

COG SQUEAKS NOVEMBER 1992

GROTTO INFORMATION

The Central Ohio Grotto of the National Speleological Society meets the second Friday of each month at the Worthington Presbyterian Church. The Church is on the north west corner of the square in Worthington, Ohio (intersection of High Street and SR 161). The meetings are in the Woodrow Room at 8:00 PM. Please contact a grotto officer or committee person for information and caving trips. **November meeting at Chuck Daehnke's farm. Friday November 13, 1992.**

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The official grotto address is:

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The COG Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Subscription is \$10.00 per year per address. The Central Ohio Grotto publishes the COG Squeaks ten times per year. The club welcomes articles on cave exploration and study, cave trip reports, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave related cartoons, or cave related art. Please send to Bill Walden. Free disks and mailers are available from Bill at the meetings. Contact Bill for information on modem or fax transmission.

NSS organizations may reprint information from the COG Squeaks. Please give credit to the author and the COG Squeaks.

Karst Calendar

- November 13 COG meeting at Chuck Daehnke's farm. The Presbyterian Church is not available to us that Friday because of a church program. Dress warmly for the meeting. Weather permitting Chuck plans a bonfire. Oh yes, it's Friday the 13th!
- November 14 Scout trip based from The Great Salt Petre Cave, Kentucky. Please contact Pat Kelly for information. He may need helpers.
- November 26 through November 29, Thanksgiving in Kentucky. Contact Paul Unger, Greg Erisman, or grotto officer for more information.
- December 12 COG Christmas party, gift exchange and lamp contest. You should have been thinking about those gifts. Remember the emphasis is on humor and low cost. See Christmas Party for more information.
- December 26 through January 3 caving through the Holidays. This is tentative. Contact Bill Walden or Paul Unger if interested.
- Any good non-caving week end contact Jon Gardner for vertical practice in Hocking Hills.

Want to put an event in Karst Calendar? Please contact Bill Walden. Deadline is the Saturday before a meeting.

SOUNDS

By Katie Walden
10-30-91

CAVE

Wet smack as boots leave mud
Orchestra of drips
echoing and re-echoing
Soft whispers of wind
Voices of friends
coming and going

RAIN

Quiet pats
in absolute silence
Memories--
Whistling wind around
a cozy cabin
Singing me to sleep

COG CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Central Ohio Grotto Christmas party and meeting Saturday December 12th will be hosted by Bill and Karen Walden at their home in Galena, Ohio. The schedule is as follows:

- 6:00 Social Time
- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:30 Meeting
- 8:00 Lamp Judging
- 8:30 Gift exchange

The COG Christmas Party and Gift Exchange is a COG custom which predates all present and active members. Old timers, Bernell Ehman and Roger McClure may remember the origins of the COG Christmas Party and Gift Exchange. If so we would like to hear from them.

The idea of the gift exchange is simple: Prepare a gift to be placed under the Christmas tree at the party. Each person who brings a gift will be given a number. After the dinner, the meeting, and judging, the gift exchange will begin. The person with the lowest number gets to choose the first gift. He "must" use that gift on his next caving trip. Emphasis is on humor. However, straight gifts are appreciated. Sometimes it is the instructions regarding the use of the gift which make up the "real gift".

Lamp Contest

We are sponsoring a back up light contest. The rules were published in an earlier edition of the Squeaks and are summarized as follows:

Contest Rules

- 1) Lamp must provide usable light for 48 hours.
- 2) Lamp must be compact and very light in weight.
- 3) Be cave worthy.
- 4) Lights must be received by December 9, 1992.
- 5) Entry fee of \$2.00 per lamp. (no limit)
- 6) Include design and approximate cost.
- 7) Your design may be published by any NSS organization so long as the designer is given credit.
- 8) No open flame lamps or lamps which may create a fire hazard. Lamps will be left on and unattended for 48 hours before being judged.

All lamps accepted will be judged by cavers attending the COG Christmas party. Contact Bill Walden for information.

TRIP REPORTS

Business Travelling

by
Paul Unger

Again duty called and I found it necessary to travel to Cookeville, TN on business. Since this was a driveable distance, Jan accompanied me, hoping for a couple of days of relaxation around the pool at the Holiday Inn. On Labor Day we met Bill Walters of McMinnville, who had invited us to cave with him. Bill had put on a presentation at the 1992 NSS Convention about his groups' exploration of 30 miles in Blue Springs Cave. He and others spent several days enlarging a very narrow filled "Bat Walk" in a well known 500 foot long cave. The blowing lead was known and dug on previously by others, but the sight of bats "crawling" out of the narrow constriction enticed them to dig. The result of their efforts is a long fossil trunk cave - virtually all walking, and very dry. Due to immediate visitation problems once the discovery became known, the entrance is now gated.

Jan and I prepared for our trip at the breakfast buffet, feasting on grits, home fries, bacon, ham, gravy; or at least I did. We met Bill and three of his associates, Hal and Joel of Nashville and Charlie, also of McMinnville. They had enticed me to dig in a cave nearby which was said to be blowing a considerable amount of air. We parked at a church and began the easy part of the trip, down the hill. Jan and I were really impressed with the "cleanliness" of the woods, relatively free of small bushes and downed little branches and other litter. The made for an enjoyable walk, especially in the cool weather.

The two foot diameter entrance could have easily blown out any carbide light with its gale force wind. Pieces of sand or debris stung my face as I entered. The entrance constriction was but three feet long, the cave opening immediately to a ten foot by twenty foot passage, with a small stream meandering from side to side along its course. Once inside, we cooled off while the caves discovery was related. They had known of this blow hole for sometime and only recently had opened it using the "rapid gas expansion process". This accounts for the lack of graffiti and other traffic signs.

The dig site was about three hundred feet into the cave, where a thirty foot joint intersected the passage, to form the first room, about fifty feet across. The obvious breeze would entice any caver into the low crawl on the left side of the room. The others dove in and Jan and I followed, using my rock hammer to "commercialize" the crawl. After a few feet, the crawl would become an enlarged

joint passage for thirty feet or so, with a high ceiling and usually a deep floor, which Jan didn't like to negotiate. Crawl again, and soon reached the intended dig site, where the cave changed to a wide, low bedding plane. We spent time enlarging the joint dirt fill downward but decided the twelve inch constriction was too narrow (dangerous) to attempt a climb down into a canyon. Several hours were spent digging the thirty feet to where the flowstone just couldn't be broken because of the tight quarters. Bill, being the thinnest, could get his head and shoulders just far enough to see the large passage which waited beyond. The group opted for more rapid gas expansion.

We exited this passage and decided to look elsewhere deeper in the cave for leads. The upper portion of the passage was an old abandoned fossil passage with lots of gypsum needles, flowers, and plates, some over two feet in diameter. After nearly one thousand feet of this walking, we encountered some really impressive sixty foot domes, each with their own gruesome drain to be explored. It is obvious some of these domes are active at times.

There was an obvious lead fifteen feet off the floor. I was inspired to try, and Bill gave me a shoulder boost. My tested hand hold bounced off Bill's head, at which point he became even less inspired. I was able to get high enough to see passage going on. Attempts to reach it via side passages were to no avail.

Being late, we left several leads for the future. Jan and I took our time, trying our new Hewlett Packard emergency light. They are very adequate for lighting, but are unknown for durability and longevity.

We opted to find an easy route up the mountain, and much to our amazement, an unknown cave was located near the contact. We all stood on the twenty five foot wide sandstone ledge and peered down the forty feet into a large room, with historical artifacts. This cave has been used as a shelter recently. Unlike most pits, this had several passages off it. One lead down to where you could see down into what appeared to be the top of a high dome. Next trip with vertical gear. On climbing back up I advised Jan and Joel, who had watched from the ledge, that they were sitting on a two foot thick piece of ceiling sandstone twenty five by thirty feet and only supported at three points on its edge. They hastily retreated. I was quite uneasy walking across it myself.

Our trip concluded at a Mexican restaurant of nearly authentic Mexican cuisine, not the northernized version. The waiter only spoke broken English. The warm motel

waters soothed our bodies. Business traveling is a tough job, but someone has got to do it! I'm planning my next business trip to Cookeville over a week end.

Premarital Wells Cave Trip

August 29, 1992

by Lou Simpson

Heather Hilton, Joe Jones, Colin Gatland, Harry Goepel,
Lou Simpson

We made a one-day trip from Ohio to visit Wells Cave, Pulaski County, Tennessee, driving in one car so we could enjoy each other's company. This was Joe's first trip with us. Joe and Heather were getting married in September and Heather said she could never marry a non-caver. Joe had caved before, and he was willing to put up with Heather's big dog, Chandler, so the caving requirement was no big deal. Colin joined us, driving down from Vandalia before dawn. The three-hour drive each way passed quickly, with caving tales, jokes, and a rowdy game of synonym, where you take turns coming up with a synonym for whatever was picked first, such as a part of the body or a bodily function.

We stopped at the Shell station in London to stock up on beanie weenies and batteries. When we reached the cave entrance, we said hello to Mrs. Wells as a courtesy, since Mr. Wells sold the cave entrances and little land last year to Jim Helmbold, a long-time caver from Centerville. Mr. Wells appeared while we were still getting ready and explained that he still was trying to sell 40 more acres north of the entrances, up on the ridge that the cave is in.

We looked briefly at the left section of the cave, which quickly connects to another entrance, then climbed over the breakdown in the entrance that leads to the Mud Crawl and the rest of the ten- plus mile cave. This crawl is quite long and gross, and there is another route that we would take coming out to avoid it, but the alternate route is difficult to find and difficult to climb in the direction leading into the cave. After you've been in the cave a while, the mud dries and you don't even notice it.

Beyond the mud crawl, we followed the route to the register, taking every left passage that doesn't end. This part of the cave is quite mazy, but if you really take every significant left, some not so obvious, you will reach the register. We signed the register and headed to the right, toward the Donkey Dick Room (euphemistically named Donkey "D" on the map), where we took a quality cooling off break. The room is named for some now-gone graffiti (graffito?) that was on the wall, pertaining to a perverted practice allegedly engaged in by

the person who was the object of the message on the wall.

We charged down the Mainline, passing the Moby Dick rock (shaped like a whale--you have a dirty mind) and hopping across the canyon in the floor, until we reached a multi-level intersection with the Subway and the S-Canyon. Leaving these delights for a little later, we proceeded onward and climbed down a small pit where you can easily go see The River. Far down below, we could hear the rush of water. Cris-crossing as we changed levels, we finally reached this flowing stream. If you follow the water downstream for over a mile, finally through neck-deep water, you can emerge, baptized, at the scenic resurgence on Buck Creek.

But we didn't want to go there because you really need a second car and the weather didn't look completely reliable. We located the DASS Passage (named for the Dayton Area Speleological Society), with the objective of locating Derek Bristol's (Miami Valley Grotto) newly discovered area, but we turned back when the floorless canyons looked more risky than we felt like dealing with.

We returned to the Mainline and explored the rest of that passage and a major branch, stopping at an eight-foot overlook of the DASS Passage where we had been earlier. Now we backtracked to the S-Canyon and followed it to the end. It's a lot of fun, changing from narrow canyon to belly crawl, then to a high canyon with a little breakdown, and finally a nice hallway that meanders sinuously for a long time. There is an obscure left lead that goes to a scary overlook of The River. I think I located it, but wasn't really interested in going there anyway.

We returned to the beginning of the S-Canyon and explored the Subway, a lower level maze. We followed several routes and explored all except what was visible beyond a deep canyon. When we returned to the Donkey Dick Room, Colin and Harry succeeded in following a route that led to the passage we saw beyond the deep canyon. We returned to the junction at the register. Heather said peer pressure from other NSS cavers has made her a braver caver. I said she would shortly have a challenge.

We headed out by the so-called "Dry Belly" route. There used to be a really tight section, but now there is only one fairly tight spot, about ten inches high. When we reached the 18-foot-deep narrow chimney down to the bottom of the Serpentine Canyon, I was dubious that we could or should all climb down. The climb is more of a controlled fall. Each person was incredulous that we were doing it. Finally, when all but Joe had climbed down, Joe said "I

suppose it's too late to go back to the mud crawl," and then he, too made the climb/slide.

We followed the small stream to a larger one coming from the Mud Slop (reputed to be even groadier than the Mud Crawl we'd gone through on the way in), and located the complicated exit route up through breakdown. The final climb between breakdown and the wall elicited many special caving expletives as each struggled to extrude him/herself through the opening without the benefit of decent footholds.

The ride home was mellow, as we now had shared a common caving challenge. We came, we caved, and we collapsed. It felt good. Joe had some bruises, but you could hardly notice him limping a little when he and Heather went up the aisle at the wedding.

Wolf River Cave Register

By Lou Simpson

Mark Turner sent me the contents of the cave register in Wolf River Cave after a trip to the cave on August 29, 1992. He wrote that the register was full and there wasn't more than a square inch left to write on. He didn't have any paper to leave in the register. Mark noted that the "Bob Cat Warning Plaque was broken in half and damage seems to have been done to some of the tracks." Mark apparently had to dry out the pages and iron them. There were five 3x5 inch pieces, three spiral notebook pages, a Cumberland Grotto card, a Kit Kat wrapper, the cardboard from the Kit Kat, and an M & M's wrapper (fun size, peanut). With no illusions about the value of the data on these documents, I nevertheless proceeded to enter what I could decipher into a Lotus spreadsheet and sorted the trips by date. Then I added up the number of visitors for each month and graphed it. I also noted the introduction of new pieces of paper and the origin (city, state, grotto) where present. What can we learn from this?

1. The number of visitors to the part of the cave beyond the register each month is relatively small, often fewer than ten.
2. Most months, somebody went to the register room in the cave. (Several small groups did not include a date.)
3. The paper in the register filled up by mid-1990. (Additional forms were introduced in early 1989 and mid-1990.) So data after mid-1990 is probably very incomplete. If we are interested in getting more data, we need to regularly service this register. I helped place the register in the cave in 1976 or 77, but I see that my name

is not among those signing it since August 1988.

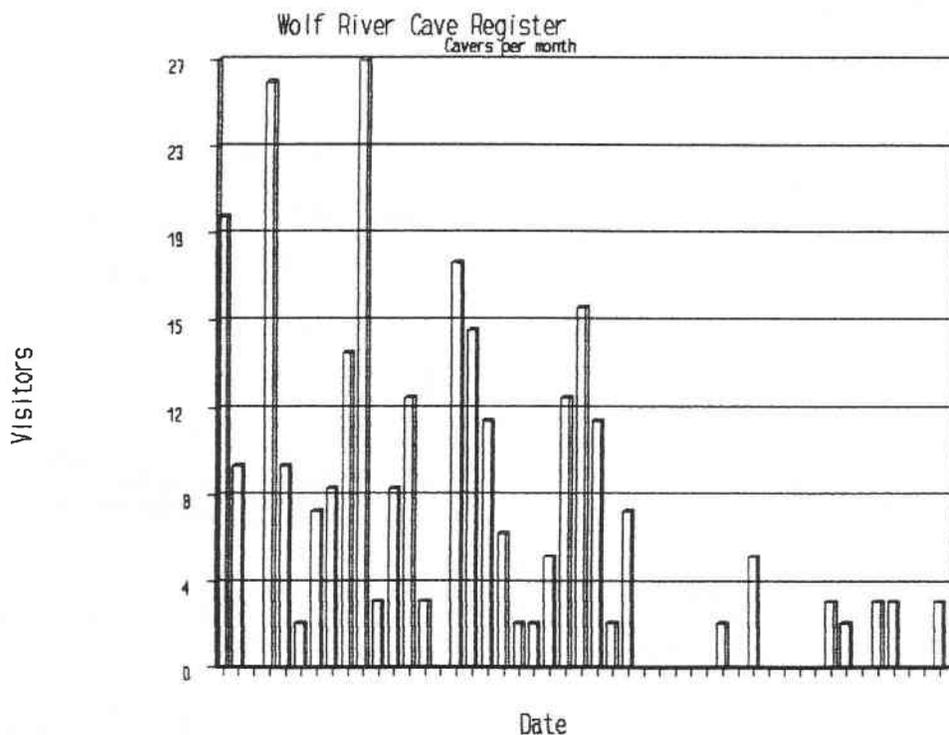
4. Most grottoes in surrounding states are represented. States include Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee. One person wrote Paris, France. Grottoes mentioned include Cleveland, Central Ohio, WUSS, MVG, GCG, ESSO, Cumberland, Smoky Mountain, East Tennessee, Bloomington, and Central Indiana. Cavers from new groups in Albany, KY, and Crossville, TN, and Rugby TN were also active in the cave.

5. Some cavers eat candy in a cave.

Directions to Chuck's Farm Meeting Site Friday November 13, 1992

From the northwest section of Columbus (Dublin), take SR. 745 or SR 257 north to US 42. SR 745 goes north along the west side of the Scioto river while SR 257 goes up the east side. At US 42 SR 257 crossed the Scioto river then continues north. After crossing US 42 turn west off of SR 257 on to Mills Road (this is at Bellepoint and is the first left after US 42). Mills road is about 1/2 mile north of US 42.

Follow Mills road west. Cross Mill Creek over a one lane bridge. Continue for approximately one mile. Chuck's farm is on the right. Look for a two story **old** brick farm house and cavers' cars. Chuck's address and phone number are: 7610 Mills Road, Ostrander, OH 43061, 614-666-1199.



Starting date is 8/88 finish date is 6/92.

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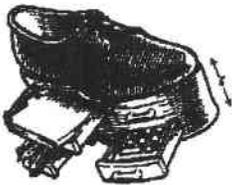
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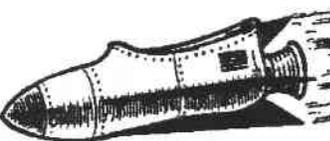
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All of Clyde's boots are made from recycled material. Clyde went into business with Chef Caver Pierre recently. Chef Caver Pierre had a surplus of skins from his donated sources and the locals were beginning to complain about the smell. Also, since the county land fill is to be closed and Pierre couldn't legally dispose of his skins, he called his expert on everything friend, Clyde, to help solve the problem.

You can help! The material from which these boots are manufactured would normally contribute to unsightly and smelly conditions along our otherwise beautiful highways. Help clean up the mess. Buy Clyde's Recycled Boots to use on your caving expedition. We guarantee Clyde's boots will last as long if not longer than boots from our competitors.



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