



Acclaimed Local Caver Presents Program On August 2

by Tom Emery
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CARLINVILLE - The exploration of caves will be the topic of a one-hour, free program hosted by the Carlinville Public Library at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 2.

“Introduction to Caving: Safe, Fun, Responsible” will be presented by Jeffery Gosnell of Carlinville, a skilled cave explorer whose TikTok videos have attracted millions of views.

Gosnell has explored caves for over twenty-one years, including hundreds of wild caves in Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. He has assisted in the surveys of five previously unmapped caves.

His presentation will discuss the science of the formation of caves, the wildlife of caves, rules of responsible cave exploration, and suggestions on how to begin exploring Illinois caves.

“The presentation will appeal to both those who would just like to learn about caves without ever setting foot underground,” remarked Gosnell, “as well as those who would like to try caving for themselves.”

Gosnell operates a “cave-oriented” TikTok account, (@cavegoose), which has over 162,000 followers. He says that videos on the site average 5-12 million views every month.

A caseworker for the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Gosnell is a board member of the Near Normal Grotto (NNG) and the Karst Conservancy of Illinois (KCI). He also holds membership in the National Speleological Society (NSS) as well as four other cave conservancies. Gosnell is the editor of two caving newsletters, The Illinois Cave Watch and The Near Normal News.

In addition, Gosnell is the moderator of the NNG Facebook group, which is open to non-cavers as well. He is one of only eighteen people to complete the thru-trip in the Blackfathom River Cave in Ste. Genevieve County, Mo.

Gosnell lists his favorite cave as Illinois Caverns, which he has visited over fifty times, often with friends, school groups, and other guests. Located near Waterloo, Illinois Caverns is the second-largest cave in the state, and the only commercial cave open to the public in Illinois.

For more information on the program, contact the Carlinville Public Library at 217-854-3505 or mail@carlinvillelibrary.org.