

The Month's Guano

February 2001

Kansas City Area Grotto

Volume 15, Issue 2

January Minutes

Meeting called to order by **Bryon Carmoney, President**, at 7:00 pm.

New Officer Nominations

Jeff Page received only one nomination for each officer position: **Terry DeFraties for President, Regan Youngman for Secretary, and Jeff has agreed to serve another term as Vice President.** The nominees were accepted by acclamation.

KCAG Membership Dues

A motion was carried to **raise annual membership dues to \$15.** A discussion ensued on what exactly we need the money for since our operating expenses are practically nothing. After some discussion we determined that our major spending has been donations. Mike Hartley, equipment manager, said that we have enough working lights to loan out for novice trips for the time being. We may consider purchasing new lights at some future date - possibly when some of the new light technology has come down in price.

KCAG Library Materials

Rick Hines has sorted and thinned out old library materials. The items he thinks we do not need to keep are old copies of other grotto's newsletters. He brought these to the meeting and encouraged anyone interested to take them.

Carroll Cave Conservancy

Rick Hines reported that the next **CCC meeting** will be held at his home this **Sunday January 14 at noon.** **Bill Elliott, Cave Biologist for the State of Missouri will be a special guest speaker.** Rick said that the work trip planned 1/6/01 to use a backhoe to remove topsoil around the 9" pilot hole over the T-Junction was canceled due to frozen ground. This preparatory work is necessary to set a tripod that will enable CCC to attempt to use a jackhammer to enlarge the 9" hole into a 3' diameter hole.

Upcoming Trips & Events:

Wind Tunnel Cave

Richard Cindric is planning a vertical trip to Wind Tunnel Cave in Arkansas **tentatively set for April 28.** Richard said anyone interested in making the trip should have ver-

tical skills and equipment. He also said the entrance is narrow and too tight for anyone much larger than he is.

Beaver Lake

Mike Hartley is planning two more dig trips to Beaver Lake in Arkansas. Exact dates have not been determined yet but **will probably be sometime in the Spring and again in August.**

Next Month's Program

Members should bring their cave pack to next month's meeting for a first aid program presented by **Dave Foran & Mike McKinney.**

Trip Reports:

Skaggs

Peddie Heinz went to Skaggs Cave on New Years' Eve with Ron & Loreli Lather. She said the cave was completely dry. Since she was in Ennis last New Years' Eve she said that she has most definitely been underground on the dawn of the new millennium, no matter when it was.

Scout Troop 50 Interested in Caving

Two representatives from Scout Troop 50 were in attendance. **They invited KCAG to do a presentation for their troop if we can.** They meet every Monday evening in the Waldo area.

Other Inquiries/Invitations Received by KCAG:

Kansas Film Commission is looking for a cave where they can do some filming - specifically a cave no more than one hour from Johnson County and large enough for adults to stand upright.

Lawrence High School Outdoor Leadership Club is interested in learning about caving.

Scout Troop 395 is hosting an event on April 28 and are looking for consultants for High Adventure activities to do programs at the event.

In light of the high number of such inquires Bryon contin-

Minutes(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) Minutes

ues to receive, he moved to form a committee of 4 or more members to finalize a **formal KCAG policy concerning youth group education and interaction**. The motion was carried. **Dave Foran, Terry DeFraties, Mike McKinney, Kathy Sumner, and Jeff Page agreed to be on the committee**. Jeff already has a waiver he drafted when this issue was being discussed last year. The committee will publish the proposed waiver in the next Guano so members can vote whether or not to accept it at the next meeting of KCAG.

to go caving. The motion was carried. Jeff volunteered to serve as a coordinator for those willing to lead such a trip. He will be canvassing members for their ideas on possible trip locations, etc.

Program - Cave Mapping

Richard Cindric presented an overview of cave map sketching.

Quarterly KCAG Sponsored Trips

Jeff Andrews moved that KCAG should sponsor quarterly trips that would give **new members an opportunity**



Is 'spring' just around the corner?

A parting note: Thanks to everyone for their support the last three years. It is with great remorse that I step down as your President but I feel that others need to be involved in the Grotto so the Grotto can continue its growth that we are now experiencing. Terry will be a good addition to our Grotto's reputation. We have shown that over the last year and 1/2, we will not be taken lightly (i.e. NCRC) and with new people come new ideas. **WELCOME TERRY TO THE WORLD OF SPELEOPOLITICS!!!!!!!!!!**

Bryon Carmony
PAST KCAG President
Guano Editor

February 2001 Vol. 15 Issue 2

The Month's Guano is published on the second Wednesday. Nine issues annually.
Submit articles to editor at least 10 days prior to publication date.
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Kansas City Area Grotto is affiliated with the National Speleological Society, The Missouri Speleological Survey, and a Founding Member of Missouri Caves & Karst Conservancy.

Meetings held every second Wednesday at 7 p.m. (**alternate site in May**), Magg Hall, behind Spencer Laboratories, Volker Blvd. & Cherry, Kansas City, Missouri.
Annual Dues: \$ 10 for Full Members (3 caving trips with KCAG, nomination and vote of membership required.)

NCRC Callout number Emergency use only

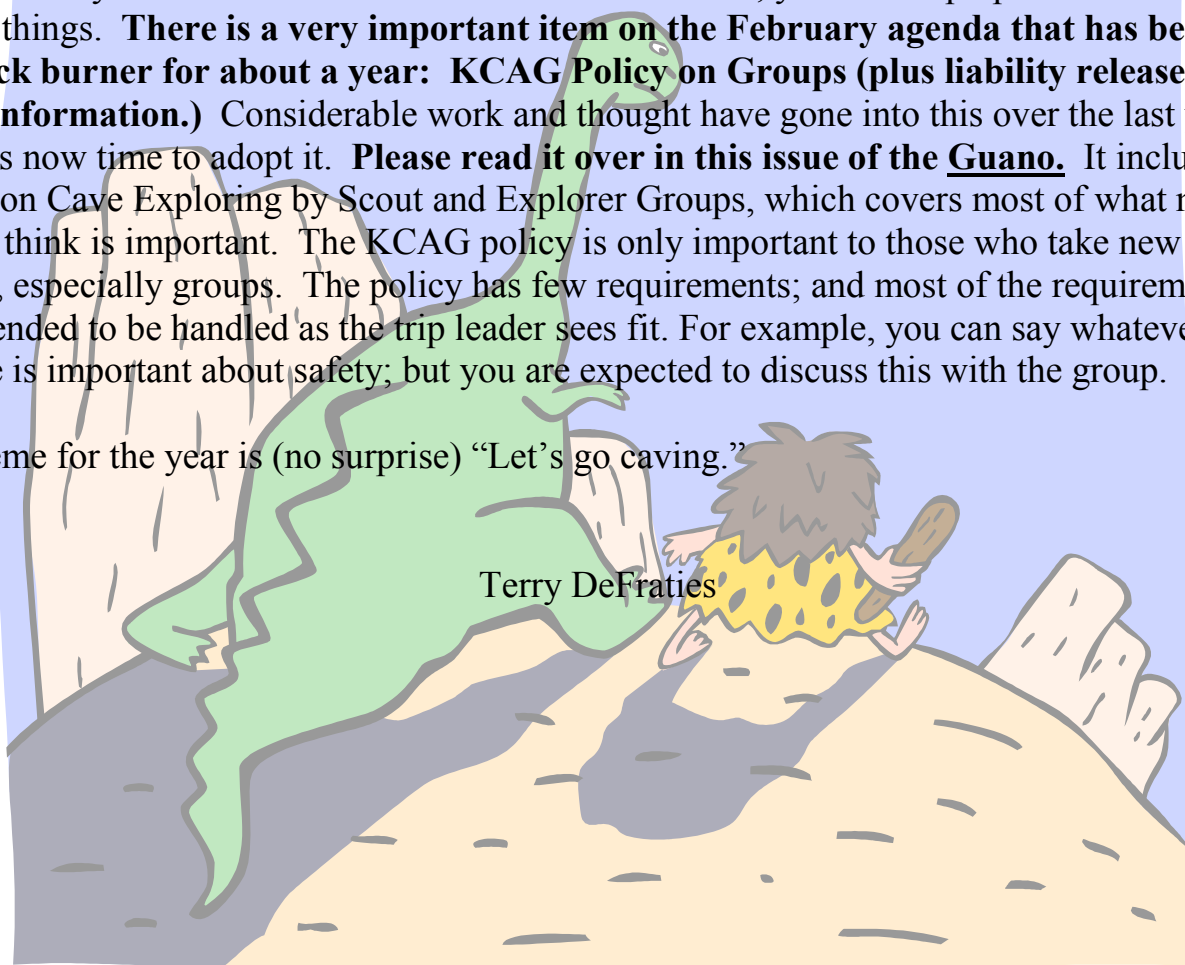
Central Region 502-564-7815. This number may be used for cave rescue emergencies in the states of, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, **Missouri**, Ohio and Wisconsin.

I know most of you at least a little bit and have caved with almost everyone in the grotto. My own primary interest in caving is seeing the cave (on 10-12 trips a year.) I am willing to do training, mapping, cleaning, restoration, digging and most things except speleopolitical (to put it delicately) “stuff.” If you want to promote these activities or any others, please call me.

Bryon will continue to edit and produce the Guano. If we have your e-mail address, he will send it there. Otherwise, it will be mailed to your mailing address. This will occur on the last Wednesday of each month. If you have something for publication—and he needs your articles and trip reports—Bryon needs it by the weekend before.

The Guano will have the minutes of the last meeting and as complete an agenda for the upcoming meeting as is possible at publication. The agenda will also describe the meeting program. Since you will have this information ahead of time, you can be prepared to discuss and decide things. **There is a very important item on the February agenda that has been on the back burner for about a year: KCAG Policy on Groups (plus liability release and other information.)** Considerable work and thought have gone into this over the last year; and it is now time to adopt it. **Please read it over in this issue of the Guano.** It includes the Policy on Cave Exploring by Scout and Explorer Groups, which covers most of what most people think is important. The KCAG policy is only important to those who take new people caving, especially groups. The policy has few requirements; and most of the requirements are intended to be handled as the trip leader sees fit. For example, you can say whatever you believe is important about safety; but you are expected to discuss this with the group.

My theme for the year is (no surprise) “Let’s go caving.”



UPCOMING EVENTS

REMEMBER OHG HAS AGGREGED TO LETS US CAVE WITH THEM. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A TRIP YOU MUST CONTACT THE TRIP LEADER.

- February 14, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
Program 8:00 pm
Bring your cave pack. We are going to look at
- February 16-19, 2001 **Novice Trip.** Cave Yet to be determined. Contact Terry DeFraties for more information
- March 14, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
- March 16-19, 2001 **Breome Moore.** Trip is Full but a backup list has been started. If you are on the backup list you **MUST** be ready when called out. We have a deadline to meet a plane and the trip leaders so we have no time to spare.
- April 11, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
Guest Speaker David Ashley
- April 18-20, 2001 Kathy Carr is sponsoring a trip for cavers. Contact Kathy for more information.
Caves Yet to be determined.
- April 27-29, 2001 **Wind Tunnel Cave.** This Trip is a Vertical trip. Contact Richard Cindric.
- MAY 4-6 **Spring 2001 MVOR** at the Stratfords' Chigger & Tick Ranch (right on 76 Hwy., south of Ava). Sponsored by OHG.
- May 9, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
- June 13, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
- July 4, 2001 **Party Time.** Fifth Annual 4th of July party. Hosted by Bryon and Michelle Carmoney. Bring a dish to pass, your beer and your fireworks. Starts at 5:00 pm until your tired. If you need to stay the night bring your sleeping bag and ground pad.
- July 11, 2001 **Grotto Meeting.** Meeting in MAGG Hall at 7:00 pm. After meeting to follow.
- JUL 23-27 **NSS Convention** (60th annual!) at Great Saltpeter Cave Preserve in Kentucky. Contact David Foran if you are interested in car pooling.
- August 2001 **Beaver Lake Trip.** This trip is for everyone that wants to come. They have boats, fishing, swimming, and scuba diving for those interested. There will also be a dig trip involved to yet an unnamed cave.

UNDER THE HIGHLANDS THE OHG NEWSLETTER

Volume 24, Number 1 / January, 2001 Edited by Lawrence Ireland

OHG MEETING CALENDAR:

FEBRUARY 7 - BUSINESS MEETING at the Springfield-Greene County Library Center (south of intersection at 60 and 160 Hwys.) from 7 to 9 p.m.

MARCH 7 - BUSINESS MEETING at the Library Center, 7 - 9 p.m. Informal meetings afterward.

NEWS: January's OHG meeting was well attended, despite the Ozarks' recent bout of icy weather. After Carl Thayer called the meeting to order, \$6,025.79 was reported to be in OHG's bank account. Recent expenditures include our \$146.50 Christmas party at Pappy's Place, \$160 in magazine printing (Y2K's 3rd issue is out!), and \$67.84 in restoration supplies. Jon Beard recounted his recent efforts at Stinson Cave in resurrecting a tall stalagmite. Jack Rosenkoetter delivered his finished fall issue of *The Ozarks' Underground*, but he's still hurting for materials to produce a winter issue. After that, our brave editor will be tackling another MVOR guidebook! Jack also asked that if anyone has not had his or her submissions (pictures, maps) returned to them, please let him know. Carl Thayer made several appointments for committee responsibilities, but a lot of people kept the same job. (Rolling over himself, Carl is OHG's first prez' to serve three consecutive terms.)

Noteworthy jobs include:

Membership committee: Randy Rosebrough, Julio Bongo

Trip committee: Jeff Stilson and Gary Bennett, with help from others (where do YOU want to go today?) Besides several members storying about other cave trips, our Fox Creek efforts were renowned as a big success, owing to Leo Thompson's tremendous pump outside the cave. One more date will totally complete the transformation - this may be held during our MVOR convention as a "project" trip.

Several Douglas County (and surrounding area) caves will need to become familiar to us in the next few months as we prepare for another outstanding MVOR. Your cabin fever will likely have several subterranean "treatment" options available in the near future!!!

CAVER'S CALENDAR:

JAN 6 - Club trip to Cathedral Cave, perhaps others. Meet at gas station at 160 Hwy. (south) and EE (at Highlandville) at 9 a.m. Lawrence Ireland leading (582-0888).

JAN 13 - Stinson Cave restoration trip. Specifically, the bottom section of the Flutestone will be reattached to its proper place. More on this project below.

JAN 14 - Carroll Cave Conservancy meets at Rick Hines' house south of Kansas City. Constitution/bylaws, access policy, and other important decisions to be finalized. Contact Ed Simmons for more: 736-3195.

JAN 21 - MVOR-planning party. Anyone interested in helping with the considerable task of executing THE BEST MVOR EVER is encouraged to come and help OHG plan this event. Meet at "Casa Nacional" at 1 p.m. (1540 S. National, at Minota).

FEB 10 - Club trip to Cat Hollow Cave. Meet at the Northtown Mall parking lot (NW corner) at 9 a.m.

MAY 4-6 - Spring 2001 MVOR at the Stratfords' Chigger & Tick Ranch (right on 76 Hwy., south of Ava).

JUL 23-27 - NSS Convention (60th annual!) at Great Saltpeter Cave Preserve in Kentucky.

Jon Beard is currently working on a "monumental" resto' project in Stinson Cave. Years ago, an eleven-foot broomstick stalagmite was knocked over, OHG has since gathered nearly all of its broken pieces (13 total). Now in Jon's garage, these pieces are being reassembled with epoxy and steel bolts. It will take some effort to get each heavy section carried to the back of the cave, but the speleothem will soon be restored to its former glory. Completion of the gluing process will take place in-cave).

The Kansas City Area Grotto

A local chapter of the National Speleological Society

Dear Interested Party,

We appreciate your interest in involving KCAG in your group's educational efforts and outdoor activities. The members of KCAG believe it is their responsibility to help the public understand the importance of cave conservation and the need for non-destructive exploration. We know the powerful attraction of caves on the human imagination. That is, after all, how we came to be. It is an unavoidable fact that people will explore caves whether or not they know how to do it safely and without damaging the cave and its wildlife. We are grateful when an individual or a group approaches us seeking the right way.

Please understand that caving is a hobby for all of our members and their time and resources are limited. We will make an earnest effort to provide a speaker for your group and accompany a small group on a caving trip for training purposes. If your group should continue its interest in caving, we will be glad to serve as a resource.

Enclosed you will find our policy on caving with scout and other outside groups. The Boy Scouts of America and NSS policy statements follow it. Our general approach is to follow their guidelines. Also included are our liability waiver form and educational outline. You may find our policy a bit rigid, but we formed it with your group's safety and the long-term interest of the caves in mind. I will be glad to answer any questions or hear any comments on the material provided.

Best regards,

KCAG

The Kansas City Area Grotto Policy On: **GROUPS REQUESTING CAVE TRIPS**

Final Draft
Rev 1/18/01

It is the policy of the Kansas City Area Grotto (herein referred to as “Grotto”) that requests by groups or organizations (herein referred to as “Group”) for cave trips are at the complete discretion of the Grotto, or any representative of the Grotto. At any time a trip request can be declined or canceled if it does not meet the full and complete satisfaction of either the Grotto, or any representative of the Grotto. No representative of the Grotto is under any obligation to act as a trip leader or assist the trip leader to take a group caving if the representative feels in any way unsatisfied with the group, its individuals, its leaders, its preparations or conditions of the trip. Furthermore, any Grotto representative is given the authority to deny any individual’s participation in the trip, at their sole discretion. Failure of any group leader to comply with and support decisions pertaining to trip participants made by any representative will result in immediate cancellation of the trip.

The National Speleological Society and the Boy Scouts of America have established policy and guidelines pertaining to Cave exploring. The policy and guidelines are attached and will be followed for all Scouting requests. This policy will also serve as the basis for any other groups or organizations requesting trips. **All Scout groups are required to have an approved tour permit for trips of all kinds. Caving activities are included under that plan. National tour permits are required for a trip of 250 miles or more; local permits are issued to cover shorter trips.** The Grotto, its representatives, landowners, or agencies may require additional permits, liability waivers, or other documentation to be completed. Any and all necessary permits required by a group’s organization to participate in trips and/or activities are the sole responsibility of the group leader. Proof of properly secured and/or completed forms may be requested by the Grotto or its representative and must be satisfactory.

If a group requests the Grotto to assist them with a caving experience, the Grotto may offer or require an opportunity to meet with the group wishing to participate in the caving experience. This can provide an educational opportunity for the group to learn about caves and caving properly and will include the information on the attached Educational Content Outline. Such a meeting can also be an opportunity to answer any questions as well as provide a chance for a Grotto representative to meet and evaluate the group prior to going caving. This may take more than one meeting. If participants are minors, it is strongly encouraged, and may be required by any representative of the Grotto that a legally responsible adult is present at the meeting before a minor is permitted to participate in a caving experience.

If a Grotto representative agrees to take a group on a caving experience, the group leaders must understand and agree to the following conditions at all times:

- The group leader, not the Grotto, its representatives, agencies or land owners involved, remains fully accountable and responsible for the group at all times in the course of the caving experience, including but not limited to areas or individuals whose property is used for camping and/or access to a cave. No one can remove or discharge the group leader from responsibility for the group.
- Any Grotto representative assisting the group in a caving experience is functioning as a resource person. As the grotto has been requested to assist a group with a caving experience, it is presumed that the group is seeking the greater experience and knowledge of veteran

cavers. Therefore, during the caving experience a Grotto representative will function as a trip leader or guide.

- The trip leader must have full and complete authority over the group while caving and while making decisions related to the trip, participation, and cancellation. **This does not remove responsibility from the group leader for the group. The trip may be cancelled at any-time up to or during the trip by either the group leader or the trip leader without any further need to justify the decision.**
- The Grotto requires that any non member (or their legal guardian) participating in any way associated with a trip, complete and sign a release form indicating their understanding that caving is a hazardous activity. Due to remote locations, access to medical resources and other emergency assistance may be limited or delayed; and serious injury or death is always a real consideration. By signing the release form, each individual acknowledges and accepts these risks, and accepts responsibility for their own safety, thereby releasing the Grotto and its representatives, agencies, and landowners involved in any way associated with any activity arranged with the Grotto or its representatives.

By signing below I indicate that I have received, read, and understood the Kansas City Area Grotto Policy on Groups Requesting Cave Trips. I agree to comply with this.

This form is to be signed by the Group Leader, and returned to the Trip Leader prior to any trip actually taking place.

X

Group Leader Signature Date Printed Name

Group Name (Please Print)

THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY POLICY ON: CAVE EXPLORING BY SCOUT AND EXPLORER GROUPS

A. GENERAL POLICY

1. **Cave exploring can be a hazardous activity** when the proper equipment, skills, and judgment are not used. Trips that are led by adults inexperienced in cave exploring and trips containing large numbers of persons compound the hazards already inherent in the activity and create a potentially dangerous situation.
2. All cave exploring, other than simple novice activities should be limited, as is the case with mountaineering and scuba diving, to high-school-age **youth 14 years of age and older**—Explorer Posts and older Scouts in troops.
3. Explorer posts and other groups which include cave visits in their program, whether for one trip or many, **must be under the leadership of a responsible, mature adult who is constantly present** with the group. The leader must be highly qualified through both training and experience in cave exploring and must be thoroughly versed in all established safety practices, conservation measures, and courtesy to cave owners.
4. In conformity with the BSA policy on the use of wilderness areas, **all caving groups should be limited to 8 to 10 persons including at least one adult leader**. Mass-type caving activities should not be conducted. Each group should be organized to function independently, i.e., plan own trips on different dates, provide its own transportation and food, and function as a separate and distinct group. The only exception to these rules should be certain commercial caves where special provisions are made to furnish proper supervision by professional guides.

NOTE: Caving trips have been incorporated in the BSA "Policy on Use of Wilderness Areas by Personnel of the BSA" with a cross-reference to these guidelines. Copies of the wilderness area policy statement are available from High Adventure Programs, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 Walnut Hill Lane, Irving, TX 75062-1296.

5. Any Explorer post wishing to learn about cave rescue work or pursue that activity as a specialty must do so under the sponsorship and supervision of an adult cave rescue group which is affiliated with the National Speleological Society.
6. **All Scout groups are required to have an approved tour permit for trips of all kinds.** Caving activities are included under that plan. National tour permits are required for a trip of 250 miles or more; local permits are issued to cover shorter trips.
7. Both the leader and the individual members of the group must understand these basic practices and policies of caving, which are approved by the Boy Scouts of America and the National Speleological Society. **In addition to understanding these tenets, every participant in a caving trip must agree, without reservation, to follow all of the specific guidelines contained in the remainder of this statement.**

B. CAVING SAFETY

1. The leader of any cave trip must be fully qualified to handle all problems that may arise and should have had experience as an active participant in a competent cave exploring group. He must realistically evaluate his own knowledge and experience and must never attempt to lead his group into a situation which is beyond his capability or the capability of any member of the group. **The overall capability and pace of a**

cave exploring group is always that of the least able member of that group, and no member of the group should ever be encouraged or permitted to attempt a potentially dangerous act that is beyond his ability solely because the remainder of the group has the necessary ability.

The leader must thoroughly comprehend that overwhelming difficulties may easily result from the problems of fatigue, improper or faulty equipment, emotional problems, physical limitations, or excessive eagerness or exuberance in members of the group. Additionally, he must realize that all of these individual problems are often interrelated and that the occurrence of any one of them can easily create a situation that will lead to or accentuate any or all of the others. He must constantly remember that any obstacle overcome on the way into the cave will also have to be overcome on the way out when the group is tired; when the initial enthusiasm of some of the group may have decreased; and when his alertness and physical abilities, as well as these of his group, are at the lowest. He must have adequate first aid training and ability, a comprehensive knowledge of the practices to follow in the event of an accident, and he must keep his group together at all times.

2. **All basic equipment such as clothing, shoes, lights, and spare parts for the lights, hard hats, and food should be appropriate to the cave being explored.** The equipment and spares must never be makeshift or of questionable dependability. The highest standards developed by experienced cave explorers are to be met in all categories of equipment, and the use and repair of each item must be understood and demonstrated by all of the party before entering the cave. Under no conditions should any member of the group be permitted to enter the cave if he does not have all of the required equipment in his possession. The sharing of any equipment, such as lights, between individuals must be prohibited.

Except for groups composed entirely of experienced cavers, the cave to be explored must not require the use of ropes, ladders, or other climbing devices. The safe use of these aids requires extensive initial training and practice under controlled conditions above ground, never in a cave. It is the responsibility of the leader to insure that all equipment is adequate and in good condition.

3. Natural and fabricated hazards such as mud slopes, loose rocks, pits, deep water, complex routes, old ropes, wooden ladders, and the possibility of flooding are all dangers to some degree and must be approached with care and judgment. **If it appears that an accident may still occur in spite of preventive measures, that area must be avoided entirely.**

4. The strength, endurance, and specific abilities of every member of the group must be evaluated in advance and **nothing attempted that exceeds anyone's limitations.** Climbing, crawling, and route finding are not necessarily inborn activities and should be taught and tested before a cave trip is undertaken.

5. Not only the leader, but every person on a cave trip, should be aware of the necessity of constantly observing the whereabouts and potential problems of other members of the group and of providing any assistance necessary. **Running, jumping, horseplay, and solo exploration must be prohibited—such foolhardy actions jeopardize not only the individual but also the entire group.**

6. **Caves are often cold and damp, and hypothermia is a danger,** especially on long trips or trips requiring wading or crawling in water. Try to dress for conditions to be met, stay as dry as possible, and leave the cave immediately if any member of the group shows signs of hypothermia such as uncontrollable shivering, slurred speech, or loss of coordination.

7. **Specific information about the caving trip must be left with a responsible person** back home at time of departure. This should include location and length of time of trip, expected time of return, list of participants, and whom to contact in case of emergency.

8. **A record of every cave trip** will provide valuable assistance to new leaders and cavers alike. Full re-

cords of all caving accidents will provide the basis for a guide to the development of a safe caving program. A complete report of any accident, regardless of severity, should be sent to the Safety Committee of the National Speleological Society, Cave Avenue Huntsville, AL 35810. Serious accidents should also be reported to the manager of the Health and Safety Service of the Boy Scouts of America.

C. CAVE CONSERVATION

In spite of the fact that most cave features are made of rock, many of them are, in reality, fragile. Once they are gone or damaged they can never be recovered, nor can they be replaced with anything else. Every cave and its contents requires tens and hundreds of thousands of years to form, and it can all be disfigured or completely destroyed by one moment of carelessness. Carelessness is regrettable and must be guarded against at all times. Deliberate vandalism, on the other hand, is more than regrettable; it is literally a criminal act and must be forbidden. **Every caver has an obligation to do his utmost to protect every cave he visits.**

The necessary degree of protection is relatively easy to obtain, however, if everyone in the group agrees to adhere to the guidelines contained in the policy on the use of wilderness area adopted by the Boy Scouts of America (See note under A 4 on page 1 of this statement). Many of the specific points contained in that wilderness policy are directly applicable to caving and, besides providing protection for the cave and its contents, adherence to these guidelines will result in a safer, more enjoyable, and more easily managed trip. Every caver should adopt an attitude similar to that of an Indian scout passing through the wilderness. He should **leave absolutely no trace of his visit behind when he leaves the cave.** This means that he must leave every natural thing in the cave exactly as it was before he entered; it means removing everything that he brought into the cave; and it means staying on the established trails through a passageway to avoid increasing the number of disfiguring paths. Keep the following points in mind:

1. **Cave formations and minerals of any kind must never be removed** from the cave for any purpose. Caving trips should never include cave mineral or formation collections. They should rather substitute underground photography or art work for displays and science fair projects. Any delicate, small, or purely colored formations must not even be touched. Both mud and the substances on a person's skin will permanently discolor formations. Some cave formations grow by means of complex chemical processes and, in addition to the discoloration, any deposit left on these formations from the contact can interfere with future growth. Some formations are extremely fragile and will require the caver to exercise great care in order to avoid damaging them. If it is impossible to pass by these formations without causing damage, then the group must ignore any part of the cave beyond that point. Damaging formations to gain access to additional areas of the cave is not an acceptable practice.

2. **Bats and all other forms of cave life must never be disturbed** nor removed from the cave for any purpose. Many species of cave life are rare and have been brought to the verge of extinction by collectors and vandals. During the winter months, hibernating bats should be left strictly alone. Awakened too often, they will use up their winter's store of fuel and die of starvation before summer. Most bats are extremely beneficial as insect eaters and should never be harmed. Some caves have been designated as special bat habitats and are closed for exploration for all or a part of each year.

3. **If the explorer should be fortunate enough to find animal bones or Indian artifacts in a newly explored passage, he should be careful to avoid touching or disturbing them in any way.** His best course is to take pictures of them, if possible, and immediately report his findings to competent authorities such as the local natural history museum or the nearest chapter of the National Speleological Society. Many old bones and artifacts that have been lying in caves for extended periods of time will crumble when touched; if they are ever to be removed, it must be by special methods.

4. The explorer must **never write, mark, or paint on the walls, ceilings, rocks, or formations of a cave.** Some caves have had registers installed by caving groups and visiting cavers are invited to sign them to record their trip. Occasionally it may be necessary to mark a confusing junction so that the correct passage may be found on the way out of the cave. For this purpose explorers should carry small slips of paper with arrows drawn on them or, a better choice, small strips of reflective tape cut into the shape of an arrow. In either case, the markers are placed in suitable locations as the group enters the cave. They must be collected on the way out. Experienced cavers always follow the rule that arrows placed in a cave, without exception, always point to the exit, never in any other direction.

The use of string to mark passages is not practical. In a small cave the marking of passageways is seldom necessary. A large cave would require a considerable amount of string and it isn't always possible to collect all of it on the way out, resulting in litter.

5. **Personal sanitation requirements should be met before entering the cave.**

6. **Spent carbide should be removed in suitable containers,** never dumped in the cave. Once removed from the cave, it should be deposited in roadside trashcans or similar locations, never dumped on the ground. Spent carbide is toxic and will cause sickness and death when eaten by animals. Farm livestock in particular is often harmed this way. An inexpensive plastic bag is ideal for carrying carbide waste safely and easily. Spent carbide still emits a certain amount of acetylene gas and severe burns can result from accidental ignition. Some explorers prefer to use spare bottoms filled with fresh carbide for their carbide lamps, removing and capping the spent one and installing a fresh one as necessary.

7. Each caver should demonstrate his interest in caves and his appreciation for them by **participating in, or organizing, an occasional cave cleanup.** The object is to remove trash and carbide dumps left by thoughtless visitors, and to remove writing on walls through the use of water and stiff-bristled brushes. This makes an excellent group project and teaches the conservation of and the respect for the natural environment of caves.

D. COURTESY TO CAVE OWNERS

All too often cavers forget that **caves belong to the owner of the land above them,** and that they must depend upon the goodwill of the owner, who is usually disinterested in their activities. Cavers usually have nothing to offer the cave owner in return for his hospitality and, in fact, quite often represent a problem for him should an accident happen. In recent years caving has increased tremendously. Owners of popular caves are besieged every weekend by cavers seeking entrance, and the result has been that many cave owners are becoming alienated. The owner of the land on which the entrance is located may exclude everyone from the cave if he wishes, and the rudeness and thoughtlessness of some cavers has caused the owners of some popular caves to do just this. The following points are important and should be understood by all cavers:

1. **Every group planning to visit a cave must obtain the permission of the owner before entering the land.** The best plan is for one or two of the leaders to visit the owner several days before the trip to obtain this permission, or, he may be contacted by letter or telephone. Some owners are reluctant, however, to give permission in writing by answering a letter so this method may result in disappointment unless the group has had previous contact with the owner. If the group is certain that permission will be granted, it is satisfactory to ask as they arrive for the trip. In this case one or two members of the group should seek out the owner while the rest of the members wait. Do not assume that permission is automatic and begin unloading equipment and changing clothes during the waiting period. Always wait for the owner to give his approval. If you find that the owner cannot be located and you do not have prior permission for this specific trip, then you must go elsewhere.

2. When planning cave trips, do not continually go back to the same well-known caves. **Heavy traffic causes damage to caves and puts a strain on cave owner relations** (commercial caves excepted).
3. After permission has been obtained, you must usually cross the owner's land to reach the cave. Remember that a farmer's income depends on his crops and livestock. **Don't climb fences that may break under your weight. Always leave gates exactly as you find them, either open or closed.** If the entrance to the cave is covered with boards or brush, make certain that it is replaced, even while the group is in the cave.
4. **Do not tease or chase livestock.** Special care should be taken not to startle flocks of poultry. They sometimes run to one end of their enclosure and some of them may be killed or injured.
5. **Be conscious of any action that will disturb or inconvenience the owner.** Keep noise to a minimum, especially late at night. Pick up all trash, even that left by previous visitors. Don't build a fire, You should never camp on the owner's land unless he extends the invitation. Don't even ask. After you leave, there should be no sign of your visit remaining on the premises.
6. **Ask where it will be convenient to park your cars.** Do not block lanes and driveways.
7. **If it's not late at night, stop on the way out and tell him that you are leaving.** If it is late, leave a note. Remember that the owner's schedule, particularly if he is a farmer, may not be the same as yours. If his home is dark, regardless of the hour, don't disturb him. In either case, thank him at the time of leaving. Sending a follow-up letter including, if possible, pictures taken in the cave, is also a good idea.
8. When obtaining permission to enter the cave, **never underestimate the length of time to be spent in the cave.** If you specify an exit time to the owner, never fail to leave the cave within that time. Longer trips can be planned for the future. Missing an exit time causes unnecessary concern to the owner and, in extreme cases, needless efforts by law enforcement agencies and rescue teams.

These rules boil down to a simple statement: **Use common sense and treat the owner as you would like to be treated.** If caving is to continue in this country, each caver must do all he can to make himself welcome at each cave he visits.

Those seriously interested in caves are invited to affiliate with a local chapter of the National Speleological Society. Information about that organization is available from the National Speleological Society, 2813 Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810-4431; e-mail nss@caves.org

Educational Content Outline

Caves

- a. How caves are formed**
- b. Cave formations**
 - **Fragile**
 - **Formed over long periods of time**
- c. Unique Habitat**
 - **Specialized life forms**
 - **Endangered species**
 - **Maternal habitat**
 - **Hibernation habitat**

Caving Safety

- a. Proper Clothing**
- b. Helmet**
- c. Light Sources**
- d. Food, water, emergency supplies**
- e. How to move through the Cave**
- f. Group Size**
- g. Emergency preparedness (surface watch)**

Caving Conservation

Courtesy to Cave Owners

TRIP LEADER

Information worksheet

Group Info

Group Requesting Cave Trip

Group Leader/Contact Person

Phone Number

Email Address if applicable

Projected/Requested trip date range

Date/Location of Pre-trip Education Meeting(s)

KCAG Trip Leader

KCAG (Other)

Trip Info:

Depart from (Location, Dates & Times)

To Arrive At (Camp or Cave Location)

Cave(s)

Cave: In Date/Time

Out Time(s)

Return To

Return Home By

Camping Info

Location(s)

Camping Contact/ Phone Number

Surface Watch Deadline _____
Date Time

Surface Watch Contact/Ph Number

Pre-Trip Checklist

- ____ Policy Statement Signed
- ____ Education Meeting Completed
- ____ Group Specific Permits Obtained
- ____ KCAG Liability Waivers Signed
- ____ Camp Permission/Permit
- ____ Camp Directions
- ____ Cave Permission/Permit(s)
- ____ Cave Map, Directions to Cave
(Provided to Cavers Only)
- ____ Helmets and Lights
- ____ Safety/Rescue Information Sheet
Completed (See Attached)
- ____ Group Cave Pack and Gear Check
- ____ Verify Proper Attire & Footwear

**This page is to accompany Trip
leader until trip is completed.**

Release and Covenant Not to Sue

Kansas City Area Grotto
Wild Cave Trip to _____ Cave

Date _____

County _____

State _____

I, _____, desire to participate in the
(print name)

above wild cave trip sponsored or led by the Kansas City Area Grotto (KCAG). I understand that caving is a physically strenuous and hazardous activity, involving climbing, walking and crawling underground upon slick or crumbling surfaces at times in confined and constricted spaces, through cold water and in poor or no light. I further understand that there are the hazards of traveling in rough terrain, accident or illness in remote places, the forces of nature and general risks of travel.

Whereas, I plan to participate upon my own initiative in the activity set out above and in consideration for being allowed to participate in the wild cave trip I do hereby, for myself and all who may hereafter claim through me or for me, release and discharge KCAG, it's officers and members, and all landowners, public or private, upon whose land these activities take place, from all claims, demands, actions, judgments, and executions which I may have or acquire and subsequently claim to have against the foregoing for personal injuries and property damage I may sustain which arise out of or in connection with the above stated wild cave trip.

I also further hereby covenant and agree with the above listed parties that no suit or action in law or equity shall be instituted for the above reasons by me or others in my behalf or in my right.

In case of injury or accident, please list the following information:

NAME OF PERSON TO BE CONTACTED: _____

RELATIONSHIP: _____ PHONE # _____

ANY ALLERGIES OR OTHER CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS:

I HAVE FULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND IT.

Signature: _____ Date _____

(If under 18 years of age, parent or legal guardian must sign for participant)

Kansas City Area Grotto

KCAG

c/o Bryon Carmoney

3512 N. 63rd Terrace

Kansas City, Kansas 66104-1009

Your
Mailing
Label
Goes
Here

Editor's Corner

Be sure To visit KCAG's Website.

<http://members.tripod.com/~kcagrotto/>

