

# Kentucky Speleological Survey



January 10, 2009

## Meeting Notice

The next KSS meeting is 10 AM Sunday, January 25, 2009 at Carter Caves State Resort Park during the annual Crawlathon. You will find information regarding Crawlathon at: <http://www.crawlathon.com/>

The meeting is in the basement of the park lodge in the meeting room adjacent to the dining room.

If you plan to cave at the Crawlathon: Due to the Spread of White Nose Syndrome (A disease that is killing bats in the Northeast United States) the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources requests all participants to decontaminate their caving gear and clothes before coming to Crawlathon. You can get these instructions by visiting the WEB site: [www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenoisemessage.html](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenoisemessage.html) - **containment**. To avoid cross contamination of caves in different regions, this should be done anyhow!

The January meeting is also the election of KSS officers. Jim Currents wants to step down as treasurer, so we need some qualified people nominated for this position.

### Current officers are:

President-Bill Walden  
VP-Brent Ray  
Treasurer-Jim Currents  
Secretary-Jim Greer  
Directors at Large-Don Conover and John Cassidy

The President and Secretary must attend meetings or make arrangements for their position to be covered. The treasurer must prepare a complete financial report for each meeting.

## Work Session

The next work session is scheduled for 10 AM Saturday, January 24, 2009 at Kentucky Geological Survey, University of Kentucky, 228 Mining and Minerals Resources Building, 500 Rose St. Lexington, KY 40506-0107. Parking at UK on Saturday will not result in a ticket or cost a bunch of quarters if you use the free lot on the corner of Columbia and Woodland. That is the lot entered on Columbia at the rear of the WTY library that is on the east side of the driveway. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> lot behind the KGS building. Bring plenty of quarters for the parking meters if you park elsewhere.

## Thoughts on Meetings

By Bill Walden

### Speleofest Meeting

I received an email from Doug Eberhart Chairman of the 2009 Speleofest. It follows in part:

*Bill,*

*I was reading the October minutes and it mentioned you might be interested in finding different locations for your meetings. I am chair of speleofest, which is a caving/fundraising event for the Louisville Grotto. Speleofest takes place memorial day weekend, May 22 through May 24 and I realize that the second meeting of the year typically takes place in April so the timing may not work out or you may not be interested in holding the meeting at this event. The event takes place in Bonnieville, KY at Lone Star Preserve, which is about 30 minutes south of E-Town and 45 minutes north of Bowling Green. We would also like to give the KSS a mention in the guidebook and briefly describe what KSS is accomplishing. If you would like to do this, please forward me what you would like placed in the guidebook.*

*Doug Eberhart*

I discussed this with Jim Currents and Preston Forsythe and we feel this is a good idea. Perhaps not holding a full-blown meeting but having one or two meetings at Speleofest to introduce the KSS to cavers attending Speleofest. Doug tells me that there is a shelter available in which we could have a PowerPoint presentation.

### Virtual Meeting Attendance

It is not always practical or possible for members to attend KSS meetings. For many attending meetings requires a long one-way drive for a one to two hour-long meeting.

Why not consider using the Internet to allow more members to participate? For example Skype is a free service that allows for conference calls among 25 computers. All that is required is the free software, a headset with microphone for individuals, and a

microphone and speaker for the meeting location. There are other packages that may be better suited. Let's discuss this possibility at the January meeting.

This requires that meetings be held at sites, which have Internet access. The Lodge at Carter Caves State Resort Park has wireless Internet access and the Mining and Minerals Resources Building has Internet Access. I don't know about the Hamilton Valley Field house. Something to think about.

## Roger Sperka A Friend of the KY Speleological Survey (KSS)

By Preston Forsythe

Two years ago I attended my first KSS meeting. I was interested in the safe keeping of KY's hard-earned caving data, including my own caving material, which is still stored in my basement. After becoming convinced that the intentions of the KSS were what I had hoped they would be I started asking questions about some of the holders of KY cave data and their current whereabouts. As Roger Sperka had published the first inventory of KY Mapped Caves around 1972, we needed to catch up with Roger. Jim Currens said he thought he could locate Roger with Jeff Vansant's help. To make a long story short Roger was still in the NSS and had lived in El Paso, TX, for the past 27 years. Jim called Roger. The sad news was Roger had suffered a stroke 3 years ago and now lived in an assisted living home in El Paso. But Roger was still kicking and in fairly good health. Jim told Roger about the new KSS. Soon Roger agreed to hand over his KY caving data to the KSS if someone would come get it. This is where Shari and I stepped in and decided this was as good a reason as we needed for a trip.

We found out from Roger's power of attorney, Terri Donawell, that Roger someday would leave everything to the NSS. In view of that and Roger's hard work and long hours of KY caving between the mid '60s and the mid '70, Roger jumped at the opportunity to permanently house his KY caving files with the KSS in a room of the KY Geological Survey Building on the University of Kentucky campus at Lexington. Shari and I and Steve Petruniak drove our cargo van to El Paso..... We met Roger and immediately we were happy and thrilled to have this opportunity to meet .....Soon we were having dinner at a fine Mexican Restaurant in town. The next day we were all at the storage room, which contained the majority of Roger's stuff. Terri had worked very hard to box and seal all of Roger's things. Terri pointed out the boxes that contained Roger's KY caving data. It was a treasure chest of survey notes, cave maps, topos and important pamphlets and reports as well as many papers Roger had authored on cave beetles in KY, especially Wayne County.

Roger was born in NE Wisconsin near Crivitz. He received his undergraduate degree at a school in Wisconsin, and then he received his MS in Geology and Hydrology at Purdue University in Indiana. It was at Purdue that Roger started caving. He participated in the survey of King and Queen Blair Caves as well as Sullivan. Roger does have some Indiana cave data, but we did

not ask for that, only KY. After Purdue Roger came to KY and he studied under Dr. Tom Barr. Roger became an expert on the caves of Wayne County.



*Shari Forsythe, Roger Sperka, Steve Petruniak, and Preston Forsythe in 2003*

In summary we carried back 4 boxes and 6 map tubes of cave information. The inventory list consisted of 13 typed pages. Roger had to be one of the main KY cavers during the time he was at UK.

The KSS is sincerely indebted to Roger Sperka for all of the tremendous work he did on KY caves and we especially are thankful for his generosity in donating his work to the new survey.

## The Jim Quinlan Collection

By Preston Forsythe

Jim Quinlan was the park geologist at Mammoth Cave National Park during the 1970's and 80's.

On Nov. 10, 2007, eleven KSS cavers began copying the Jim Quinlan (JQ) collection at the UK Special Collections Library under the direction of Mr. Marshall. The cavers were Darrel Atkins, Don Conover, Randy Paylor, Bill Walden, Duke Hopper, John Cassidy, Jim and Ana Greer, Preston and Shari Forsythe, and Jim Currens. We were limited to a four-hour session. The bulk of the material in five boxes was the survey notes from Hick's Cave (Hidden River), and Whigpistle Cave, plus topo maps with added notes. We broke into teams and scanned, copied, photographed, and transferred topo data to a new set of topos. We could have used two more scanners. Preston generally looked over caver's shoulders and talked.

Here are some general notes from the session.

The second floor room makes an architectural statement, as does the entire building. Walnut tables and shelves, nice pictures and special collections, e.g., the Breckinridge family of Kentucky, add to the grandeur of the library. Mr. Marshall said that when the building was constructed in the 1930's it almost broke UK.

The collection of Jim Quinlan is proof of the vision he had in building a database of information on the Mammoth Cave area. One of his basic tools, it seems, was to obtain funding to hire cavers to survey and perform other tasks such as water tracing. I

believe Jim first received funding for cavers to work within the park. These cavers became known as the Feds. They received \$4/hr. Then Jim worked out a deal with Dr. Ron Dilamater at Western KY University to fund cavers working outside the park on the sinkhole plain. These cavers received basically \$3/hr. and became known as the Molemen. Joe Saunders may have coined "Molemen," a term of endearment. Both groups of cavers received all of the carbide they could eat! The Feds consisted of Don Coons, Sheri Engler, Joe Ray, John Branstetter, Rick Schwartz, Rick Hendrickson, and others. The Molemen were Tom Ahlers, Duke Hopper, George Huppert, and Bill Cobb. Other cavers were Jim Quinlan, Reid Morris, Steve Knutson, Joe Troester, D. Walker, Paul Heller, Phil O'Dell, Jim Borden, Joe Saunders, Tom Gracinin, Mark Stock, Jeff Burkett, Preston Forsythe, and Kevin Neff. I know I have left out many cavers like Geary Schindel and I suspect others. The cavers hired by Western were part of the Western KY Karst Research Team.

Tom Ahlers was one of the main cavers involved in Hick's Cave, also known as Hidden River Cave. Duke told me that Tom passed away two years ago and Tom's second wife, Connie, has a garage full of cave data that she wants to give the KSS. Connie lives in Anderson, Indiana, and Duke and Preston are planning a trip to obtain this cave data.

I skimmed over many of the survey books and a few notes caught my eye: One memo book was labeled "leads in the Park City Area" and said, "on this land we found Keep Out Lead." It was a small hole filled in somewhat with rocks and stumps and had a sign nearby which said Keep Out. JQ noted with all of this Keeping Out, there must be something worth going on under there, 3/21/75. Another note said, "the old man who lives at the end of the road knows of all the caves around here." One local describing a cave said, "some people have traveled from morning till noon without finding the end." On 11/19/77 three cavers in Rutledge Cave, Warren County, totaled 3154.8 feet of survey for the day. A borehole was discovered, however, JQ commented, "this is a high-gradient stream passage and we are unable to come up with even an estimate of the gradient." "If the system goes it will be necessary to consider the possible necessity of resurvey." Moral: Do it right the first time. For some reason the survey team had taken no vertical shots. On 7/21/77 in Gift Horse Cave a note was made directed to JQ, "why do you keep giving us the screwed up clinometer?" JQ wrote in the book, "because . . . (25 words or less), but it will not happen again." The group of S. Knutson, M. Stock, D. Walker, and D. Hopper proceeded to survey 68 stations, a new record. Other survey notes were: "sumping hell," and "50 feet to Sounds of Music." On another trip only 128 feet were totaled. The note was made the survey was terminated by rising water. On 8/3/77 in Whigpistle Cave 92 stations were set for 4737.2 feet. This exceeded the former station record set in Hick's of 89 stations. One of the highlights of this period of exploration must have been the discovery of the big room with a floor area of 2.4 acres in Whigpistle. The room looks like a sausage link. The next largest room in the Mammoth Cave area is Wright's Rotunda at 1.4 acre in Mammoth Cave.

We only partially copied the material in the five boxes. Jim Currens said this was approximately 10 % of the material at the library from the Quinlan collection. The way the material arrived at UK was due to the work of Jim Currens, and Preston's suggestion that someone needs to contact Don Coons and see what Don had in his attic and closets. Jim did contact Don Coons up in Illinois and Don said he had beaucoup material from his Quinlan days. Jim

asked Don to donate the material to the KSS. Don first wanted to give it to Western KY University, but Western refused it. So a plan was arrived at to give a copy of the material to UK. Jim Currens and Mr. Marshall made two trips to Illinois to begin copying the material, but finally Don said to just take it all due to the high copying costs, plus Don did not have a climate controlled storage location. Thank you Don.

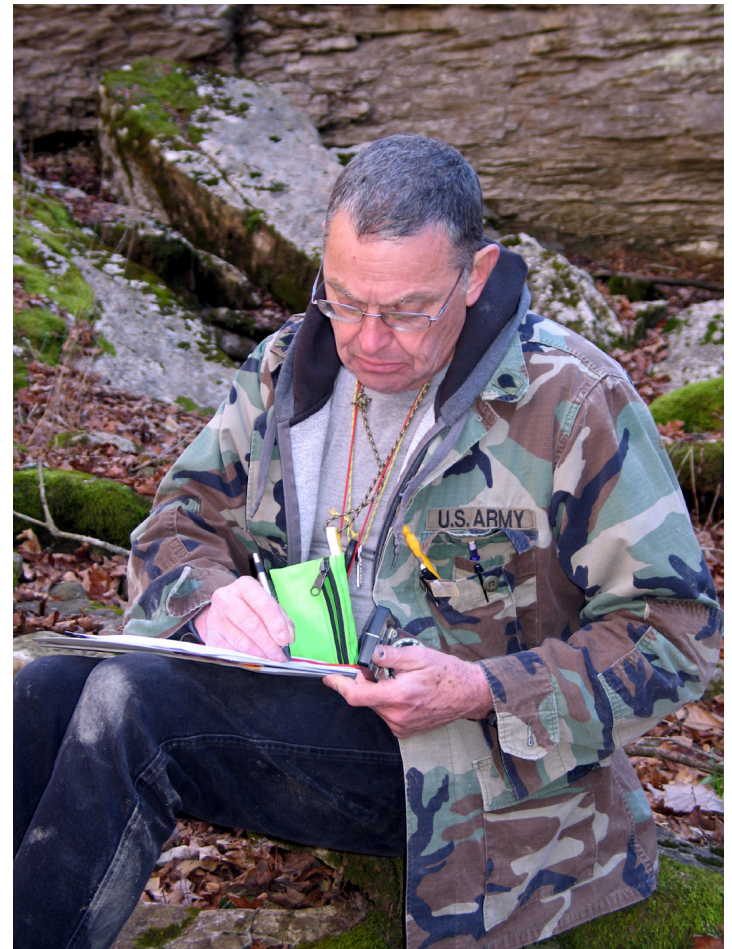
Jim Quinlan was noted for his karst library. Apparently the bulk of the library went to Steve Worthington in Canada. I am sure Geary Schindel and Don Coons could add many stories to this brief write up.

## Survey Projects

### Great Rock Sink Entrances of Sloan Valley Cave

By Preston Forsythe

With Wolf Creek Dam being repaired for several years and the lake being lowered, for the first time in a long time, Great Rock Sink is accessible. Dr. George Crothers, the KY State Anthropologist is interested in investigating the area. At the request of Dr. Crothers, Bill Walden organized a surface and cave survey to replace the original survey map which was at approximately 500 ft. to the inch. It was my first time there.



*Bill Walden Sketching in Great Rock Sink - Photo by Preston Forsythe*

The sink is impressive -- of state park quality. The owner has done a good job of maintaining and protecting the site. Bill said there have been several caver clean-ups there over the years. Bill Walden, Katie and Aron Schmid, Kevin Toepke, Dale Andreatta, Bruce *Baldbat* Warthman, Brenda Mitchell, and Preston Forsythe made three 5-hour survey trips over the first three days of the New Year. It was a great time. As I said the sink is impressive and the main feature of the multi-entrance cave is the fine main entrance and the cave passage averaging over 75 feet wide. We stopped the survey near Hat Hole Pit and an overlook into huge passage. Hat Hole is where the early commercial guides used to play a trick on clients by knocking their hat down a hole in the floor and then later recovering it for a laugh. The cave was known as Cumberland



*Tourists visiting Cumberland Crystal Caves - Photo courtesy of Tom Land*

Crystal Cave in those days in the 20's and 30's. On our first day of survey ice formations were present outside as well as over 200 ft. into the cave. Some were 2.5 feet long. By the way the cave is a cold sink. The large passage and two-entrances created a wind chill that all noticed. Bill measured 34° F. in the cave. The sketchers bare hands were cold but the resurvey was fun and worth it. Bill quickly produced a stick map using the cave survey software Compass in red and green of the results.

The KSS does more than have meetings, shuffle paper and data and rewrite the by-laws. Come on out and join us for some real caving.

### Survey Projects:

Cave	County	Project Leader	Status
Ice Cave	Wayne	Bill Walden	Completed
Wind Cave	Wayne	Eric Weaver	Completed
Redmond Creek	Wayne	Bill Walden	Nearing completion
Bowman Pit	Wayne	Lee Florea	Just started
Triple-S	Wayne	Eric Weaver	In progress
Blowing	Wayne	Randy Paylor	In Progress
Dale Hollow	Cumberland	Erin Lynch	In Progress
Great Rock Sink	Pulaski	Bill Walden	Just Started

These are the surveys of which I am aware. There are likely many more.

Bill Walden

### Suggested Agenda for the Jan. 2009 Meeting

- Election of 2009 Officers.
- Discuss possibility of Internet conference for meetings so that more members can participate
- Possibility of a meeting or introduction meeting at Speleofest.
- April Meeting: We would like to have a speaker and consider holding the April meeting at **Kentucky Geological Survey**  
[Well Sample and Core Library](#), 2500 Research Park Dr., Lexington, KY 40511.

### Minutes from the October 2008 KSS Meeting

10:20 Bill Walden called the meeting to order.

Present were Bill Walden, Preston Forsyth, Jim Currens, Randy Paylor, Dan Nolfi, Mike Dyas (proxy for Don Conover) and John Cassidy.

Officers' reports:

Treasurer's report: Jim Currens reported that \$127.00 was deposited to the treasury from dues. There was an additional \$4.50 in interest also. Two checks, one to Bill Walden and one to Don Conover were issued. The ending balance is \$1775.73.

Committee reports: 4 data requests were handled.

Special orders:

Bylaws: Jim Currens resumed the discussion on changes to the bylaws. A few additional changes were made and a final copy will be posted on the website for review. A vote will be held at the next meeting on this final version.

New business: KSS laptops, Bill Walden suggests, due to his experience with other computers, that we leave vista on the computer but we put XP on an external hard drive. Randy Paylor also suggested we make XP the default operating system..

Jim Currens has been doing both Secretary and Treasurers duties and would appreciate a volunteer to take over Secretary duties. It was also decided that the membership duties would be given to a person appointed by the Chair with approval from the board. Bill Walden appointed himself and the board approved unanimously.

Caving on Paper sessions: The next one will be held at the Mining and Mineralogy building on the U. K. campus. There is a possibility it will be turned into a two-day session.

Jim Currens suggested that we need to get the serial numbers straightened out for this session. Randy Paylor asked for some volunteers to help with this. Preston Forsyth thanked Randy for all the hard work he has been doing with all the data.

Meetings: Bill Walden is looking for alternative meeting sites that might help encourage participation from the grottos that cave in Kentucky.

Announcements: Ohio Valley meeting in October 2009 will be held in Bellefontaine, and will be hosted by WUSS and COG

Adjourned