

Minutes
Kentucky Speleological Survey
University of Kentucky Mines and Minerals Building November 22, 2009

The President of the KSS, Bill Walden, called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm.

In attendance were twelve cavers:

Randy Paylor, Don Conover, Jim Currens, Ivan S. Artoudrine, Bob Yuellig, Howard Kalnitz, Steve Gentry, Kim Gentry, Bill Walden, Shari Forsythe, Preston Forsythe, and Bruce Warthman.

Preston Forsythe read the minutes of the April 19, 2009, KSS meeting. The minutes were approved.

John Cassidy, the treasurer, could not attend so he submitted his report in writing. The KSS balance is \$2229.41. It was noted the balance has increased by several hundred since April. Bill Walden said we are not spending any money. (Bill has been paying for incidentals out of his pocket).

Bill Walden welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Darrel Atkins submitted input to the meeting by email, as he could not attend.

KSS minutes and newsletters from earlier in the year were put on the table for anyone who wanted copies.

Meeting sites for 2010 were discussed. The January meeting will probably be in Lexington. Bill Walden said he would try to line up a speaker from KY Fish and Wildlife. Bob Yuellig suggested we check and see if the Carter Cave Crawlathon in January will be a go.

We have good attendance at the Crawlathon. Steve Gentry suggested we check with the ACCA in Horse Cave for hosting a January meeting. Preston said, "wherever the meetings for January and the rest of 2010 are conducted, they need to be announced well in advance so cavers can mark their calendars." The KSS website needs to reflect the 2010 schedule. It was noted that paper-caving sessions have to be in Lexington. Jim Currens said we need six paper caving sessions a year.

Randy Paylor discussed the computer database. More members need to be familiar with our database.

We discussed ways of increasing membership.

Bill Walden talked about future locations for the KSS office and library, if a change was needed. If the NSS office moves to KY, maybe the KSS can rent space from the NSS? Jim Currens said for the near future the KSS would have a home in the Mines and Minerals Building.

KSS Function. Howard Kalnitz led an interesting discussion on just what is the mission and focus of the KSS. What is the function of the KSS? It is an organization based on data files. Howard said what we should be doing is concentrating on what we are doing, recording new discoveries across the state. The KSS is a Survey, not a grotto or an association. We do not want to lose our identity. Howard said our files are what the KSS offers to researchers. The KSS has a different purpose and function from the NSS. Don Conover made some comments concerning the role of the KSS maintaining files in areas as biota, not just surveys. Howard and Randy both said we, the KSS, needs to nail the function and mission. Randy said we should follow the lead of the Tennessee Cave Survey. Preston pointed out that Texas has had both a Texas Speleological Survey and a Texas Cave Association for years. Howard

summarized that the KSS needs to fulfill the primary mission before any secondary issue can be met. (Preston hopes he has accurately captured this interesting discussion.)

Bill Walden discussed holding meetings at the Karst-O-Rama and Speleofest. At a minimum our KSS displays need to be set up at these popular events. Steve Gentry pointed out the KSS really does need to set up a manned booth at the Speleofest. Bruce Warthman agreed. Bruce said that we need to plan ahead. There are always several meetings on the last day of the Karst-O-Rama so meeting times and locations have to be planned.

Bill Walden discussed making the cave database available to everyone, but with protection, IDs and passwords.

Don pointed out that the KSS is really in the early stages of a power curve, where only a few do the work, and that as the KSS matures, larger number of cavers will participate. Howard said that KY libraries are good sites for meetings, and usually free. Someone said maybe we should have some meetings in conjunction with a grotto meeting. We do not work as well as we should with the grottos. Howard said we need active KSS members who are strong grotto members. We need members who will help with the KSS newsletter by submitting articles. Jim Currens said he likes paper copies of newsletters. A few of our members will never have email. We have at least three KSS members who do not use a computer. Kim Gentry said she prefers electronic newsletters. Bill Walden said he needs to know who wants a paper copy, since he is the editor. Howard said members should get a paper copy and electronic copy and non-members by email only.

Bill Walden asked for suggestions on how to attract articles for the newsletter. Howard said the county organizers need to participate by supplying reports of activity at least once a year. Surely we can generate some interesting caving activity from across the whole state not just what is happening in Wayne Co. Howard said the county organizers need more organization and coordination. Randy seconded that we need to push this area harder. Make the organizers more official. Howard said that in many cases instead of county coordinators we need area coordinators. Our data is not open and free, but it is available to legit researchers and cavers. Area coordinators could handle a data request fast rather than by going through the loops where a data request is handled only at a KSS meeting.

Preston mentioned the recent request from Dean Snyder in eastern PA. Dean asked for information on Campbell Cave near Hopkinsville. He has received the NSS Peter M. Hauer Spelean History Award. Dean is currently researching the early KY caver Russell Neville who was a caving companion of Floyd Collins. Campbell Cave was the first cave in KY that Russell visited back in the early 1900s. Preston notes that this approximately 900 meter long cave with a large entrance needs a resurvey.

At this point Bill read a letter from Darrel Atkins. Darrel feels we need more KSS Newsletters and more advance notification of meetings and paper caving sessions. The reason we have good attendance at the KOR and Crawl is that those meetings are announced well in advance.

Howard talked about setting up a KSS Yahoo Group site. All agreed that was a good idea. Howard immediately started working on that. This was followed by a long discussion on the number of meetings a year, when and where. Jim Currens said these meetings need to be announced well in advance. Kim said meetings could be set up in advance on, for example, the 3rd Sunday of each quarter so that people could anticipate the time of the meetings and make better plans. Back to the location of the KSS office: Jim Currens said that if the case ever arose where a KSS member was not employed at the KY Geologic Survey, then someone at the KGS could be made an honorary

member. The KGS is entitled to have someone on the KSS board.

Funds. Bill asked if the KSS could consider holding some kind of weekend caving event. Steve Gentry said that insurance for those events now eats up all the profit. Insurance can be expensive for even a two-day event.

Howard said members want value. Kim Gentry said a small amount of money could be earned from Goodsearch.com where the KSS would receive a percentage for each search, For example 800 searches could yield \$8. Kim also said door prizes at meetings can raise money. Don Conover said prizes could be offered for the most new caves reported each year. Paper Caving Sessions: Bill Walden said we need more. The only place to conduct these sessions is at Lexington, but Don and Howard pointed out that material can be copied and scanned and taken home so county and area coordinators can be more productive. Jim Currens said that our database needs to be available to more than one member. Randy and Howard said we should be able to give data to people who need it. Maps and data can be scanned. Howard said we need to work up a Current Best Approach (CBA) for handling data. Jim Currens said we need a central database where all new data is entered. Randy said each cave file needs a unique number for this to work. Howard said we need to push our work on the database. Howard has done some good work with the Rockcastle and Pulaski County files.

The discussion on databases and county coordinators continued. Howard said someone needs to keep a list of who has what data. Howard said we need a more formal approach to our data by assigning unique numbers to each cave file. Randy said the database is really expanding in Wayne Co. Howard said he has found a lot of random junk in the database for Rockcastle and Pulaski. Lots of duplication, as data came from many sources and the system was never set up to have a unique number. Facts have to be checked. For example, Old Lady Cave near GSC has four locations. Howard has asked cavers to help him verify which location is correct. Several caves are listed with no exact location. Randy and Howard said we need a formal list of coordinators. Once we have a product we can recruit people. Bill suggested we need written procedures for work paper caving sessions.

Elections will be held in January.

Jim Currens was nominated for president.

Howard Kalnitz was nominated for vice president.

Bill Walden was nominated for secretary. [A week after the meeting Kim Gentry said she would be willing to run for secretary and would enjoy doing that].

John Cassidy was re-nominated for treasurer.

Jim Greer and Don Conover were nominated for Directors at Large.

Other people can enter the running before or at the January meeting. The date and location of the January meeting will be announced soon.

Preston asked that we consider making Roger Sperka an Honorary member of the KSS. The motion was made and passed. Roger is one of the founding members of the KSS.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30.

Respectfully submitted by your scribes, Preston and Shari Forsythe