

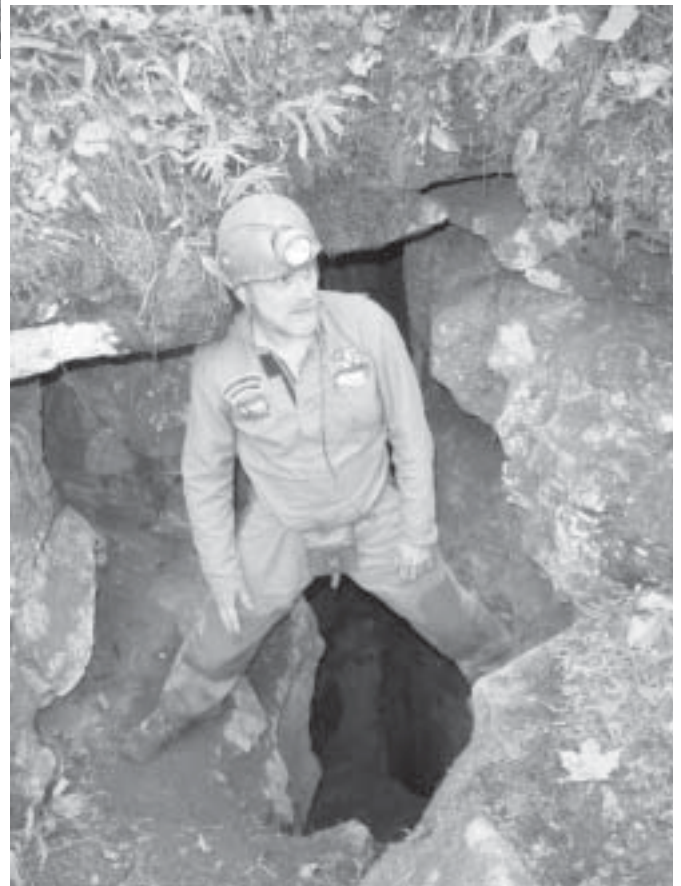
COG SQUEAKS

November - December 2006



**Two Days'
Work**

**OVR
Cleanup
Hits
Bottom**



The Central Ohio Grotto (COG)

The Central Ohio Grotto (COG) of the National Speleological Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Worthington Presbyterian Church on the fourth Tuesday of most months. The church is on the northwest corner of the intersection of High St. and Rt. 161 in Worthington. Parking is available behind the church. Enter the parking lot from the first side street on the right off Rt. 161. Please contact a grotto member to confirm meeting time and place. The December meeting is not held at the church.

COG Web page:www.tuningoracle.com/cog

**Grotto Membership Dues:
\$15 per individual or \$20 per family**

Grotto Officers	Name	Telephone
Chairman	Dale Andreatta	614 890-3269
Vice-chair	Bruce Warthman	614 459-8345
Secretary	Saundra Sklar	614 989-9463
Treasurer	Joe Gibson	614 855-7948
Exec. Committee	Lacie Braley	614 895-1732
Exec. Committee	Bill Walden	740 965-2942

Squeaks Editor -Lacie Braley LKcaver@cs.com
Webmaster - Kevin Toepke ktoepke@tuningoracle.com
List Server - cog@ontosystems.com

The COG Squeaks

The COG Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio . Articles regarding cave exploration and study, cave trips, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave-related cartoons, cave art or photographs are always welcome. Material may be submitted via mail or e-mail to the editor.

Lacie Braley
332 E Park St.
Westerville, OH 43081

The COG Squeaks is mailed to dues paying members and to grottos with which the COG exchanges newsletters.

Karst Calendar

- Nov. 28, 2006 COG Meeting
- Dec. 2, 2006 DUG Christmas Party
6:00pm @Travelodge,
Vandalia, OH
- Dec. 9, 2006: Christmas Party at PJ's in
Sunbury, 7:00pm - 9:00pm
(or later)
- May 31-June 3, 2007 Southeastern Regional
Association (SERA) Summer
Cave Carnival at Camp
Nakanawa, hosted by East
Tennessee Grotto.
- June 22-24, 2007 KOR 2007 at GSP
- July 23 - 27, 2007 NSS Convention in
Marengo, IN. See the con-
vention website at
www.nss2007.com for online
registration.

Contents

Karst Calendar	2
Small Team Completes Big Cleanup	3
History of Eastern Kentucky Karst	4
From the Editor	7
A Cave Trip Carol	8
COG Christmas Party info	10

Cover Photos by Bill Walden
Top - Two Days Work
Bottom: John Cole, Disappointment Pit

The DUG Christmas Party will be held at the
Travelodge Motel
75 Corporate Center Dr.
Vandalia, OH 45377
937 898-8321
For more info go to:
www.dugcaves.com/christmasparty.htm

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Small Team Completes Big Cleanup

By Dale Andreatta

On the weekend of Oct. 21 and 22, 2006 a small team of cavers from the Ohio Valley Region completed the cleanup of Disappointment Pit just up the hill from Redmond Creek Cave. The first half of this project was done in 2002. The pit is a 30-40 foot deep crack leading to a 1000-ft cave. The crack is narrow and sloping, and it can be free-climbed though most climbers prefer to have a safety line. In September 2002 it was probably 75% filled with trash, about half of which was removed at that time by a team of about 30 people.

On Saturday morning 10 cavers gathered. We looked at each other and said, "That's all?" but got to work anyway. The team included John Cole and Ken (last names not used when they are unknown) from Lexington; Bill Walden, Bruce Warthman, and me from COG; Kevin, Linda and Margaret from Wittenberg; and Andrea Dieffenbaugher and Ray Gillis from Ohio Cavers and Climbers. Linda and Margaret went to clean graffiti out of the main cave; Ray, John, and Bruce went to the bottom of the pit and started filling buckets and bags with trash, and the rest took up stations on the walls of the pit, usually not very comfortable stations. Buckets and bags would be pulled up on a rope, with some people pulling on the rope, some guiding the trash up through the narrow crack, and some emptying buckets into bags and moving bags around topside. John had the foresight to bring super-tough trash bags that could withstand being snagged repeatedly on the cave walls without tearing. Since I was most of the way down the crack-but just above the worst of the snag points-passing bags up over my head, I was personally quite grateful for this.

As trash goes it was fairly nice trash, probably because everything that could decompose and stink already had done so years before. At the start, we thought there was no way we could finish, but by the end of Saturday we had pulled up 38 bags of trash, plus 3 tires, 2 car batteries, some sheet metal, and a few other things. Mr. Koger, the landowner, stopped by and said he could bring a tractor with a wagon up to the top of the hill. This was an enormous help since the dumpster was at the bottom of the hill and many of the 38 bags were awkward, partially torn open, and well over 50 lbs. The haul team threatened the bottom team that if they didn't start putting less weight into the bags we would pull up the safety rope and leave them in the pit, but this didn't have much of an effect since the pit was climbable. They did eventually start making the bags lighter. The crack was

barely wide enough as it was to allow a bag of trash to pass, and even then only at the right angle, at the right spot. Again and again we were happy to have the tough bags.

On Sunday we started again with the OCC and Wittenberg people helping as much as they could before they had to leave. John and Bruce again had the hard jobs in the bottom of the pit. The others formed a small but efficient haul team, and at noon Mr. Koger showed up with the wagon. After a while John said that he estimated only 10 more bags of trash to go, and soon he announced there was nothing left but some "pickings" as he called them. The vast majority of the trash was gone! Success! Great satisfaction! Or at least great relief. We came up out of the pit, took pictures, and happily walked down the hill with the wagon, finishing the day by tossing the roughly 55 bags of trash plus other stuff into the dumpster.

Everyone stayed at Bill's house on Saturday and Karen Walden had a big batch of chili prepared for dinner. No one was injured except for a few scratches from the thorns. Very important when working in such an unclean environment. And remember, you just might be a redneck if you're even done a pit cleanup in Kentucky and said, "Hey, those tires'll fit on my truck."



Andrea at Work

photo by Bill Walden

History of Eastern Kentucky Karst

by Larry Simpson

~1 billion years BP: Collision of continents produces Grenville Mountains, predating the Appalachians and creation of the super-continent, Rodinia.

~750 my BP: Rodinia pulls apart creating rift valleys where the Mississippi Valley and Cincinnati Arch now lie. New Madrid fault is a present day remnant of this rifting. Rome trough graben-like structure is created below future parts of the Cumberland Plateau.

~430my BP: The gradual uplift of the Cincinnati Arch begins along a southwest axis in central Kentucky.

~360my BP: Allegheny Orogeny forms southern Appalachian Mountains as the north African coast of Gondwana drifts into the south coast of Laurasia eventually forming Pangia.

~350my BP: Mississippian limestone that will become future karst is deposited in a shallow inland sea.

~320my BP: Seas are replaced by periodic swamplands and deltaic outwashes of clastics that eventually will form coal beds, shale and sandstone cap rock of the Cumberland Plateau.

~5.7my BP: Upper levels of Bone Cave in Tennessee are abandoned.

~3.5my BP: Upper levels of Cumberland Caverns in Tennessee are abandoned.

~2.2my BP: Upper levels of Wolf River Cave are abandoned as the Cumberland River and its tributaries are downcut.

~2my+ BP: Teays River and Valley is formed draining Kentucky and Licking Rivers north into Ohio and possibly westward to Illinois or eastward into Pennsylvania.

~1.8my BP: Upper levels of Zarathustra Cave in Tennessee are abandoned as the Cumberland River and its tributary Obey River downcut.

~1.6my BP: Upper levels of Xanadu Cave are abandoned on the Obey River.

~900,000 years BP, quartz sediments are washed into Great Salt Peter and Sloans Valley Cave.

~70,000 to 18,000 years BP: a series of Pleistocene glacial advances and retreats destroy the Teays River valley, damming the Licking River and New Rivers and creating a 7000 square mile lake nearly 900 feet deep in parts of Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia, most likely

including the Carter Caves area. During maximum glaciation and minimum sea level, abundant melt waters allowed the Mississippi River to flow 100 feet deeper than present effecting other rivers of the Cumberland Plateau such as the Cumberland and Kentucky Rivers. The final retreat allows the present path of the Ohio River to form.

~10,000 to 35,000 years BP: Jaguars left tracks and remains in Jaguar Cave, Tennessee.

~10-12,000 years BP: Clovis point deposited near Cumberland River northeast of Nashville, Tennessee. Chert was mined in western Kentucky for Clovis points. Cumberland fluted points were made and distributed along the escarpment of the Cumberland Plateau, one later found in Sloans Valley Cave Entrance. Fire was used at a rock shelter in Jackson County. Flat head Peccaries, leave remains in caves of Rockcastle and Wayne Counties, Vero Tapir in Rockcastle County Cave.

~4500 years BP: Explorers using cane torches leave bare footprints in Jaguar Cave, Tennessee.

3000 years BP: Woodland period peoples domesticate native Kentucky plants.

2200 years before present: Adena culture builds mounds in Kentucky. Indigenous peoples use caves for water, habitation, burial, possibly for minerals and ritual.

1750 Dr. Thomas Walker crosses "Cave Gap" later called Cumberland Gap along an Indian and buffalo path into Kentucky that would become Wilderness Road. He describes the entrance to Cudjo's Cave found near the gap.

1754-1763: French and Indian War. Chickamauga Cherokee settled around the upper Cumberland in and around Burnside Kentucky, hold a war Counsel at the sacred Doublehead Cave vowing to hold their land against French and their Native allies from north of the Ohio. The French are defeated, but the celebrated War Woman, She Who Carries The-Sun is killed in Battle.

1775: In the Watonga Treaty (1774) and the Overhill Cherokee Treaty (Sycamore Shoals) (1775), the Cherokee sell all of eastern and central Kentucky north of the Cumberland to the Transylvania Land Company (Henderson Purchase). Daniel Boone cuts Boone's Trace through Rockcastle County and founds Fort Boonesboro on the banks of the Kentucky River.

1775-1781: American Revolutionary War.

~1789 Big Jake Troxell marries Corn Blossom, daughter of Chief Doublehead at Doublehead Cave.

1790: US Congress Declares war on Cherokee and other indigenous peoples of southeastern Kentucky.

Treaties signed in 1791 & 1795.
1792: Kentucky becomes a state.

1793: Fight between Indian raiding party from Ohio and settlers near Murder Cave, which is named for hostages killed.

1798, John Baker discovers Great Salt Peter Cave and becomes lost exploring it.

19th Century, Pioneers use caves for water, food storage, camping, salt petre: Salt Peter Cave, Carter County, Great Salt Peter Cave and Teemer's Cave in Rockcastle County, Sloans Valley and Peter Pit in Pulaski County, and numerous others on a smaller scale, reaching pinnacle of production during the war of 1812. Whiskey brewed from springs along the Cumberland.

1801: mining begins in GSP (Great Saltpetre Cave).

1805: Dr. Samuel Brown, Saltpeter entrepreneur, buys GSP. The following year he writes of several peter caves in Jackson and Rockcastle Counties including Kinkaid's Cave, later called Great Saltpetre.



Looking toward Echo Auditorium in Great Saltpetre Cave L. Braley

SQUEAKS

1806: Doublehead (Chuquilatague) cedes the final of ten million acres of Cherokee land in Wayne and McCreary Counties outraging many of the Cherokee, possibly resulting in his assassination as a traitor by the faction led by Kahnungdatlagueh.

1810: Massacre of Cherokee women and children at Yahoo Falls (near Eureka Cave) marks the final dispersal of Cherokee in Kentucky. Corn Blossom mortally wounded. Big Jake Troxell thought dead but escapes.

1811-1812: New Madrid, several earthquakes occur near the westernmost tip of Kentucky. Thought to be greater than a magnitude of 8, they are said to have caused the Mississippi to flow backwards.

1818: Luke Munsell produces the first official map of the state of Kentucky showing caves and karst features.

1832: Naturalist Constantine Rafinesque catalogues and describes Kentucky caves and their fauna including two from Rockcastle County.

Mid-1800's to mid-1900's Short Creek Spring is location several grist mills over the years. Settlers begin exploring caves for pleasure.

1870-1910: Timber boom strips most old growth forest from Kentucky causing sediment influx and increased flooding in many caves.

1873: Cholera epidemics in Kentucky likely due to contaminated water (and cave springs).

1877: USGS geologist C. J. Norwood first describes geologic strata in Rockcastle County.

1888 A.L. Packard Jr. investigates fauna of Carter County caves.

1896, Oligonunk Caverns in Carter City may have been the first commercial tourist cave in the region.

1930's: attempt made to commercialize Stab Cave (AKA Taylor Salt Peter).

1937: Daniel Boone Forest is created (originally called Cumberland forest.)

1939: Renfro Valley Barn Dance is broadcast from Great Saltpetre Cave on CBS radio.

1940-1942 Clyde A. Mallot & Floyd C. Mallott survey more than 7.5 miles Sloans Valley Cave connecting Minton Hollow Cave to the commercial section then called Cumberland Caverns.

1941: Construction begins on Wolf Creek Dam, which will contain waters of the Cumberland River flooding many caves including parts of Sloans Valley, Cave

Creek, Coral and Wells Cave as well as the old city of Burnside, once a trading center of the Cherokees

1949: Alabama biologist, J. Manson Valentine visits a number of caves in Pulaski & Wayne Counties with Pulaski County Geologist, Woodson Diamond, and publishes a paper on cave beetles (1952).

1950: W. R. Jillson and students from Transylvania College in Lexington, survey lower levels of Sloans Valley (the commercial section then called Crystal Cave).

1954: McGrain publishes *Geology of Carter and Cascade Caves*.

1957: Fort surveys Blowing Cave in Wayne County possibly the first cave survey in that County. Ralph Ewers, Tom Klekamp, Paul Howeler, Al Geiser and others form the Cincinnati Speleological Society, exploring and surveying caves in Carter County among others. The group, associated with the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History also made a cave movie in Carter County Bat Cave that was aired on a Cincinnati TV program. The group formed the first Kentucky Cave Survey and began third survey of Sloans Valley Cave (known then as Tater Cave). In 1963 they form the Greater Cincinnati Grotto (GCG) Thomas C. Barr Jr. begins investigation of cave fauna of Eastern Kentucky. Ewers & Barr begin long-term beetle study in Stab Cave.

1959: T. C. Barr and Roy Davis explore Eureka Cave in McCreary County. Joe Voigt & COG members survey Jarvie Roark's Cave and others of Tygarts Valley in the 50's and early 60's.

1962: University of Texas Grotto Members, Thomas Costello and William Russell visit Rockcastle, and Pulaski Counties surveying Great Salt Peter, Sinks of Roundstone and Pine Hill Caves and exploring many more. They also visit Sinking Valley caves in Pulaski County. Tom Barr and others found the Blue Grass Grotto (BGG).

1966: GSP commercialized. A group of Boy Scouts from Cincinnati, Ohio begin the first survey of Wells Cave, mapping 15,000 feet. Philly Grotto cavers explore several caves and in Pulaski County including Slavey Pit.

1967: Wayne White publishes *Speleography of Great Saltpetre Cave*.

1968-1970: Emergency grouting of Wolf Creek Dam is credited with saving the dam, but does not solve the problem, cavernous limestone bed rock below the dam.

1969: Dave Beiter begins the fourth survey of Sloans Valley Cave and is joined by Lou Simpson who spearheads efforts by Columbus Ohio Grotto (COG) and the Blue Grass Grotto (BGG) surveying more than 24 miles,

the longest in the Cumberland Plateau. Cavers from GCG explore multiple entrances in Hound Hollow that will eventually be surveyed as Coral System, the second longest cave survey of the Cumberland Plateau. The Coral Cavers will eventually be joined by DASS surveying the cave with additional help of COG & Cleve-O Grotto. Sinkholes for in embankment of Wolf Creek Dam on Lake Cumberland "due to the karst geology of the site characterized by an extensive interconnected network of solution channels in the limestone foundation."

1970-1980: Cog surveying in Pulaski & Wayne Counties, DASS surveying Pulaski, Buck Creek; GCG surveying in Rockcastle, BGG surveying in Rockcastle Jackson, Pulaski & Wayne Counties. Ken Tankersley surveys Caves of Jackson County.

1972: G. Odell & J. Rebmann publish *Caves of Rockcastle County*. Beiter & Cooper report discovery of blind cave fish in Sloans Valley Cave. Coral/DASS cavers begin 2nd survey of Wells Cave that will eventually exceed eleven miles. Ewers completes Masters thesis for the University of Cincinnati using data and photos from Coral, Wells and Sloans Valley Caves.

1973: SWORCA (South West Ohio Regional Caving Association) discover the Miracle Mile in Goochland beginning a survey that will add five miles to the two previously mapped in the longest cave surveyed in Rockcastle County. Werner Jud and SWORCA Cavers discover Blind cave fish in Coral.

1974: Cave Run Lake is completed by Army Corps of Engineers. Miami Valley Grotto forms.

1975-77: A concrete diaphragm wall is constructed at Wolf Creek Dam to prevent undermining by bedrock karst features. Feb. 9 1977, Lake Cumberland reaches low level during construction (677.85 ft), opening many submerged passages previously below the lake.

1979: Thomas Barr and Donald Harker Jr. publish *Caves and Associated Fauna of Eastern Kentucky*.

1980s-90 Cavers fight to prevent a proposed garbage landfill draining into Sloans Valley. Cavers Speleologists and local groups testify at hearings. BGG & MVG surveying in Long Hollow & SV Systems.

1981: Lake Cumberland reaches lowest level since being impounded (686.61 ft.) allowing Mike Johnson to make previously sumped Coral and Dave's Cave connection solo.

1983: Jon Thompson & cavers from Pulaski County and Cumberland College form the Lake Cumberland Speleological Society. They resurvey (Pulaski County) Wind Cave finding new passage.

A flash flood in Rockcastle County traps GCG cavers in Precinct 11 Cave. Dr. Horton Hobbs & WUSS survey SaltPeter Moon System and other caves in Carter County.

1984: (5/13) Big Flood in Pulaski & Wayne Counties, eight-inch rain raises Lake Cumberland to highest level ever (751.7), flooding Coral & Wells Caves and many others to new heights. Doc Daugherty and MVG surveying Ranch Cave and Big Sink in SV.

1985: Percy (Doc) Dougherty edits *Caves and Karst of Kentucky*.

1986 Attempt made to get permit to strip mine Long Hollow, permit withdrawn 1987. Strip mines above Hail Cave and Pourover Cave.

1989: Great Saltpetre Preserve is formed.



Cave Entrance in Sinking Valley

L. Braley

1990-2000: GCG surveying Rockcastle County Caves. COG, GCG, MVG & others survey Black House Mountain Caves.

1998: Plans announced to build I-66. The proposed preferred route would take the interstate through prime karst including Wells and Coral Caves. Lee Florea alerts cavers and a loose coalition of cavers and environmentalists are formed to challenge the proposed route (Kick-66). Cavers and hydrologists critique karst aspect of the plans.

1999-2000: Partly in response to I-66 and other ecological threats, regional Grottos, project cavers and the Kentucky Geological Survey form the Kentucky Speleological Survey to house maps and GIS data and to inform state planners of karst locations. Lee Florea and others begin surveying other caves in the possible alignment including Kneeshredder, forming the Shreddites survey group.

June, 2000: the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet scraps plans for the southern alignment over Wells and Coral

Caves and initiates a new study of possible alignments to the north.

August 2001: NSS Convention is held at Great Saltpetre Cave. Hydrologic field trip tours Sinking Valley. Jason Gulley begins series of sump dives and surveys in Short Creek, Sinking Valley and Coral Cave along with Sam Freshour, Steve Keene and Sue Sharples.

2002: Planning stage for the Northern Bypass of I-66 around Somerset begins. Business and political leaders convince the KYTC to move I-66 further north, possibly threatening the Sinking Valley System. Lee Florea, Jason Gulley and others begin surveying caves of Sinking Valley with a grant from the NSS.

2003: Jim Helmbold, a DASS Caver, donates land including two entrances to Wells Cave to the NSS for a preserve. Chris Johns and Larry Simpson film *The Caves of Sinking Valley* to document caves in the I-66 corridor.

2004: Preliminary Karst identification for the I-66 proposed corridors between Somerset and London is begun by consultant, Gannett-Fleming. Geologists identify karst features. Biological survey of caves by Dr. Julian Lewis begins. Bat survey by Price Sewell is begun.

2005: Jim Currens and the Kentucky Geological Survey begin a dye trace study of karst in the proposed I-66 corridors for the KyTC. KGS surveys Light Hole Cave.

2006: Preliminary phase for plans to pour a new grout curtain into bedrock 25 feet below Cumberland Dam to prevent failure of dam. New waterpark in Somerset damaged by sinkhole collapse shortly after the park is opened.

From the Editor

Well, my second issue of the Squeaks has been much easier to put together. Mainly because people sent articles for it. Thanks Dale and Larry! I'm already accepting items for the next issue, everyone...hint, hint. I know lots of people go caving at Thanksgiving and New Year's...

The COG Christmas Party is coming up at PJ's in Sunbury, OH. I hope to see lots of cavers there and lots of creative gifts in the gift exchange. I wish you all a Happy and safe Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Lacie
Squeaks editor

A Cave Trip Carol

A Fractured Version of the Classic Tale by Charles Dickens

Once upon a time, on one of the happiest days of the year, Cave Trip Eve, old Ebenezer Scoop sat busy with his laptop. It was cold, bleak, biting weather. The numbers on his digital watch had only just passed three but it was dark already. Scoop kept a careful eye on his assistant, Bob Crackedd, who sat at a broken down desk straining to see the blurry writing on his monochrome computer screen.

Meanwhile, outside the fog and darkness thickened and the cold became intense. Co-workers in the hallway passed each other and joyously called out "Happy Cave Trip!"

"Bah, Humbat!" said Scoop.

Eventually, 5:00PM arrived and Bob Crackedd instantly put on his parka. "You'll want tomorrow off, I suppose?" said Scoop.

"If convenient, sir." Came the reply. "Well, it's not! But go ahead. Be here two hours earlier the next day!" snarled Scoop as he departed.

Once home, Scoop heated a Healthy Choice dinner on the microwave and spent the evening surfing the Internet. Scoop lived in the cramped apartment that had once belonged to his long dead caving buddy, Jacob Farlead.

As he stared at the screen saver he thought for a moment he saw Farlead's face. Then, shaking his head, once again he saw only the Mona Lisa. Scoop walked through the apartment and everything appeared to be in place. Nobody was under the table or the sofa or the bed. Satisfied, he sat down in front of his Sony flat screen TV. Suddenly, he heard thumping down below, as though someone was dragging a heavy chain. The stairwell fire door flew open with a BANG and the thumping became louder. And closer...and closer...

"It's Humbat!" said Scoop. "I won't believe it!"

Without pause, something came through the apartment door and into the room. Farlead's Ghost! The ghost carried a decrepit cable ladder, its length tangled with hammers, ascenders and even a couple of shovels.

"Who are you?" stammered Scoop.

"In life I was your friend, Jacob Farlead."

"Humbat, I tell you, humbat!" said Scoop.

At this the spirit let out a roar, shaking the metal ladder.

"Mercy," said Scoop. "Why do you trouble me?"

"Everyone," the ghost replied, "is required to explore life. If they do not explore life they are doomed to wander the world after death and witness what they cannot share. That which they might have shared on Earth and turned to happiness."

**You will be visited
by three spirits**

"I wear the ladder forged in life. I gave up caving to watch Nascar. I came to warn you. You can escape my fate. You will be visited by three spirits. Expect the first tonight when your watch beeps once. The second will come tomorrow at the same hour and the third the next night at twelve beeps." The spirit faded away.

Unable to form the word humbat, Scoop went to bed and slept. He awoke and looked fearfully at the clock radio - 12:59 - no - 1:00AM! Light flashed in the room. Scoop found himself face to face with a wizened barefoot Native American carrying a cane torch.

"I am the Spirit of Cave Trips Past," he said. "Rise and walk with me."

With those words they passed through the wall and stood in a beautiful, glistening cave passage. At the end stood three cavers, each in awe of the glorious walls.

"Why it's Fossilbig! Bless his heart, my first caver friend. He taught me to chimney!" exclaimed Scoop in delight. "No rest tonight, guys," said Fossilbig. "We've a lot to survey!" Suddenly the scene changed. Again Scoop stood in a cave, this time with a young girl. "I matter little to you," she said. "You love computers more." "Spirit," sobbed Scoop brokenly, "take me away from here! I cannot bear it!" Scoop was conscious of being exhausted and once again in his own bedroom. He sank into a heavy sleep and awakened in the middle of a huge snore. Frightened, he awaited the arrival of the second spirit. Click! The room lit up as if from lights hidden by small rock piles. Before him stood a man dressed in a Park Service uniform. "I am the Ghost of Cave Trips Present," said the spirit. "Stay on the trail!" "Spirit," said Scoop, "lead me where you will." Off they went to Bob Crackedd's house. Inside, all was busy as the family prepared for the cave trip dinner. "Happy Cave Trip to all," Bob toasted. "Cave softly, everyone!" said Tiny Tape Tim as he sat weakly in his chair. "Spirit," said Scoop, "tell me if Tim will live to cave again." "I see an empty helmet," replied the ghost, "and in the corner a pack without an owner, carefully preserved. If the future remains unchanged the child will die." Scoop's watch beeped twelve. The ghost was gone. At the last beep Scoop looked up and saw a solemn wetsuit clad phantom approaching him. "Are you the Spirit of Cave Trips Yet to Come?" asked Scoop. "You are to show me shadows of events yet to happen? Lead on, Spirit." The phantom glided to a gloomy graveyard and pointed to a neglected headstone. Scoop trembled as he read the graffiti covered rock. "EBENEZER SCOOP"

SQUEAKS

"NO, Spirit! No! No! Spirit hear me! I am not the man I was! Tell me I may change the shadows you have shown me! I will honor cave trips in my heart. I will remember these lessons! Tell me I may sponge away the graffiti on the stone!"

Scoop held up his hand in one last plea and the wetsuit clad phantom dwindled away. Scoop was home in his own room.

"I will remember the past, present, and future. Thank you, Jacob Farlead!" shouted Scoop. "But I don't know what day it is!"

So he flipped open his cell phone to see.

"I've got time!"

Quickly Scoop donned his old cave gear and headed to the nearby cave that the Crackedd family frequented.

"Happy Caving to you, Bob! He told his stunned assistant. "Take tomorrow off, too, so your family can enjoy this fine cave!"

Scoop was true to his word. He returned to caving and became known for introducing many people to caving and surveying. As for the Crackedd family, Tiny Tape Tim received the medical treatment he needed and became a famous cave biologist. Through it all his favorite phrase remained...Cave Softly, Everyone!

The End

Happy Holidays!

I wrote this version of Charles Dickens' great story as part of a Christmas Party gift exchange at the first COG Christmas Party I attended. When I wrote it, I didn't realize that the recipient of my gift would have to stand up and read the entire story out loud for the whole group of partiers. Luckily for me, Karen Walden chose my gift and did a great job of portraying the characters in the story. When I pulled out the story for the newsletter, I did a little bit of updating to the new century. I hope you enjoyed reading the story as much as I did "writing" it.

Lacie Braley

It's time once again for the

COG Christmas Party!

December 9, 2006 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at PJ's in Sunbury, OH

It's time once again for the COG Christmas Party. We're heading back to PJ's in Sunbury this year. Of course, there'll be food - pizza and subs usually - and drinks- soft and beer. There is a cost for the party - about ten to twelve dollars each.

And don't forget about the COG gift exchange. It's a little different from other gift exchanges. It's the usual bring a gift, get a gift set up but the gifts are not necessarily "regular" gifts. The idea is to create a caver related gift that may or may not really be useful in a cave. (Although the recipient is supposed to use their gift on their next cave trip...) Some past gifts include:

Cavers in a Can - a stuffed doll survey team in case you can't find anyone to go surveying.

The Super Sure Grip Climbing Kit - gloves, kneepads, and boxers with suction cups attached.

The Giant Carbide Lamp Reflector - made from a round plastic sled, complete with a brick counterweight for the helmet.

A Duct Tape Purse

An Elastic Two Pocket cave Pack (bra)

the list goes on and on...

These gifts all come with instructions. The instructions are read aloud by the recipient as they open their gifts and are often funnier than the actual gift.

Oh yeah, regular gifts are okay, too. Last year the gift I picked turned out to be a headlamp. I really have used it on my cave trips all year.

So mark your calendars and come to PJ's on Saturday, December 9th at 7 PM!

Directions to PJ's: From Columbus go north on I-71 to the Sunbury Exit (Rt. 36/37). Go east on Rt. 36 for about 3 miles. PJ's is on the right. (If you get to Rt.3, you've gone too far.)



New! from Real Caver

Pick the big one!

MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE!



*Congratulations!
You are now the proud
owner of...*

