Carroll Cave in Camden Co., no new length but making great progress on the map. **Joe Light sent:** -A report on working with the local fire department and helping familiarize them with Cliff Cave in St. Louis Co. -2 published articles from the Journal of Spelean History, one on mushroom caves and sudden deaths in the brewery caves of St. Louis. The articles specifically mention 5 different caves. -A report and 2 photos of the site of sinkhole “collapse” and now filled at Benton Park, which is thought to drain to Benton Park (English) Cave. An assist was provided by Bobby Swain who supplied a photo looking up from the bottom of the hole (no possible way forward was detected). **Andrew Mayer sent:** -Via Dan Lamping, 2 maps for Pearl Ocita (CL=131 ft) and Trapping (CL=60 ft) Caves in Shannon Co. Very nice maps for his first attempt, looks like a pro in the making. **Chad McCain sent:** -4 Faunal Records for Flaming River and Crevice Cave over the MVOR weekend. **Bob McKelvey sent:** -Via a phone conversation his recollections of a cave mapped in 1965 (almost 60 years ago) that we did not have an accurate location on. He remembered the owner, the orchard and the access road along with locational information that we did not have documented otherwise. All this information was further documented on the existing topo maps of the area and Google maps. **Kohl Mitchell sent:** -3 Monitoring forms for Spanish Steps Cave in Pulaski, Spring Cave in Boone Co. and a Hannibal city cave in Marion Co. -2 maps for Lincoln Co.: Trefoil (CL=) and Featherbell (CL=) Caves. **Scott House sent:** -A map of Overlook Cave (CL=80 ft) in Texas Co., part of the Paddy Creek survey week in April of this year. **Marissa Schorr sent:** -New map of Crossing Hollow Cave #2 (CL=89) in Phelps Co. **Tony Schmitt sent:** -3 cave reports, via Dan Lamping, for 3 new cave leads in Shannon Co. **Mick Sutton sent:** -New map of Spanish Steps Cave (CL=210) in Phelps Co. **Richard Young**

sent: -A historical research paper for Weinrich Beer Cave in Perry Co. He found a deed documenting a number of brewers using the cave before 1890!

Chouteau Grotto. Sept 8th - Diana Dawson, Kohl Mitchell, and Caleb Mundwiller went to survey the dreaded Spring Cave (BNE-021) but due to instrument failure had to abandon the trip after one 24ft shot. **Sept 17th** - Rita Worden and Bob Lerch led a survey trip into Devil's Icebox Cave (BNE-001) with Caleb Mundwiller and Jerel Waters to mop up details of a couple of domes in the Left Fork. **Sept 28th** - Rita Worden led the semi-annual invertebrate survey in Devil's Icebox with Jack Rufener and other DCI members. **Oct 13th** - Jack Rufener, Kohl Mitchell and Amy Fawks returned to Spring Cave to survey the complex entrance area of the cave, netting 674ft, completing the survey of the multiple entrances. **Oct 19th** - Kohl Mitchell and Caleb Mundwiller took advantage of dry conditions to push a low-air-space lead in Wieczorek Cave (RAL-052). Several hundred feet of virgin passage, mainly water crawl, was discovered. They plan to return for survey if or when dry conditions hold. -- Rita Worden

Kansas City Area Grotto (KCAG) Liaison Report for September-October, 2024: Sept. 6th-10th: Jim Cooley led a small CRF team consisting of Jack Rufener (Chouteau) and Jay Mrazek (Out of Bounds Grotto) to the Irish Wilderness to survey caves on the Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF). We completed the sketching of Ravine



Cave (ORE-197), and then floated down to the White's Creek float camp for a few days of wilderness canoe camping. During that time, we spent two days trying to complete the survey of Amphitheatre Cave (ORE-148), but were stymied by a defective DistoX. We're close ... but as yet, no cigar. We also monitored Porifera Cave (ORE-029), and replaced a lock and chain removed by vandals on the gate to White's Creek Cave. **Sept. 13th-19th:** Jim Cooley, Mike and Candace Kovacs (SPG), and Richard Orr (Stygian) surveyed several privately owned caves in Carter Co., and discovered two new ones. We completed the field work (sketching) for Massey Cave (CTR-031), Danged Overhang Cave (CTR-099), Pseudo-Sisyphus Cave (CTR-097), and Barrett Cave (CTR-080). We completed the QC check for a map of Pennington's Arched Shelter (CTR-101), turned it in to the MSS cave database, and discovered two new caves nearby: Classic Dry Cave (CTR-103) and Tunnel & Tube Cave (CTR-104). All survey shots were taken and line plots were drawn up for CTR-103 (202 feet of survey shots) and Sisyphus Cave (CTR-096 – 244.6 feet of survey shots). They're now "pencil-ready" for sketching on the next trip. Unusual fauna in Massey Cave

included a sizable adult Midland watersnake (*Nerodia sipedon pleuralis*), which when first noticed hanging out of the wall at eye level less than a foot from my face looked **startlingly** like a copperhead! **Sept. 22nd:** Jim & Julie Cooley and Dave Turley (landowner) checked out a cave lead for CRF on the MTNF, on land immediately adjacent to Turley's large ranch. This small, obscure lead was discovered during glade restoration work by U.S. Forest Service contractors. Dave's been hopping and bopping up and down these hills since he was knee high to a grasshopper, and has also cooperated with MTNF on glade restoration extensively in this area, so he was the perfect guide. The lead proved to be a very small entrance pit cave, which we have named Lee Hollow Glade Pit (CTR-105). It goes! **Sept. 30th:** Pursuant to an inquiry directed to the MSS, Jim Cooley and Bill Gee



met with three representatives of a feature film production company to assess a filming location in a small, abandoned subterranean room-and-pillar limestone quarry in Clay Co., not far from Kansas City. We are calling this mine the Kearney Movie Mine (CLA-^02). The company is filming a feature-length horror movie, and wanted to use the site for a “spider’s lair” set, complete with flame- and smoke-producing props. They wanted to know if the mine was safe for this purpose (answer: well, sort of), and any advice we could provide on hazards they might not notice, or direction we could provide on how to utilize it safely. It was a productive visit that led to the decision to go ahead with using the site for filming. Intriguing fauna encountered included 30 big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*), who may

be used as extras in the film, and two sizable adult western black rat snakes (*Pantherophis obsoletus*), who failed their screen test when we told the movie people that they were probably eating the extras – and that they’re big enough to give a painful bite to humans, too. The movie folks were quite tight-lipped about the film and who was acting in it, but we did later learn that the “talent” (actors) arrived at the site for the filming



by helicopter. It makes you wonder ... **Oct.26th**: Bill Gee led Shane McCurdy (Tulsa Grotto), Martin Carmichael (Chouteau), and Peter Schnegelberger on the annual Carroll Cave bat census to the Mountain Room. Three others signed up but withdrew only two days before the trip. They entered the shaft at 9:20 a.m. and were out at 6:30 p.m. Three single bats were counted, two tricolor and one gray. Another very small cluster of gray bats found, no more than a dozen individuals. Lots of sculpins were seen, and three perch. There was one surface crayfish spotted near Mountain Room, but no frogs. Several dozen salamanders were noted. A dozen isopods were inventoried at the usual counting site, plus many

more at some of the riffles near the Mountain Room.-- Jim Cooley

Springfield Plateau Grotto (SPG). Sept. 8---Mike and Candace Kovacs surveyed 760 ft in Roberts Cemetery Cave (Greene Co.) **Sept. 13- 15---** Mike and Candace Kovacs assisted Jim Cooley with Ridgewalking and Survey (Dent Co.) **Sept. 21---**Candace Kovacs, Mike Kovacs, Sarah Peterson, Loren Kuntz, Pete Kuntz and Sean Fay visited Fry Creek Cave (Webster Co.) Sean arranged the trip after connecting with Jeff, the new land owner on Reddit caving subreddit. The group met up with Jeff at 9am and he took the cavers to the entry to the cave shortly after getting geared up. The cave is 1.8 miles long with a creek running through it. The majority of that is one long passage with a few side passages that dead end. It goes from waist deep water, to crawling in water to a big room, back to crawling in water to a big room, to crawling in water to a big room repeatedly, until the terminus of the cave. There are a few squeezes one of which is accurately labeled on the map as “man sized hole.” It was a tight squeeze and then the pattern continued. The cavers got wet and muddy. Mike inspected an unsurveyed passage that is documented on the map. The cavers exited the cave at 1:00. Candace, as usual, had her camera ready and she took photos of as many as she could get: Count totals: 9 crayfish, 8 grotto salamanders, 7 dark sided salamanders, 1 yellow spotted salamander, 30 frogs, 27 tadpoles, 3 fish (perch, blue gill, minnow), 1 pipistrelle bat, 1 wood rat, 1 phoebe nest, 1 armadillo (was outside of the cave before they went in but they are counting it!!!) There is a distinct lack of speleothems

which our resident geologist, Sarah, attributes to the sandstone in the area but there were beautiful calcite crystals lining the abundant breakdown in the big rooms after the man-sized hole squeeze. Jeff has only gone about 1/4 -1/2 of the way into the cave and was not able to make the trip but wants us to come back and take him to the back. Jeff is open to SPG and KCAG (or any other grotto in Missouri) making trips in the future and offered to work out a deal on cabin rentals if we wanted to stay there. There is a field with lots of picnic tables so this would be an ideal meeting area. There is a second smaller cave on the property that has collapsed but still has squeezable access that we are planning on squeezing past the breakdown to see how much of it is still accessible. Jeff has only gone back so far on that one as well. The maximum group size is 8 in the cave at a time. Next trip will include Jeff, hopefully. But if you want to get wet and muddy, see a lot of frogs and tadpoles, let Sean Fay or Alex Stump know please! **Oct. 3**---Jon and Alicia Beard took the tour of Carlsbad Caverns (New Mexico). That night they had supper with former SPG member Stephanie McCarty, who is now President of the Pecos Valley Grotto. **Oct. 6**--- SPG Family Trip to Old Spanish Cave (Stone Co.) **Oct. 26**--20 SPG Members and Guests participated in the SPG Family Trip to Cleveland Cave. While exploring the cave, part of the group climbed the ladders to see the rest of the cave, while others waited for their return. Megan Pyle even crawled into a small hole to fish out an old beer can that had been unreachable by the cavers during the many restoration trips into the cave. Thank you, Megan!!!--Material provided by Jonathan Beard, Nathan Burton, Sean Fay, Mike Kovacs and Heather Pyle. Report by Max White. **Oct.19-20**---Springfield Plateau Grotto hosted the National Cave Rescue Commission in Reeds Spring, MO. The NCRC crew led an Orientation to Cave Rescue class, with approximately 30 attendees consisting of an assortment of cavers and first responders from four counties. Saturday was spent mostly in the classroom, but finished up outside learning how to package and transport patients. Sunday was spent at Old Spanish Cave performing a mock rescue. I am happy to report that both volunteers being rescued survived their rescue. Thank you to all of the NCRC volunteers who travelled and made this happen.-Max White.

Lake Ozarks Grotto (LOG). Ken Long made a trip to Gravois to check out the property of a landowner with the possibility of a large cave but couldn't find a way to get into it. He also got a lead on a possible cave in the



Sunrise Beach area, but the property is for sale and will wait until there is a new owner to pursue it. **Sept. 7th** – Ken Long, Christen Easter, Buzz Caldwell, Dillon Wood and Carl Ritcher (a German exchange student) made a trip into Kiesewetter Cave. They saw 3 Leopard Frogs, several cave crickets, a couple flies, salamanders and one Pipistrelle Bat. **Goodwin** – Ken Long, Klaus Leidenfrost and Jean Knoll did a cleanup trip. **Oct. 26th** – Work day at Goodwin with Ken & Monica Long, Klaus Leidenfrost, Jean Knoll, Gary & Alberta Zumwalt,

Brannon Schroeder (past MST student who had worked at Goodwin before), and 25 soldiers from Fort Leonard Wood. Max White made it possible for everyone to get connected, making this workday possible. Three groups were formed: one to work in the cave, one to work at the waterfall and one to work on top in the pavilion area. A lot of work was done. **Nov. 6th** – Frank Jasper Hurley, 92, of Versailles, passed away at the Harry S. Truman Memorial VA Hospital in Columbia, MO. The family will receive friends from 10:30 am to 12:00 noon on Saturday, November 23rd, at Jacob's Cave, followed by a funeral service with Pastor Landon "Cap" Chapman officiating. Gravesite services and interment, with full military honors will follow in the Versailles Cemetery. A complete obituary will be available on the Kidwell-Garber funeral home website. Frank was the former owner of the commercial cave, Jacob's Cave, and co-founder of Lake Ozarks Grotto. He will be missed.....-Alberta Zumwalt

MSS MINUTES. The Fall 2024 Board meeting of the Missouri Speleological Survey was called to order by President Dan Lamping on September 15th at Pleasant Valley Nature Preserve. **Introduction of Officers:** Dan Lamping, President; Alberta Zumwalt, Secretary; Don Dunham, Treasurer. Absent was Vice-President, Krista

Bartel. **Roll Call of Directors:** Max White, SPG; Allan Breite, Stygian; Stefanie Voss (proxy for Craig Williams), CAIRN; Andrew Mayer (proxy for Chad McCain), MVG; Tony Schmitt, MCKC; Dave Hoffman (proxy for Emily Reimer), MSM; Gary Zumwalt, LOG; Rita Worden, Chouteau; Lorin O’Daniell, PEG; Karamea Christofferson (proxy for Gary Resch), SEMO; Joshua White (proxy for Jim Cooley), KCAG. Absent were: Daedalus, LEG, MMV and OHG. **Secretary’s report.** The minutes were distributed to the officers and directors after the meeting and printed in the March-April *MSS Liaison*. Minutes approved. **MSS Liaison.** Gary Zumwalt reported cash on hand of \$195.83; Sending out 26 paper copies and 104 electronic copies, the next deadline is Nov. 1st. **Treasurer’s Report.** Don Dunham reported: – ACCOUNTS: General fund \$9,868.45; Subscriptions/Donations *Missouri Speleology* \$6192.86; Research Fund \$15,579.18; Anne Johnson Data Fund \$14,917.77; Affiliation Fees 0.00; Subscriptions *Liaison* 180.00; Total \$46,738.26. ASSETS: Interest Checking \$10,738.26; Certificates of Deposit \$36,000; Total \$46,738.26. **Missouri Speleology.** Don Dunham reported Volume 68 – *Caves & Karst of the Island Branch Natural Area* – was printed. Don and co-editor, Derik Holtman, with collaboration from Joe Light, will be working on Caves of St. Louis. Don reported a large order on the website for over \$200 (38 issues) from someone in Wisconsin. Don has back issues with him today. **Old Business:** None. **New Business:** **MSS Website Design** – Pres. Lamping said that the website needs to be rebuilt. Joe Light built the site and Dan puts stuff on it. Joe said it is set to expire the end of the year – but may not. Help is needed to redo it. Andrew Mayer and Joshua White volunteered to help. **Cave Files Committee** – Pres. Lamping said that the committee consisting of Pres. Lamping, Scott House, Ken Grush, Mick Sutton and Jeff (Spike) Crews has never been formally established. The committee works with organizations that work with the MSS. An addition to the bylaws would read: “CHAPTER XVII: CAVE FILES COMMITTEE. The MSS shall establish a Cave Files Committee to coordinate database efforts, to solicit and disburse data and to publish findings through Missouri Speleology and other media. This Committee shall consist of a five-member voting panel, which includes the MSS President. One member, selected by the Committee, will serve as Chair. The committee shall appoint its own replacements with Board Approval. Appointees to the Cave Files Committee should have appreciable investment in the Missouri Cave Database and be knowledgeable of MSS institutional history.” Pres. Lamping said a change needs to be announced 45 days in advance wo it would be voted on at the next meeting. He asked if there were any questions. There were none. **Election of President and Vice President.** Pres. Lamping said that he would continue for another term. Tony Schmitt made a motion Dan Lamping be retained as President and nominated Kohl Mitchell for Vice President. Seconded and passed. **Appointment of Treasurer.** Pres. Lamping appointed Don Dunham for another three years which he accepted. **Re-appointment of Jeff Crews and Doug Gouzie to the MSS Research Council.** Jeff (Spike) Crews accepted. Doug Gouzie will remain on the council until Pres. Lamping can verify that he wants to remain on it. Pleasant Valley Cave History. Tony Schmitt said that Earl Biffle created the bat sticker in the 1960s, to be used as a letterhead for MMV Grotto. It was rejected but later used as a fundraiser to help purchase Pleasant Valley Cave to help protect it. Later, it was purchased by 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. The work trip yesterday, found 24 people (80-man hours) taking trash out of the cave. Tony said that it was gated in the early 70’s, concreted shut in 1993. He said it is a caver’s cave. MCKC’s plan is to restore the entrance, take out everything there and put in a new gate which would cost approximately \$25,000. He is asking the MSS to make an exception, not a precedent, and donate money for the project. Scott House said he is against giving money for cave gating but considering the history of the cave, an early cave protected by conservation and an urban cave, he suggested a donation of \$1,000 to MCKC from the General Fund. Tony said that Jefferson County was going to fill it in or seal it. Dave Hoffman made a motion that the MSS donate \$1,000 toward the gate of Pleasant Valley Cave. Seconded and passed. Allan Breite handed over a check of \$500 from his business to Tony for the cave gate. **Projects and Announcements.** Cave Files – Scott House reported work on the amendment, data sharing & confidentiality agreement. A list of those who have data from the MSS would be compiles and those will sign for it. He said agencies and organizations have other agreements that include the database, and some funding has come from that. MSS does not own the data but manages it. MoDot used data all the time. MDC is now on board and uses our data. Scott said there are close to 50,000 (note from Ken Grush later – actual count is 46,500) faunal records and all acknowledge that. Joe Light asked about the Sunshine Law. Scott said

the material is on loan so that doesn't apply. Pres. Lamping said he is working on a google form for cave reports to make the process more user friendly with minimum standards for "lead" or "cave" to improve data quality. Ken Grush said there are 7900 caves with around 4700 mapped. There are 800,000 electronic files in the Archives – photos do a lot of that. Pres. Lamping said Chuck Sutherland did heat density charts for states, made maps to see karst sites and will put in *Liaison*. **Agency Reports. Mark Twain National Forest and Ozark National Scenic Riverways** – Scott House said they have agreements with CRF which expire in 2025. They need to do another 5-year agreement. He reminded everyone that without agreements, all federal caves are closed. That would include well over 1,000 caves in Missouri. **State Parks** – Scott said they are all on an individual basis. **Affiliate Organization Project reports.** Pres. Lamping said there are 1-2 mapping trips into Carroll each year – now around 22 miles. He said activity in Berome Moore has slowed down. **Public Outreach.** Pres. Lamping said we have the Website, a Facebook page and a Facebook group. **Next Meeting.** Pres. Lamping asked for suggestions on a location. Suggested were Paddy Creek and Meramec State Park. They will check on Meramec first. If that doesn't work, it will be Paddy Creek. Announcement: Tony Schmitt said that Jefferson County Parks had allowed us to have the MSS meeting at the pavilion for no charge. So, a big THANK YOU to Jefferson County Parks and a big THANK YOU for Tony for organizing everything for the weekend. Meeting adjourned. – respectfully submitted, Alberta Zumwalt, Secretary

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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** and **Daedalus**. The fee was due in January 2024. 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. It might be a good idea to pay for 2024 & 2025.....

CALENDAR:

January 5th – Next Liaison deadline