

# Kentucky Speleological Survey



January 17, 2010

## Meeting Notice

**Our 2010-election meeting is Sunday, January 24, 2010 at 1 PM EST, noon CST in Horse Cave, KY.**

The American Cave Conservation Association is hosting our January meeting.

### Directions:

The American Cave Museum and Cave are located 2.2 miles east off I-65/Exit 58. Take State Highway 218, cross the railroad tracks and pass the stoplight (intersection of 218 & 31W). The American Cave Museum and Hidden River Cave are on the right.

### Parking:

Curbside parking is available on Main Street. Additional free parking is available adjacent to the American Cave Museum, on Cave Street. This public lot is designed to accommodate buses, motor homes and other vehicles.

### Welcome to ACCA

I would like to take the time to invite the Kentucky Speleological Survey to hold their annual meeting with us at the American Cave Conservation Association's newly renovated American Cave Museum/Hidden River Cave. With a vision of expansion on our minds since moving to Horse Cave in 1986, the dream of having a world-class facility that is dedicated to the very things we love, CAVES, is about 95% complete.

In May of 2009, with the renovations complete to the street level and basement levels of adjacent buildings, we moved our welcoming area and gift shop into these areas. This has allowed us to better serve the public providing a more inviting entry area and much larger gift shop area. These new renovations have also allowed us larger classroom facilities to better serve school groups. It also gives us larger areas to be able to host groups such as the KSS, for meetings and conferences. We finally have place to spread out.

We would like to offer to the KSS, the usage of the American Cave Museum to hold their annual meeting. Along with this, we encourage you to visit the Museum, take a guided tour of Hidden River Cave's Historic Tourist route. This tour is for the "normal" people. It is a one hour trip that is designed to teach visitors about karst and karst issues. Once deemed the most polluted cave in America, Hidden River is also a great teaching tool to the public how sensitive caves and karst areas can be if things are not planned properly.

For those who may be interested, a walk on the wild side with an off trail tour is available. Should you choose to take a little extra time and visit the wilder parts of Hidden River Cave. This trip can be designed to keep you underground for 2-5 hours, your choice. This is weather dependent, since the cave is flood prone. Not a super difficult cave, but nice in it's own respects. Current surveys have the length at a 10.2 miles and going.

We at ACCA do adhere to the USFW Service recommendations on WNS Decontamination Protocol. Please check this link for the most up-to-date information and protocol guidelines for decontamination: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/wnscavers.html> With WNS on our door step here in KY, we are trying to do our part to slow the spread as much as possible.

If you are coming to be a part of the KSS Annual Meeting, call me ahead of time to make reservations for the Wild Cave Tour, 270-786-1466. Or email me at [clark.c17@gmail.com](mailto:clark.c17@gmail.com). If you have never visited the American Cave Museum or Hidden River Cave, we look forward to having you and showing off our expansion.

If you have any questions about the cave or have a cave or sinkhole in mind that needs a good conservation cleanup done, feel free to contact me at anytime. I look forward to meeting and seeing everybody again.

See you Underground Soon,

Chris Clark, Programs Coordinator

American Cave Conservation Association

270-786-1466

### Current KSS officers are:

Bill Walden, President  
Jim Currens, VP  
John Cassidy, Treasure  
Sheri Forsythe, Secretary  
Don Conover, Director  
Jim Greer, Director

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.

## January 2010 Election of Officers

At the moment we have nominations as follows:

President	Jim Currens Darrell Adkins
VP	Howard Kalnitz Steve Gentry
Secretary	Kim Gentry Bill Walden
Treasurer	John Cassidy
Director at large	Don Conover Jim Greer

We founding members would like very much to see some “new blood” as officers. Please do volunteer or make additional nominations.

## Current Survey Projects

### Wayne County

County Coordinator – Harry Goepel

#### Furnace Mountain Cave

Project Leader: Eric Weaver

Status: In progress, almost complete.

Surveyed length: (approximately) ~1000 feet

#### Bowman's Pit

Project Leader: Lee Florea

Status: Temporarily on hold due to very stinky dead skunk at the bottom of the pit.

Surveyed length: 5,750 feet

Pit depth: 80 feet, total depth is ~ 200 feet.



*Bowman's Pit*

#### Lester Morrow Blow Hole Cave

Project Leader: Bill Walden

Status: Temporarily on hold. Waiting for warmer weather.

Surveyed length: 3,308 feet



*Lester Morrow Blow Hole Cave*

#### Blowing Cave

Project Leader: Randy Paylor

Status: Temporarily on hold. Waiting for water level to go down. Beaver Creek needs to have a flow rate of 10 CF/s or less to get into the cave.

Surveyed length: ~4.5 miles

#### Triple-S Cave

Project leader: Eric Weaver

Status: Temporarily on hold. Waiting for drier conditions.

Surveyed length: ~ 3.5 miles

#### Hobert's Cave

Project leaders: Eric Weaver and Harry Goepel

Status: In progress

Surveyed length: ~ 2000 feet

Depth 207 feet, 3 drops 20 feet, 30 feet, & 90 feet

#### Monk Piercy Cave

Project leaders: Eric Weaver and Harry Goepel

Status: In progress, almost complete.

Surveyed length: ~1500 feet

#### Spelunger Pit

Project leader: Tammy Otten

Status: On hold. Waiting for better weather.

Surveyed length: ?

Pit depth: 165 feet

#### Carter Chasm

Project leader: ?

Status: On hold. Waiting for better weather.

Surveyed length: 1500 feet

Pit depth: 145 feet. Total depth ~200 feet

#### Koger Cave

Project leader: Eric Weaver

Status: Not complete, becomes unpleasant

Surveyed length: ~2500 feet.

#### County Coordinators:

Let us hear from our other county coordinators for future newsletters.

Howard Kalnitz – Rockcastle, Jackson, Lee, and Estill counties

Steve Gentry – Meade, Jefferson, LaRue, and Bullitt counties

Jim Currens – Woodford, Barren, and Fayette counties

Please send your county reports to Bill Walden at [wdwalden@windstream.net](mailto:wdwalden@windstream.net) for publication in the next newsletter.

# 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

## Buttonwood Brook Cave Report One

By Steve Gentry

would return the next day.

Tim & Chris Stoops along with Jeff Cay attended "Upton Days" Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 which is the local fall festival in the town of Upton, KY, near Lone Star Preserve. They setup and manned a booth to promote caves, caving and Lone Star Preserve. During the day they talked with several people who told them about possible caves on their property.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the brothers left Lone Star Preserve to visit one of the people who had told them about sinkholes and a possible cave on their property. The owner showed them a log and wood covered sink near the road in his front yard. The owner stated that the past owner had covered it over to keep people out of the cave. He also showed them a sink forming on the backside of the property that blew steam in the winter. The brothers dug that hole with little luck. They decided to report their findings to the grotto. The owner also told Tim that per the stories he was told, there was a cave in the front sink and that the cave went under the road.

Richard Gilliam and Steve Gentry visited the owner on December 22nd; they received the same tour as the brothers. Steve, while walking and talking with the owner noticed a dry stream bed leading to the front sink. After checking out the back sink, (good dig site) they walked back looking for where the dry stream beds began. The head of the stream was located. The group followed it to the front sink. Along the way, a small pond was found several feet north and a few possible holes were noted. They looked over the sink in more detail and found a good dig site with a small hole going down into a void. Steve set off a smoke bomb into the void. The smoke went down and was gone in a matter of a few minutes. Steve and Richard decided to return after Christmas for a dig.

Richard returned on December 27<sup>th</sup> to dig the front sink. He removed several logs and pieces of lumber to find a way into the cave. Only a large rock stood in the way. The rock was moved around just enough to allow entrance. He called Steve to tell him what he had done and found. Richard also told Steve, he was going in to see if the cave was passable and that he would call back in a few minutes. Richard called Steve back after his very short recon trip. He told Steve that the cave does go. He also stated that it has a short free climbable pit (hand line useful) just after the entrance squeeze, at the bottom of the pit the cave continues in a tight crawl where he stopped. Richard told the owner what he had found and that he and Steve

December 28<sup>th</sup> found Richard and Steve back at the newly opened cave. After talking with the owner, (who wanted to go caving but didn't have a helmet) they went off to the cave. Richard and Steve entered the cave and found that the passage leaving the pit room to be very tight. The right side of the lead became too tight within 10 ft. The left side was open just enough to squeeze through. This passage quickly became a tight 3 feet wide rock on rock with a small meandering canyon in the floor. This passage ended in a junction room containing many animal bones. The cave from the "Bone Room" continues both directions. The right side gets small fast but has some nice formations. The left side was not pushed out. The left lead is a hands and knees passage with several very tight spots. This lead also has an underlying level off and on throughout the explored part of the passage. There was also a short free climbable pit with a stream that was not pushed. This lead was smoke bombed, and the smoke went down a very tight stream passage in a matter of a few minutes.

The team exited the cave to inform the owner what they had found. The owner told Richard and Steve that they were in the cave over 2 plus hours. Steve remembered the train tracks that were close and ask the owner if any trains had gone by. The owner said yes that trains run every hour or so. Richard and Steve didn't remember hearing any sounds of a train and thought that the cave trended away from the tracks. Everyone said goodbye for the day and plans for the next trip was in the making. Steve called Tim Stoops on the way home, left him a voice mail about the cave. Steve also sent Tim an email describing what was found and that a survey trip was being planned. Tim told Steve on what dates he could survey. Steve, Richard and Tim set the next trip for January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 started with a temperature of 9°F. There's nothing like starting the New Year surveying a new cave. Tim came to Steve's house alone; he stated that his brother Chris bowed out on the trip. Steve loaded his gear into Tim's car and we were off to meet Richard at the cave. Once at the cave and the talking with the owner, it was time go caving. The owner had a helmet and was ready to go with the team.

Any of you that have caved in the winter know that when you get to the cave you are partly dressed out. But finishing dressing in the cold is nasty. The first

survey point was set in the cold entrance. Steve slid in over the now ice coated rocks into the cave followed by Richard. Tim was setting his book and helping the owner try to get in. The owner made it past the rock at the entrance but was stopped at the top of the pit. He decided it was too tight for him and that he would call it a day. He wished the team well and headed to the warm house. Tim by now was freezing. Richard and Steve, who were at the bottom of the pit, were very cold also. The cave was sucking all that cold air down the entrance. Tim made his way to the bottom of the pit, he told Steve and Richard how cold he was and the team decided that they would forgo the entrance passage survey for the day. The survey was restarted at the "Bone Room," the junction of the passages.

Steve on point, Richard on instruments, Tim on book, the survey was under way again. The passage to the right was quickly done. Tim pushed his way through a tight spot to complete the passage and his sketch. The left side was started and surveyed past the pit through several tight spots and ended for the day at a junction of the upper and lower level. The passage gets tight here so it was a good place to end the day. The trip out was uneventful except for the very cold wind in the entrance crawl. The next survey trip will be on a much warmer day.

The owner had been trying to come up with name for the cave since the first day the cave was opened. He sent Steve an email on the night of January 3<sup>rd</sup> with the name of Buttonwood Brook, after the Sycamore tree and the dry stream at the entrance.

### Proposed Meeting Schedule:

It was suggested at the last meeting that we have the KSS meetings the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each quarter. That would mean that we have meetings as follows:

April 18, 2010

July 18, 2010 (or at KOR)

October 17, 2010