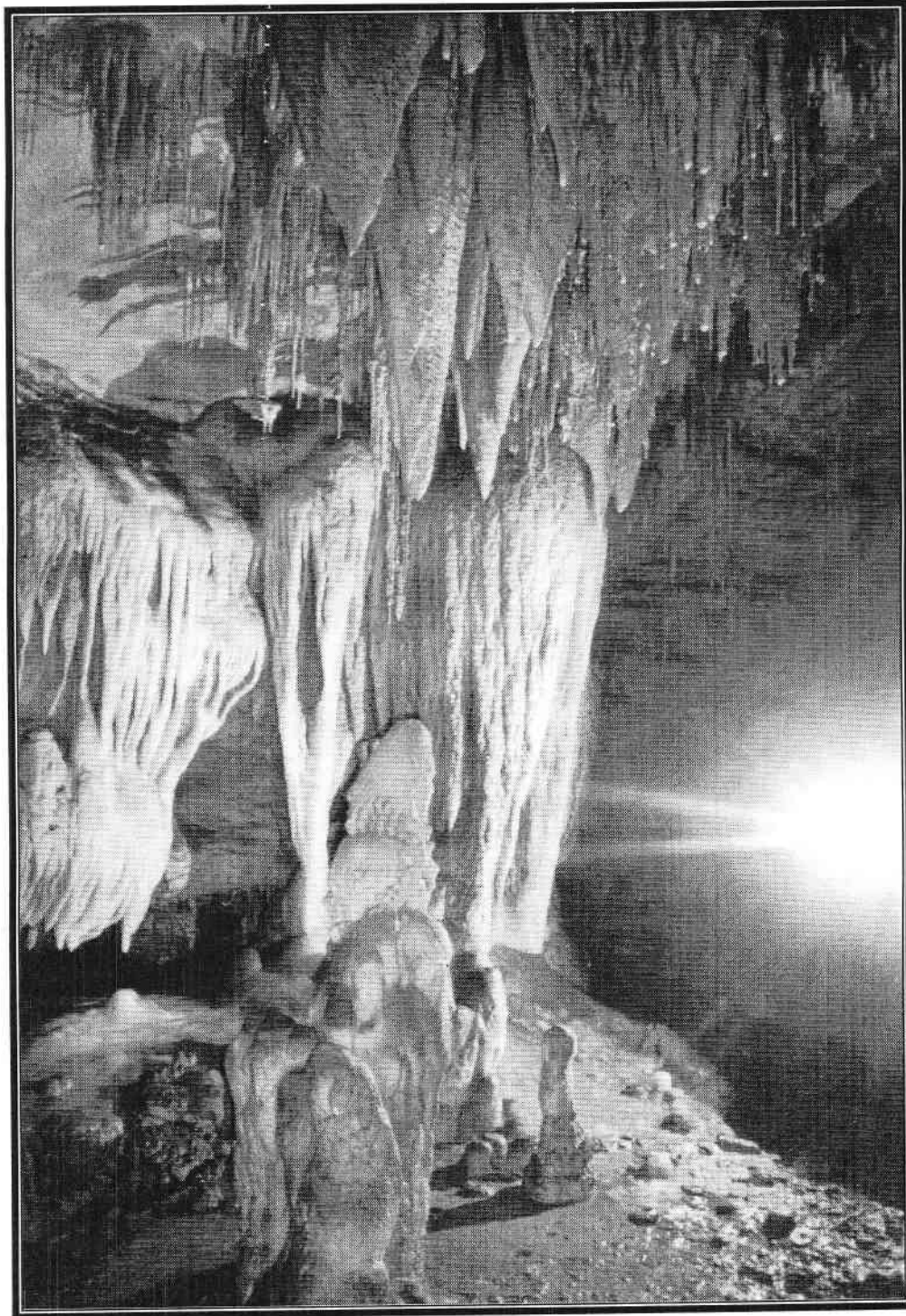




COG SQUEAKS

September & October 2000



Enchanted Forest in Wolf River Cave – A Lacie Braley Photo.

THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO

The Central Ohio Grotto (COG) of the national Speleological Society meets at 8:00 p.m. at the Worthington Presbyterian Church the second Friday of most months. The church is on the northwest corner of the square in Worthington. Parking is available behind the church. Enter the parking lot from the first side street off State Route 161. Please contact a grotto officer to confirm meeting time and place. The December meeting is not held at the church.

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Please join by sending e-mail with the subject **subscribe**.

Grotto Membership Dues \$15 per individual or \$20 per family.

The C.O.G. Squeaks

The C.O.G. Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Articles on cave exploration and study, cave trips reports, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave-related cartoons, cave-related art or photographs are encouraged. Please note that I have a 35mm film scanner and a flat bed scanner. I can handle negatives up to 4 X 5 inches. So, please send me your photos, negatives, or slides for inclusion in the Squeaks. Send material to Bill Walden via mail, e-mail, disk, fax, or even dictation.

NSS organizations may reprint material from the C.O.G. Squeaks so long as the author and Squeaks are given credit unless stated otherwise. Send E-mail to Bill Walden if you want a Word file of the Squeaks to reprint.

The C.O.G. Squeaks is mailed to dues paying members and to grottos with whom the COG exchanges newsletters. The C.O.G. Squeaks is also available by E-mail as an Adobe Acrobat file (PDF). Please notify Bill Walden or Andy Franklin if you want the PDF version (It's in full color).

C.O.G. Cabin

The Grotto has a small shelter cabin on the property of Greg and Angela Erisman in Pulaski County, Kentucky for the use of C.O.G. members and friends. The cabin has five bunks and a picnic table. Outside of the cabin and a very short distance from the cabin is a practice-climbing tower for rope climbing. There is plenty of room for tents on the property.

COG KARST CALENDAR

Oct. 13, 2000	COG Meeting. 8:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Worthington, Ohio. Enter from the rear of the church. Nominations for 2001 officers.
Oct. 14, 2000	Halloween-O-Roast and COG Auction hosted by Jim Blankenship. Please refer to the article by Jim.
Oct. 21, 2000	2001 NSS Convention Planning meeting Caving trips?
Nov. 4, 2000	Ohio Valley Region 2000 conservation project. Please read the press release in this issue.
Nov. 10, 2000	COG Meeting. 8:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Worthington, Ohio. Enter from the rear of the church. Election of 2001 officers.
Nov. 11, 2000	Kentucky Speleological Survey meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Mines and Minerals Building at UK, Lexington.
Nov. 18, 2000	Ohio Valley Region Autumn meeting near Cincinnati, Ohio.
Nov. 23 – 26	Thanksgiving in Kentucky. Survey trips. Surface survey at Redmond Creek. Need a GPS receiver.
Dec. 29 – 31	Survey trips – Farmers, Redmond and others.
Dec. 31, 2000	New Years Eve Party at GSPCP. Come and celebrate the beginning of the 21 st century with cavers. (Remember the year 2000 is the year for which the 20 th century was named.)
July 23 – 27, 2001	2001: A Cave Odyssey. The NSS Convention at Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve, Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. Visit www.nss2001.com where on line registration is available.
June 24-28, 2002	NSS Convention, Camden, Maine
August 4-8, 2003	NSS Convention, Poterville, Cal.

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Trip Reports

SECRETS (ALMOST) REVEALED

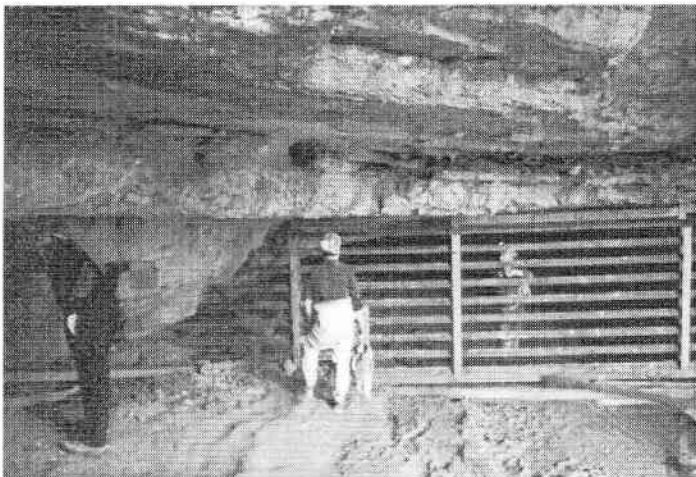
By Lacie Braley

Participants: Jim Blankenship, Steve (Jim's brother-in-law), Stephen Clark, Harry Goepel, Lou Simpson, Bruce Warthman, Lacie Braley

We had gathered at the Fentress County, Tennessee Blackhouse Mountain Gang Hideout for one last push in Wolf River Cave before the seasonal bat hibernation closure. Saturday morning we rose at dawn, ate our Wheaties, and headed straight for the cave...no, wait...that was some other group of cavers.

What really happened: At some point in the morning we drove to Jamestown intending to partake of the Mark Twain's breakfast buffet. Alas, the Twain has once again closed it's doors. Instead we ate at the little family run restaurant behind the jail. There we discussed our plans for the day. Jim was going four wheeling with local landowner and all-around nice guy, Tom Patton. Lou and Steve decided to spend the day above ground, metal detecting. Lou said he'd prefer to wait until Sunday to go to Blowing Fern. That way he'd have more help. I wonder whom? Harry, Bruce, Stephen, and I were going to Wolf River. At the Hideout, Harry, Bruce and I got our gear. We stopped at Granny's Guesthouse to pick up Stephen. Jim was taking photos when we arrived so we grabbed our helmets and hammed it up for the camera.

True to BHM tradition, we arrived at the cave entrance at noon, central time. The bar on the new gate is a bit of a puzzle. You have to lift and shift in a certain order to open it. The plan was to bust butt for our destination. No sightseeing, just a couple cool down stops along the way.



Wolf River Cave Gate. Photo by Lacie Braley.

About an hour and a half later we reached our target area. Harry searched briefly for some flagging tape left on a previous trip. It marked one way through the rocks. No luck. So Harry, Stephen, Bruce, and I started up the original treacherous route. The area is a massive collapsed rock pile. There are loose rocks everywhere, just waiting to be knocked free. As Stephen said, "These rocks are saying-Touch me! Touch me please!"

After four or five short climbs winding up through the rocks we slipped behind a wall section that had broken free. Then up a little more and over to a slot in the "floor."

This was the stopping place from the last trip. Harry and Bruce slid down through. Stephen got hung up a couple times so he stayed up above. I stayed up, too and went over to look in an unchecked lead nearby. I found no hole in the rocks big enough to get through and lots of big rocks above just waiting to fall on me. More of the, "Come on, I dare you to touch me!" rocks. Harry and Bruce had no luck in their passage either. We regrouped and looked above the wall where we'd entered the area. Pay dirt! Harry crawled through a hole and up we went again, this time to a wetter area. The water glistened as it flowed down the side of a brown, tilted rock slab. Here we found surface debris washed in- some leaves, twigs, and nutshells. Stephen noticed a live frog watching him. It must have gotten washed in and far down into the cave, poor thing.

From the side of the slab Stephen could feel a strong breeze blowing down. He carefully made his way over and beyond the slab. It soon got too tight and he called on Harry.

Harry knows when the going gets tight, Harry gets to go. He wore a helmet mounted battery pack light just because he didn't want a battery pack at his waist when it was time to push a tight spot. Harry said the wind was quite strong until he got through the tight spot and came to a place to stand up. There he couldn't find any one hole blowing more than another and all were too small for human passage. Stumped again.

The four of us corkscrewed our way back down through the jumble of rocks to the main passage. Bruce and Stephen went out a crawl in the bottom of the rock pile. While we waited Harry found his flagging tape for the alternate route. We both took another look around the edges of the collapse and discussed surveying up through the breakdown. A not so fun task but it could help to relate the surface area to the passage below. When Stephen and Bruce returned we cooled off for a few minutes, then began the trip out of the cave. Wolf River seems determined to keep her secrets a while longer.

As often happens on the journey out, the conversation got a little strange when we rested at 409. If anyone's interested, there may be a market for self-inflating helmet pillows. It's a true leisure-

caver “must have” item. Just press a button and poof-instant pillow!

On down the Stairs, through the Register Room, and down the Inferno we went. Stephen’s light shorted out at the Register Room. I think it may have been blinking a message in Morse code. “Go back and touch those rocks!” He got out a backup light and continued on down.

We took the stream on the way out. I went up and over a ledge in one spot rather than get wet to the waist. Sometimes you just wanna keep the undies dry. We got to a final ten-foot long stoop in nearly three feet of water. Through very careful negotiation I once again successfully kept those pants dry. No going commando today for me.

It didn’t take too long to get the bar off when we reached the gate. Getting it back on was a lot more difficult but we persevered.

We dropped Stephen off at Granny’s and drove to the Hideout to clean up. Jim arrived on his four-wheeler a few minutes later. He offered me the use of the hot water shower at Granny’s but I decided to suffer through a quick, cold, hose water shower at the hideout instead. I didn’t want to hold up the drive into town for dinner.

I had Ruth’s Buffet (roast beef, mashed taters and carrots, yum) in mind but the group decided on Pizza Hut. Their reasoning: Get a large pizza and keep some for Sunday breakfast. Didn’t happen. It was Food Lion groceries for breakfast instead. It was raining when we got up Sunday morning. Jim, Steve, Stephen, and Bruce opted to head back home. Lou, Harry, and I prepared for a trip to Blowing Fern. Harry and Lou magically got Steve Lugannani’s old Jeep Eagle running and we drove it down the fields to the creek. We hiked ATV trails most of the way. It’s only the last, up the creek bed hill that’s rough. Lou and Harry traded off carrying the tool bag.

Lou entered Blowing Fern first. He carried a bag of dry clothes, a trowel, and a saw. The saw was for a tree root that blocked a lead. I took a hammer and followed him through the puddle belly crawl. Lou quickly cut the root and moved some rocks. He had to lay on his side, facing downhill – pretty uncomfortable. He called for Harry. Once again the going was tight so Harry had to go. Harry was still back near the entrance. He had remembered a drain plug in the cave floor, had opened it and drained off several inches of water from the belly crawl. Yeah.

Harry crawled on in, carrying a shovel and crowbar. Lou climbed to the upper level to look around while Harry worked. I helped Harry shift some rocks then went up to join Lou above. There’s a too tight to pass canyon and another potential dig up there. When we climbed back down I decided to try and dig out the entrance crawl a little more. I took the trowel and dug mud and rocks where I could. Eventually I reached the entrance. I knew the guys would be coming out soon. Then I remembered the hammer, oops. I turned around and belly crawled through the puddle again to retrieve the hammer. Harry was just preparing to exit the cave. A couple semi-upside down shifts digging were

enough for the day. A team of diggers, working in shifts, may yet get through the lower dig.

An almost sunny day greeted us both when we crawled out from the hole. Lou soon joined us outside. We were quite a sight, slimed from head to toe.

It was time to head back to the Hideout. Down the creek bed we went. It was a really pleasant walk back to the Eagle.

The question on our minds when we reached the car—Had the battery charge held? Would it start?

No.

Since Lou was the most presentably dressed (slacks and a T-shirt), he started walking back to get his truck. Harry and I went to the creek to rinse our slimy gear. Just as we finished rinsing a red truck pulled up and a young guy called out, “You the ones looking for a jump?” Lou had stopped at the first house along the road and the young man had offered to help. Within a minute the Eagle’s engine was operational again.

We thanked our rescuer and followed him back down the road, picking up Lou along the way.

I had hoped to just do a quick washcloth clean up in the kitchen while Harry showered on the back porch. One look at the grit coating under my polypros convinced me a full-fledged shower was the only way to go. So I had a cold rinse, finished loading my car, bid adieu to the guys, and began the long drive home.

Once again the portal to the fabled Never-Never Land had eluded us. But I, for one, am not unhappy with our attempts to find the key. We had found remnants of upper level passages. Who knows where they might lead?

For now, Wolf River Cave belongs to the bats, but come spring...

From Hypothermic to Overheating in 10 Minutes or Less

By Kevin Toepke

On Friday, September 29, 2000 I headed down to Squalid Manor for a weekend of caving with the Shreddites (Better Shred than Dead!) As I'm pulling into Squalid, I notice a car following me. It turns out to be Lee Florea and Brian (one of Lee's friends). As we are the only ones there and no one else is expected for an hour or two, we jump into Brian's truck and head into town to get Lee and Brian some food.

After returning to Squalid, a bunch of Lee's friends start trickling in with the usual antics following. Molly White and the Cincinnati crew showed up around 10:30. Jason and Jamie

Gulley and Darrel from Purdue showed up shortly after I hit the sack.

We were up bright and early on Saturday morning ready for a full day of caving. Molly and her crew were going to their usual caves for her bio survey; Jason was going to do some more diving in Short Creek and the rest of us (Lee, Jamie, Larry Simpson and his daughter Becky, Darrel and myself) were going to Coral cave for a through trip with pauses to study the geology and possibly take samples. It was planned to be a 10-hour trip.

Just after the crack of noon (12:35), we entered Coral Cave. We went at a leisurely pace, taking frequent pauses to look at the geology and for Becky to rest up – she even took a short nap at one point – afterwards she wouldn't shut up.

We got to the Gypsum Passage at about the 7-hour point and stayed for about an hour. Jamie sacrificed himself and kept Becky out of our hair. Darrell studied the sediments and we discussed the formation of the passage (Paragenesis or not paragenesis, that is the question.) The question of the passage's formation was left undecided.

After leaving the Gypsum Passage we made our way to the Big Room, which, coincidentally, is big. Off to one side is the Big Room extension, the highest point in the cave. I'd guess it extends 50' above the floor of the big room. The route we took was to the other side of the Big Room – towards the Water Passage. Before we could get to the Water Passage, we had to do a body rappel down a fairly steep slope, with the last 10 feet being a free-fall. The bottom of the body-rappel is about 100 feet below the base of the big room. We all made it down without too much difficulty. While waiting, Lee and I discussed how quickly we could have made it to this point. I thought it would have taken us about 3 hours – Lee thought we could have done it in less than 2.

The entrance to the 900-foot water crawl is a tight crawl over cobbles. I had made it ½ way through this crawl (about 100 feet) when Becky started in and started complaining about her knees hurting. So I turned around and loaned her my kneepads. When we first found water, Larry didn't think we were in the right place because we hadn't found a side canyon passage. So we spent time looking around and we did find the canyon passage. Larry was still unsure if we were in the right place, but he entered the water to double-check. A few feet in, he confirmed that we were in the right place.

About ½ way through the water crawl, we found a place to stand up. Lee and I waited for the rest of the group to catch up. It was here that Becky returned my kneepads – they weren't working for her. They were sliding around because they were too big and her main problem was sand under her athletic kneepads.

After the rest of the group caught up, Lee and I forged ahead to the end of the crawl. We eventually did find it after some trepidation. While waiting for the group, I poked my nose into the canyon to the Left while Lee went right. When Larry caught up, he confirmed that we were, indeed, in the right place. He had

forgotten about the anastomoses that marked the end of the crawl. At some point Becky had tripped on a rock and fallen into the water. She was the only one in the group that got their torso wet!

Before we headed out again, Larry mentioned that the exit crawl was a 400' crawl over cobbles (sounds fun!!) but there was a bypass, if we could find it. Which he did. But, again he wasn't sure if it was the right place – so he and Lee went in to poke around while the rest of us sat around in a little room. Lee found a canyon passage, but Larry didn't think it was the correct way. At one point, Lee made a loop from the Bypass to the exit crawl.

While waiting, Becky started to get hypothermic, so I gave her my trash bag and candle so she could "tent".

After ½ hour or so, Larry decided he couldn't find the bypass so we should proceed to the Exit Crawl. Darrel and Jamie went ahead to scope out the situation with Becky and myself (who was now getting cold and concerned about getting out) followed until we hit a taller section where we waited for Lee and Larry. Darrel and Jamie found a tight passage that needed to be dug out and, at Larry's direction, started to dig. The rest of the crew started the belly crawl to catch up to Jamie and Darrel. Soon after Becky entered the crawl, she started complaining about sore elbows so I crawled back (about 75') and gave her my elbow pads. We made it about 200' into the crawl and paused to wait for the digging crew.

Larry eventually caught up and went ahead to see how the dig was progressing. While all of this was going on, Becky was using both my candle and Lee's carbide to get warm and I started to get hypothermic.

It turned out that the exit crawl was totally plugged so the digging crew started backing out. At this point Lee and I started making contingency plans -- most of which involved retracing our steps with Lee and myself running ahead to get more cavers, dry clothes food and drinkable water. I fully expected to have to do this. Larry thought that Lee and I should check out the canyon that Lee had found then check out a few other possibilities before we turned around.

After making impossible time back through the 200-foot belly crawl, Lee and I headed towards his canyon. Along the way we took assessment of our situation. We had very little food, almost no drinkable water, no extra clothes but plenty of light. We also knew that the rest of the group was tired. We wasted no time getting into Lee's canyon. Along the way, the external debris (natural and man-made) kept our hopes up. It took us almost no time to make it to the 50' belly crawl that Larry mentioned getting to during his earlier investigation. Lee and I raced through this crawl to find a 6' drop-off to the right (maybe the one that Larry was looking for????) Beyond this drop off the canyon passage continued. We quickly arrived at a fork in the passage. Lee went left and I right. Lee's passage quickly ended and he turned around to catch up to me. My passage had lots of debris and trash – and followed the water. When Lee caught up to me he yelled, "Isn't that the outside?" I yelled back "Sure looks

like it!" After a quick celebration and a quick call of nature break, we returned to the main group to report our finding. The round trip took us about 20 minutes and we both were quite overheated by the time we got back.

Our news greatly changed the mood of the group. I took point and Lee stayed with Becky. Larry and I made it to the belly crawl ahead of the rest of the group and I sent Larry ahead to open the car. I was too tired to notice that he entered the upper belly crawl instead of the lower belly crawl. He had gotten 20 feet or so when Lee arrived with Becky and the rest of the group. Lee then took point and led the way through the belly crawl. I hung back to cool off a bit. After cooling off, I quickly caught up. We regrouped in the drop off room and proceeded to head out of the cave.

Our 10-hour trip had turned into a 13-hour trip. Larry had to head into town to call his wife (he told her to get worried if he hadn't called by 2am.) Lee and I headed back to Squalid to report that we were, in fact, safe. We got back at just after 2am to be greeted by a greatly relieved crew.

I'll have to return to Coral Cave someday to take pictures of the formations. And again with Lee to see if we can make the through trip in 2 hours.

Shivering in Redmond Creek Cave

By Bill Walden

I planned to spend Labor Day Weekend at the COG cabin do some surveying in Redmond Creek Cave and help Greg and Angela with their house. Andy Franklin planned to meet me at Redmond Creek Sunday afternoon. So I spent Saturday helping Greg and Angela painting and putting up trim in their new house.

Sunday I drove over to Redmond Creek and set up a camp just outside the secondary entrance of Redmond Creek Cave. Once that was done I enjoyed a bit of lunch then entered the cave to take some pictures in the entrance area with the objective of preparing a series of pictures for a virtual cave trip. After expending my available film I exited the cave and waited for Andy who was driving up from the Nashville area.

My plan for Sunday afternoon was to continue the survey in Stream Cave. Kevin Toepke and I had surveyed Stream Cave the previous year and had quit the survey when it became a full belly crawl in water and it became impossible to keep my Brunton compass out of the water. Andy and I would stick with Silva and Suunto compasses. When I plotted Steam Cave I noted the survey ended near where the cave would intersect the Redmond Creek streambed again. I presume there should be an entrance. Further Kevin and I noted the water was warmer where we quit. So, I had promised Andy a warm, shallow water crawl.

Andy arrived soon, set up his tent, changed clothes and we set off for Stream Cave. The hike to Stream Cave follows a logging road, which follows the Redmond Creek dry creek bed. At one point the road cuts up the hill to avoid a nasty area in the streambed. I chose not to drive the road for fear of scratching the paint and damaging the plastic bumpers on my new style (wimpy) 4X4. (Plastic bumpers are kin to plastic Justrites – WORTHLESS!!!)

Stream Cave is in the Bangor limestone and as the name implies it has a stream flowing from the entrance. The stream comes out, flows a few hundred feet through the Redmond Creek streambed then cuts into the hillside and disappears into the Kidder limestone below the Hartselle formation of shale and sandstone. I presume this is the insurgence for Redmond Creek Cave. Andy and I examined the insurgence (sorry, place where the water enters the cave) and wondered if we might find a way into the cave.

There are at least a dozen examples of this phenomenon around the Redmond Creek Valley – really a giant sinkhole. Streams come out of openings or seeps at the base of the Bangor limestone, cross the Hartselle formation on the surface, then sink or enter openings in the Kidder limestone. Thanksgiving weekend I would like to visit these with a GPS and record the locations. Any helpers??

From the insurgence Andy and I waded the stream to the entrance of Stream Cave. Just inside the entrance is a wood dam. When Kevin and I surveyed the cave the backside of the dam was filled with gravel and sand. Water had broken through the base of the dam and much of the sand and gravel had been flushed out of the cave. I pointed out the connection to Joint Cave on the left. Indicating that Katie and I had made voice contact through the passage but no one had actually gone through. The map confirms that Joint Cave and Stream Cave are very like the same and the passages line up both horizontally and vertically.

We followed the upper passage into the cave. I commented that some people don't like the upper passage because of the many crossings of the lower stream passage. Andy seemed a little concerned about stepping over the canyon below. We made good time to the junction where I left a survey station. We started with a 100-foot shot. From there the ceiling became lower and we were in water. Andy took point and found himself in laying cold not warm water. He did not want to continue. I checked another route but it just came to the same point. I didn't remember the water being so deep or it being pooled. When Kevin and I quit we were in a slowly moving shallow stream. Andy and I exited the cave following the stream.

Rather than prepare a dinner of canned stew, Andy and I drove in to Monticello where we enjoyed dinner at an oriental restaurant next to Wal-Mart.

Monday morning we got up and prepared to enter the cave. I had prepared a Mylar notebook and had carpenter's crayons to mark the stations. I had also brought a hammer and chisel to mark our

final station. The weather forecast called for scattered showers and as we were planning to survey the water passage at the upstream end of Redmond Creek Cave, Andy and I decided to limit our time in the cave for the sake of safety. We set a limit of 1 hour in the water passage.

Andy packed his wetsuit and I my multiple layers of polypros into the cave. Arriving at the dry end of the stream passage we changed and layered. The survey station that Paul Unger and I had left at the beginning of the nearly water filled passage was easy to locate and we began our survey. Andy lost his Mag light and we could not find it. I had promised a walking passage with a foot of air. The foot of air was correct but the passage was now gravel filled and was a crawlway albeit an easy one. Progress was much slower than I expected. We were using the water level as a reference, putting our stations on the ceiling, and estimating left and right dimensions. At the end of our one-hour I started shivering and found it very difficult (impossible) to write in the notebook. We quit. Since I was too cold, Andy chiseled the final station into the ceiling. I exited the water watching carefully for Andy's Mag light. I didn't spot the Mag light. Once out of the water, I had a bite to eat. Andy soon joined me. He assured me that he had left and easy to find station. We planned to return the next weekend to continue the survey.

The next weekend we returned to Redmond Creek. Andy met me at our hose in Galena and we picked up Lacie Braley early Saturday morning and drove to the Eastway Market on KY 80 where we met Lee Florea. We transferred camping gear to Lee's car to make room for Lee and drove over to Redmond Creek.

Lee, Lacie and Andy packed their wetsuits into the cave and I packed my multiple layers of polypro into the cave. We changed clothes just before entering the water and made our way to the final survey station. We could not locate the station. In fact we couldn't locate any of the stations. I made several trips back and forth in the water passage looking closely but never did find Andy's chiseled station or any of the crayon marks. Water must have come up and erased our crayon marks. We took a best guess and began our survey. We were soon out of the water and on gravel shoals. The passage widened and at one point we were able to stand. We had been in the water for over an hour. Now out of the water I was trying to locate a good point station but my headlamp went out. I checked connections to the battery – OK. Had to be the bulb. I went to replace the bulb but because my hands were so cold I had a lot of difficulty trying to unscrew the retainer that holds the bulb. I held my hand to my mouth and blew warm breath through my cupped hands. Slowly that helped enough so that I was able to replace the bulb. Now with light again I realized that I was again shivering uncontrollably and decided that I had better get out of the water and warm up. Disappointed, I left the surveying to Lee, Andy and Lacie. (See Andy's report, Labor Day Labors, which follows this report.)

As I left through the water passage I watched for survey stations from the previous week. I never spotted one. I also watched for Andy's lost Mag light but did not spot that either. I did spot a red handkerchief that I assumed belonged to Andy – it did. Once in dry passage, I waited, had a bite to eat, and warmed up.

The others returned with tales of bigger passage. Redmond Creek Cave continues. Once home I plotted the survey and it does indeed continue south toward the resurgence.

After exiting the cave we dropped Lee off at Eastway Market and drove over to Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve for a 2001 NSS Convention planning meeting.

Lessons learned: 1) One absolutely needs a wetsuit with gloves for surveying in water filled passages! I'm now in the market for a wetsuit. 2) Gravel moves. 3) One needs to place a bolt for the last station in an active conduit.

Labor Day Labors

(Andy Franklin's version of the water passage survey.)

Redmond Creek – 3 & 4 Sep and 9 Sep 2000
By Andy Franklin

"Easy trip!" he said. "Just need T-shirt and coveralls!" "Big walking passage to (the) survey!" Then why the hell am I plastered against the ceiling in a sprawled crawl with not enough airspace to turn my head without dipping my face in the water?????

Thus began my re-introduction to caving after a two year absence...

Bill Walden and I met up at Redmond Creek Labor Day weekend. The goals were to survey in Stream Cave Sunday and big wet stuff in Redmond Monday. I had been at an event in Nashville Saturday and drove up Sunday morning from there.

Stream Cave is towards the south end of the valley on the opposite side of the main cave. It normally is dammed up to provide a water source, but the dam had leaked, leaving the cave reasonably dry. I chose to go with one less layer than I normally wear, since I have become more 'insulated' as I have gotten older. It was also a long hike to the cave in the 90-degree heat.

We quickly reached our objective, and were excited to immediately get a 95' shot. Visions of many feet danced in my head. It was a foolish thought....

As you can imagine, the passage got lower and lower, and we turned a corner and found a pool. Since I was point, I charged ahead, muttering obscenities as I crawled off into the cold water. I comforted myself knowing I could thaw out walking back to camp. We ended the survey after the single wet shot. The ceiling was getting lower and lower and things did not look hopeful. Bill tried another parallel route, but it appeared to end in the water, too.

On our way into town for dinner we stopped by the Koger house and talked with the landowner. He was in the process of building a rather large dam for a pond. I wonder if he is a COGer at

heart....? It is an ambitious project since the stream being dammed has not flowed in three years. He is rather handy with his D-6 bulldozer. Of course, being the dig person that I am, I was lusting after it....

Monday dawned with the sense of the unknown. I have never deliberately done a deep-water passage. I was starting to wonder why I bought that wetsuit at Convention a few years ago. Bill was going to attempt the survey in multiple layers of polypro and his cave suit. We quickly did the trek to the back of the cave. My wetsuit was in a backpack. Unfortunately, Redmond is much easier to navigate with a side pack, so I ended up carrying the pack in my hand most of the way.

We changed clothes on the beach. Bill had described this as chest deep water in walking passage. I thought he was taller than that, but I never have gotten off hands and knees there. The passage is a featureless oval tube about 10' across and 3-4' high. Airspace stayed at around 12-15". We did not worry about inclinations since we had vertical control with the water. The survey went slower than planned, and we stopped after an hour due to Bill getting severely chilled. We managed about 750' due to the great visibility for long shots. I chiseled the final station into the ceiling while Bill headed out.

Leaving the cave was tiresome due to the crawling while still wearing the wetsuit. I was an exhausted puppy by the time we left the cave, and did not look forward to the 500-mile drive home. However, I was hooked....

The next week we went back down to extend the survey with Lacie Braley and Lee Florea. The idea was to have two teams and leapfrog down the passage.

We went charging down the surveyed passage and could not find the last station after much searching. Bill chilled very quickly, confirming the need for a wetsuit and exited the cave. We decided to chisel the starting station and will tie the two surveys together at a later date. The Suunto that Lacie was using fogged really bad due to being soaked, and she then had trouble reading the Silva. So we essentially were back to a two-person survey!

We managed another 900', including one 155' shot. That is pretty impressive to a guy that usually only carries a 50' tape. When we stopped we had to crawl several sandbar - perhaps the end of the water. The air is screaming down the passage, and it was rather cold being wet in the moving air.

Believe it or not, I am looking forward to again pushing the water. It is amazing how comfortable it was in the wetsuit. I highly recommend one to everyone, rather than fighting the cold. I was also able to take advantage of the buoyancy and move through the crawlways fairly quickly simply by letting my feet float and pulling myself along with my hands.

These trips allowed me to remember why I cave. It's a whole bunch of fun! I've been away from it way too long.

Events

Halloween-O-Roast Saturday, October 14, 2000

In the tradition begun by the late Jake Elberfeld.

By Jim Blankenship

The 2000 Halloween-O-Roast is scheduled for 2:00 P.M. and a barbecue with brats and hot dogs will start around 6:00 P.M. I figured the auction could start sometime after dinner so as the later arrivals can participate. There will be hayrides, a bonfire, and telescopes set up; weather permitting. We plan to have a 10" reflector set up during the afternoon hours; equipped with a solar filter to observe sunspot activity. Deep sky objects will be a problem with the near full moon. Euchre is a possibility. A volleyball net will be set up and the ping pong room will be available.

Directions from Columbus: Take Rt. 23 south to the Circleville Rt. 56 East exit. This will take you thru downtown Circleville. Continue east on Rt. 56. You will come to a flashing red light six miles out of Circleville, which is Rt. 159. Continue east on Rt. 56 for about two miles until you come to Jackson Rd. Turn left and go north for about 3/4 of a mile. Our house is a beige cape cod with a white wrap around porch and sits about a thousand feet off the road. Take the gravel road leading up to and park in the back. The Blankenship's home phone is (740) 474-1040.

I plan on coming to the Friday the 13th meeting. See you there.

GROTTO AUCTION

By Karen Walden

Among the fun activities at Jim Blankenship's house will be a grotto fundraiser. Please bring donations of your "white elephants," and useful material (Not necessarily cave related) for the auction. In the past we had caving clothes and gear, slightly used books, maps, camping equipment, games, and souvenirs.

Please bring items for auction and \$ money \$ to buy some great stuff following dinner at the Halloween-O-Roast October 14th.

2000 Ohio Valley Region Conservation Project

From John Cole

Date: Saturday, November 4.

Time: 8:00 a.m. 'til dark.

Site: Leonard Springs Nature Park; Bloomington, Indiana.

Project: Hillside/roadside cleanup; some cave cleanup (Shirley Springs Cave).

Camping: Monroe County Fair Grounds, Friday through Sunday. There are toilets, showers...

Supplies: Provided.

Wear gloves, suitable clothing & footwear for steep hillsides, cool weather (probably); cave lights, helmets, kneepads, etc. (if you want to see the cave, but there's very little underground work).

More Info: John Cole (859) 245-3383; Kriste Lindberg (812) 339-7210.

Please mark you calendars for this event. The COG has supported these clean ups in the past and I hope that we continue to do so. Bill Walden, C.O.G. Squeaks Editor.

OVR Winter Meeting:

From John Cole

Date: Saturday, November 18.

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Site: Springdale Fire Dept, Springdale, Ohio.

(This is where we held the winter meeting last year, at Gary Taylor's hospitality. I am looking for a copy of the map to get there, but haven't dug it up yet. Directions will be included in Tuesday's mailing).

Major issue: 2001 Annual Conservation Project Site: Ohio. Still looking for suitable project site. Spread the word.

THANKSGIVING IN KENTUCKY

November 24 through 26, 2000.

By Bill Walden

Tom Crockett is hosting his annual Thanksgiving for cavers at his home in Sloans Valley. All COG members are invited. The Dinner usually starts around 6:00 p.m. Saturday. Tom reports that all his well with his family except his dad who has Alzheimer's disease.

Thanksgiving dinner at the Crockett's is a good time to mingle with other cavers who cave in the Pulaski County area.

Following dinner a bowl is passed to collect money to help pay for the dinner.

I plan to visit Redmond Creek Friday and hope to do an extensive surface survey of known entrances. I will need a GPS receiver. I hope that I can talk someone into bringing some. I would like very much to get more than one crew working and a photography crew also. My goal is to present Redmond at the US Exploration session during the 2001 NSS Convention.

Saturday trips might include helping Lee Florea and/or working the Farmers Cave System.

CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR UNDERGROUND

Help celebrate the coming of 2001 underground in Great Salt Petre Cave, Mount Vernon, Kentucky. Bill Carr hope this will

become a tradition for cavers New Years Eve. The campground will be open and the celebration will be held inside the cave.

Last year a large screen TV was set up in the cave and there was plenty of food and beverages.

Please plan to attend.

From our Chairman

Where have we been?

Where are we going?

Steve Aspery, Chairman COG

Bill asked me to write something inspirational for this issue of the Squeaks. I've been battling a cold, haven't been caving in months, and am not feeling all that inspirational. But as the soon to be outgoing Chairman, it is an interesting time to look at the Grotto. We are rapidly approaching our 50th year for Central Ohio Grotto and I wonder how many of our members have any awareness of the accomplishments of those that came before us. I also wonder what the future holds as people's lives get ever busier and caving competes for what is left.

Bill Walden, our eldest active COGer, is interested in compiling the history of the COG through interviews with the remaining early members of our group. This will be a great opportunity to meet and learn from the pioneers of our Grotto. But Bill needs help with this project. Bill has volunteered to Chair the sessions at the NSS convention next year and will soon be a frazzled ball of nerves with little extra time. If you are interested in the history of the grotto or have an interest or ability to interview people and compile facts, we could use your help. We'll be setting up a committee for this purpose at the next meeting and I hope that you will volunteer. Many of our favorite caves and systems were explored and mapped by the COG including Flint Ridge, Sloan's, Carter, Cave Creek, and many more.

Which brings us to the present. The Central Ohio Grotto remains a strong and involved grotto with plenty of projects and activities for anyone. Whether it is a conservation project, the formation of the Kentucky Speleological Survey, or even the NSS Convention, the COG is active in both numbers and leadership. We have several significant exploration and mapping projects underway and available to anyone who wants to participate, a strong contingent that participates in CRF, and a number of people who enjoy recreational trips and are willing to take someone along. But with all this opportunity we still struggle to find adequate people to go caving. I can't help but wonder why this is true. We participate in an exciting and interesting sport, we generally have a great time on our trips, and it remains one of the few true adventures available in our region. That people aren't trampling on us to go on trips seems amazing and the only

Minutes for 8/11/00

By Katie Walden

The meeting began with Lacie showing pictures of the tree that fell on her house and the damage done. Large branches were sticking through the ceiling from holes in the roof. Lacie has not had electricity for a month now and has a caving lamp hanging from her shower rod to light the bathroom.

Dick Maxey is the ranking officer present tonight.

Treasurer's Report: \$ 563.30

Boone Karst Committee: Rick Zimmerman has moved to Nashville and gave Ron Canini the info. Ron is now the chairman of the Boone Karst Committee.

Trip Reports:

Bill Walden, Darrell Adkins, and John Peterson surveyed a challenging passage in Redmond Creek— there's plenty more to do! One section is going southwest, another is going east. The canyon passages are two feet wide and thirty feet high.

Katie Walden, Dale Andreatta, and Katie's friend Jason went back into Redmond for a fun/photo trip. Jason had depth perception problems so we took him out of the cave. Dale and Katie explored east-end cave. We found one lead with lots of formations and a going lead with lots of air movement that got too tight for me, about seven and a quarter inches high.

Lacie went to Wolf River. Bruce says that Wolf River is gated now. The gate is in a bad position; it is visible from the road. Cristian Bobo has the key. The gate is also in the way of bats.

Lacie went to Smokehole last weekend in Rockcastle County. The name of that cave was found on the Internet and this upset the owner.

Cheryl visited Biosphere II and went underground to see the plumbing and all. Dick Maxey says that the Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson has a better cave exhibit than Cincinnati. The one in Tucson is longer and had tourists complaining about bumping their heads.

Squeaks Report: Bill Walden keeps the Squeaks to eight pages because mailing cost goes up if it is ten pages long.

Kentucky Speleological Society has been quiet this past month.

The presentation was a video of bat slides.

Minutes for 9/8/00

By Katie Walden

Treasurer's Report: \$563.20

Squeaks Report: There was no September Squeaks because there weren't enough articles, Bill Walden went caving, and his computer crashed.

Boone Karst: No news.

Kentucky Speleological Society: The articles of incorporation and bylaws have been finalized by the authors but not reviewed

conclusion that I can draw is lack of communication. This lack of communication exists both within our grotto and with those outside. We've all seen new or prospective grotto members attend meetings who fade away or never make more than one trip to a cave. We are a fairly tight group with plenty of eccentricities and I think that sometimes it is difficult to make new people feel welcome. I also wonder whether our proposed trips, particularly the project trips, intimidate those that might consider going along. Not knowing whether you might be headed for "The Passage from Hell" or a 15-hour marathon to the H survey might cause the timid (or sensible) to shy away from the trips that these apparent masochists lead. We might do ourselves a great favor by publicizing the nature of the trip and the details early and clearly.

As to communication with the outside, this is historically a touchy issue. We would all argue that increased traffic in caves degrades the cave. One extension of this would be that we therefore don't want to get more people involved in caving thus increasing the traffic. The challenge is balancing this with the need to have enough interested and able people to make up safe and effective teams for our trips. Even more difficult is finding people who are willing to make a commitment to caving with their time and energy. We don't need more tourists but we do need more cavers. Our group is split between a number of major projects that dilute our time and resources. I don't think that we can change that or that we should, but to maintain these efforts safely and effectively we need to have a large enough pool of people with time to go on the trips. So who are these people with time and energy and an interest in adventure? Most of our grotto is well over the age of 30 with family commitments, career, and all the trappings that come with age. The key I think is to find prospective cavers before they have settled into their lives and committed their time elsewhere. These are the people who are not yet 30, perhaps college age, and if they get involved now, caving will be a part of their life that they will include and work around as their schedules grow more hectic. We have no communication or contact with this group, particularly at OSU.

I offer this as food for thought, should we make an effort to gain greater exposure to this group of people? Granted they are generally less responsible and sometimes less trustworthy than our aged companions, but they do generally have time and energy to commit to something that interests them. I am so far removed from this group that I don't know what they do today. I suspect that many are involved in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits (former AYH). Perhaps we should make an effort to have a presence there so that those who show an interest in caving would be made aware of COG. I don't know the best way to accomplish communicating with the folks that we want, but I think that we should discuss and try some methods to see what happens. I know that we have been down this road before, and I understand that there have been issues and tension as a result, but I can't help but wonder if this might be the key to strengthening COG and ensuring it's success in the future. We are all getting older. Let the debate begin.

by an attorney. We need \$150 for attorney to review it. Dick Maxey moved to donate money to KSS for funding and will also move that CRF do the same. Seconded by Katie Walden. We voted to donate \$50 to KSS. Tentative date for next KSS meeting is October 21.

Nominating Committee: Darrel Adkins, Dick Maxey, and Steve Asbery

Halloween 'O Roast will be Saturday October 14 with a grotto auction. We will still have the regular meeting Friday the thirteenth.

Greg and Angela Erisman will be moving into their house by the end of the month. Bill Walden moves that we have a house-warming party for them, maybe Thanksgiving weekend.

Trip Reports:

Bill Walden went solo to Kentucky last weekend and helped Greg and Angela paint the house and set doors Saturday and went to Redmond Creek Sunday and met Andy Franklin there. They surveyed but didn't get far. Monday they surveyed the water passage until they got too cold and had about one foot of airspace. Bill Walden, Andy Franklin, Lacie Braley, and Lee Florea will continue the survey tomorrow afternoon. It is mostly hands and knees crawling.

OTR: report: Darrel Adkins; Alice Woznak; Katie Walden; Bruce Warthman; Don, Paul, Carl, Pam, and Annette Conover were all there. It was a fun and relaxing weekend. Don did get re-elected.

COG Mailing List as of October 8, 2000

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