

COG SQUEAKS

June 2007



Neelys Creek Lower Cave Entrance Passage

Bill Walden

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
lkcaver@wowway.com

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

Karst Calendar

June 26, 2007 COG Meeting

JULY COG MEETING CANCELLED

July 18-21, 2007 NSS PreConvention in Orange County, Indiana, hosted by the St. Joseph Valley Grotto. See the website at www.caves.org/grotto/sjvg/preconvention/Default.htm for details and registration.

July 23 - 27, 2007 NSS Convention in Marengo, IN. See the convention website at www.nss2007.com for online registration.

August 17 -19, 2007 16th Annual Wormfest Lewisburg, WV. Sponsored by the Dayton Underground Grotto

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**July COG Meeting Cancelled
(due to NSS Convention...)**

Cover Photo by Bill Walden

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Help Wanted!

Greetings fellow cavers!

I am looking for **volunteers** to assist with several project going on at **Carter Caves State Resort Park** in northeastern Kentucky during the period of **June 22 through July 8**. We are **replacing three gates** on Saltpetre Cave, **building two new ones, downloading dataloggers**, doing **a little digging and rock removal, photodocumenting** the work, and managing an environmental consulting company performing **geoprobng** over a closed entrance to the cave. We especially need help during the first part of the project in order to move all the steel and equipment and set up, although volunteers are needed throughout. **Camping is available** at the Park, and there are several motels nearby. We'll try to **provide lunch** each day for any volunteers that help out. If you have questions or need more details, contact me directly and not to the group. If you think you will be attending, please **drop me a line to let me know who is coming and for what dates**. This really helps me plan for meals and also to see what days we might be a little short on help.

I thank you, and the caves thank you.

Jim "Crash" Kennedy

Cave Resources Specialist, Bat Conservation International

jkennedy@batcon.org

512-327-9721 work

512-663-BATS cell

Please feel free to announce this at grotto meetings, post on websites, reprint in newsletters, or forward to other lists that I may have overlooked.



Bat Buddies

L. Braley

SQUEAKS

Breaking In

Folks

I wrote this in 2002 yet it makes sense to repost today. The issues between new members joining and old crusty F**ks is neither new, nor limited to grottos and caving. Regardless, it is something that BOTH sides need to think about and try to solve. Without the old members the history and the traditions die. Without the new, the grotto dies!

Breaking In

It seems like I have been in the grotto forever. But I do remember what it was like to join the grotto for the first time. It was scary and hard, nobody would talk to me, and it seemed like it took forever to get noticed and invited to things.

But eventually it got a little better. People remember your face. They ask what you have been up to. You get invited to trips. Soon you are watching new people and you realize - you are in!

New members are the lifeblood of any organization, more so with caving, as we seem to loose so many people after about 5 years. I was thinking about it for a few days and decided to write a few notes on Breaking in, or how to not only join, but also become PART of the grotto.

Becoming a part of a grotto is a little harder then most clubs. I think it is because the club is really only there to support the activity of caving (in all different ways). But all comes down to the caving and getting known so you can go out on trips. And the nature of caving is such that we tend to stay within our known groups of friends when we go out caving. These notes are not sure-fire, but they are something to try.

Get out and Meet people!

Find someone you would like to cave with. Introduce yourself and tell them you would like to cave with them and ask about their projects. Share your experiences so that they understand your skills. If you don't have a lot of experience, don't gloss it over, be honest. Keep at it. To many of us seem to get into a rut, caving with the same people over and over, because we are comfortable with them. We tend not to think about others who can make the trip, but

if you can get them to know you - they will think of you when planning a trip. Ask for an email and drop a note occasionally to see what is up.

Many people will not go out of their way to invite newcomers, but they will not avoid them either!

Volunteer!

One of the best ways to get to know people is to volunteer for something - there are ALWAYS jobs available. You can be on a committee, volunteer to clean up at GSP, help with the openhouse or Karst-O-Rama. All too often it is the same group of people over and over. When someone new shows up, people notice. And groups that work well together often cave together.

So volunteer, even if it is a crappy job - and try your best!

Go On Grotto Trips

That's why we plan them and announce them. We are hoping to get new people in these trips! Too often new folks are intimidated and don't go. Don't be. If you have the skills, join in!

Build Skills

We are always running courses in caving skills. Vertical caving, survey, map making, ridgewalking, all kinds of things. Taking classes to build you skills helps in two ways:

First, you are building skills that help you be a better caver. People are going to invite others that they know can complete the trip. Being skilled means that you are a competent caver, and people will recognize you as a good caver to have on a trip.

Also, building skills works because you get into a small group with other cavers. The more people start to really meet people (and I don't mean just at meetings), the easier it will be to find caving partners (same goes for the volunteer thing above).

Don't Be Obnoxious/Demanding

Caving Grottos are a loosely knit group of friends that are all interested in some way in caves and caving. Come in looking to make friends!

Being loud and obnoxious will turn off the very people you want to get to know. Demanding to be lead on trips, or demanding cave locations because you are a 'member of the club' is the quickest way to find yourself with neither. There is no rule that the grotto HAS to oblige everybody.

Most long time cavers have been caving with the same people for years because we have built up friendships and know we can depend on them in a pinch. While you don't have to be a friend to be invited on a trip, being unfriendly is a sure way NOT to be invited. That's why it is so important to build up relationships and make connections by doing some of the things I have outlined above

That's it really. I can sum it up in three short ideas:

- Build your skills
- Get involved in any way so you can meet people and make friends
- Take your time and be cool.

All of us were new at one time or another and we know how it is. But cavers are some of the best folks around. When you become friends - you have someone you can trust for a long time! It doesn't take to long if you are trying!

Howard Kalnitz



Lower Cave Entrance from Rim

Bill Walden

The Caves of Neely's Creek

Pulaski County, Kentucky

By Bill Walden

Surveyors:

Bill Walden

Bruce Warthman

Dale Andreatta

Jim Greer

John and Tama Cassidy

Louis Simpson introduced me to Neely's Creek Cave in the early 1970's. We explored the cave but did not survey it at that time. Neely's Creek is a short distance east of the Sloan's Valley Cave. This little karst valley has five caves:

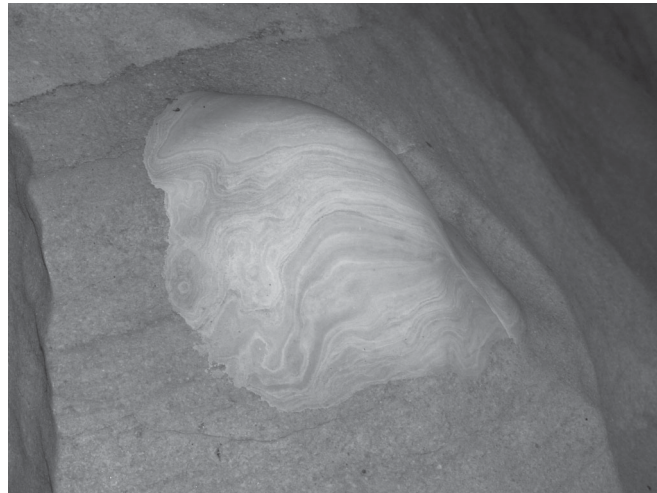
- * The lake cave which empties into Lake Cumberland. At the moment neither entrance is open. The upper entrance is blocked by sand, gravel, and organic debris and the lake entrance is still under water.
- * The lower cave, which is normally under the water of Lake Cumberland, is now totally exposed. This cave has been surveyed.
- * The middle cave is also normally under water and it too is totally exposed. This cave has been partly surveyed. Now that the stream level is low, we should be able to complete it.
- * The upper cave or Neely's Creek Cave is always above the highest level of Lake Cumberland. The resurvey of this cave is in progress.
- * A Bangor cave supplies water to Neely's Creek above Neely's Creek Cave. Two streams meet inside the entrance of this cave and cut through the Hartselle formation to continue underground. This cave has not yet been explored by me or anyone else as far as I know.



Blue Hole

Bill Walden

The resurgence of the lower cave, a karst window, and the upper entrance of the lake cave are in a sinkhole locally known as the Blue Hole. People who live in the area say the Blue Hole is one of the best places for fishing. Most of the people in the area were not aware of the caves in the Blue Hole. Some were aware of the caves from stories told by their grandparents.



Lower Cave Dissolved Stalagmite

Bill Walden

The Lower Cave

We have surveyed 1030 feet of passage in the lower cave. This cave has two parts. Part one is what I call the main passage. One enters a huge 70-foot wide by 20-foot high opening which narrows to a stream canyon toward the back. To get from the entrance to the entrance canyon, one must wade through a waist deep pool. In the entrance canyon one can see remains of stalactites and stalagmites that have been partly dissolved by the waters of Lake Cumberland. Some are really pretty to look at. On some of the stalagmite stumps, one can see the growth rings. As one travels upstream in the canyon the floor gradually comes up close to the ceiling and one has to stoop walk. Just before the first junction room a stream comes through a small tunnel on the right side. This little stream is partly draining the second part of the cave, the canyon passage.

At the first junction room one can take a belly crawl straight ahead. This crawl splits and both sections become filled with gravel to the ceiling. To the right is a stoop walk passage with a small stream and pools. This too is draining the canyon passage. The stoop walk leads to the second junction room. To the right is low belly crawl that drains the canyon passage. Straight ahead is an other belly crawl that also leads to the canyon passage. One can see through but neither of these passages have been surveyed. To the left is a third belly crawl that leads to the third junction room. One can stand up in the third junction room. To the right one can

climb a sloping rock up to a hands and knees crawl that leads to the canyon passage. Turn right in the canyon passage and you soon come to a huge dome pit with a huge flowstone formation on the left wall. This canyon passage is the second part of the cave and it has a stream, which is totally separate from Neely's Creek. Continuing on past the dome one comes to the canyon drain. Water from the canyon passage is the same water flowing from the huge entrance of the lower cave. Continuing past the drain one comes to a 7-foot high water fall that is easy to climb. On past the waterfall one comes to a second dome from which the water cascades down the right wall. There is a large lead from which the water cascades down. The climb will have to be bolted to continue.

One can continue in the canyon passage which finally terminates in breakdown. In the breakdown room one can find salamanders, cave crickets, bats, and some raccoon tracks. Bruce and I could not find anyway for a human to continue but obviously some smaller mammals (coons) can.

Back to the third junction room if one goes straight the main passage continues as a belly crawl over gravel and rocks. This passage winds around for a hundred feet or more before coming to the forth junction room. To the left one can climb up a slope then stand upright. One is at the base of the canyon passage again. Climbing up further and back tracking in the canyon passage, one comes to an overlook where one can look down into the first entry point into the canyon. Returning to the climb up from the forth junction room but still in the canyon there is a passage to the right that is a branch of the canyon. This leads to a series of rimstone pools. The water flows in the direction you are traveling and then the stream rounds a tight bend where one can hear the water crashing to a lower level. The bend is too tight to get through.

Returning to the junction and following the canyon one gets to a breakdown room and then a pit. The pit is where the water from the rimstone branch of the canyon falls to the stream level below. The stream below is Neely's Creek.

Returning to the forth junction room one can continue the belly crawl which alternately is now hands and knees and a belly crawl. This crawl leads to a place where one can see Neely's creek on the left and then up and over a gravel hill where one finally comes to Neely's Creek inside the cave. From this point on, one is doing a hands and knees crawl or stoop walk for a few hundred feet in water to the rear entrance where Neely's Creek enters the cave.

Neely's Creek flows into the lower cave and follows the main passage before turning off through very low level crawls – too low to follow. It can be heard from a karst window in the Blue Hole before the water continues on to the lake.

So, there are two totally separate streams in the lower cave; the one which originates in the canyon passage and flows out the gapping entrance, and Neely's Creek which flows into the rear entrance of the lower cave and midway through takes off through very low gravel crawls. These crawls are too low to survey.

Exiting from the rear entrance one finds himself in a nice surface stream. But, the stream doesn't stay on the surface for long. About 300 feet upstream Neely's Creek emerges from the middle cave.

The Middle Cave

The middle cave has four entrances; the resurgence, an overflow entrance, a karst window, and the upper entrance into which Neely's Creek flows.

The resurgence of the middle cave is a very pretty little walk in entrance with blue-green, clear water. Inside the entrance there are 3 ways to go; to the left is a small stream passage that one can follow for about 100 feet before it becomes too difficult to continue, to the right and then left is the main Neely's Creek stream, and to the right is a dry walking passage that goes to an overflow entrance, which opens out onto the stream flowing from the middle cave to the lower cave.

Dale Andreatta and I surveyed part of this little cave. We started with the resurgence and the side passages and continued upstream. We were blocked by a narrow place where total emergence in the stream was required. Since we were already cold, we terminated the survey and exited the cave and reentered at the karst window. We surveyed downstream to within a few feet of where we had stopped then started up stream from the karst window. A couple hundred feet in we were blocked by breakdown so we exited and reentered the upper entrance and surveyed down stream until total emergence in the stream was required. Now that Neely's Creek is way down and the water is a bit warmer, we may want to complete this survey.

Neely's Creek Cave

Neely's Creek Cave has been surveyed at least twice before but I do not believe the previous surveys to be complete. The map, that I have seen, shows a straight through survey from the resurgence to the upper

entrance.

The entrance has a nice bubbly cascade coming over the boulders of the collapsed entrance. One can enter the cave above and to the right of the cascading water. Once inside one is in a low sand and gravel hands and knees crawl. Neely's Creek is on the left side of the room. Continuing one has to climb up and over some breakdown to enter a breakdown room, travel across this room and then climb back down to the stream level through breakdown. At the stream level one has to climb up and over breakdown until coming to some small waterfalls. The first two on the left take you to the Meringue Crawl. Imagine a 100-foot belly crawl across the top of a meringue pie of which the topping is limestone with sharp peaks.

One emerges from the Meringue Crawl from under a breakdown pile. One can go left or right. To the left is a stream flowing from a canyon that is coming from the direction of the entrance. Water from the canyon joins Neely's Creek to flow across the Meringue Crawl. What is interesting about this canyon is that it is coming from the direction of the entrance! John, Tama, Bruce, and mostly me were stopped by the canyon narrowing and becoming difficult to follow.

I need a couple skinny cavers to survey this section. It is not on the previous map and it will be very interesting to learn from where the water comes. Obviously it cannot come from the entrance. I suspect the canyon will turn to the right (east) and pirate water from the middle fork of Neely's Creek. Tools needed are survey gear and a small sludge hammer. It should be easy to the break off the slender ledges with a hammer and continue the survey.

Returning to the end of the Meringue Crawl and going to the right, one comes back to Neely's Creek. The passage begins as a low passage (walking, stoop walking, and some crawling) with a wildly meandering narrow canyon above. This canyon is the same canyon that goes toward the entrance. Eventually the canyon widens and one is walking at the base of the canyon in Neely's Creek. The canyon continues to a 12-foot waterfall where the survey ends. Side leads off the canyon tend to be smaller canyons that are too tight to follow.

Saturday June 23rd (KOR weekend) I plan to continue the survey by entering the upper entrance of Neely's Creek Cave and surveying downstream toward the waterfall. I remember that there is an easy place to climb down from the upper level but I was unable to spot it from the lower level. I remember it being very subtle. At the moment the proposed survey team consists of Bruce

Warthman, Preston Forsythe, and me. Helpers are welcome!

Interesting Observations

To date I have observed creek shad and surface crayfish in these caves but I have not observed any cave crayfish or cave fish in the Neely's Creek caves. I have spotted the orange salamanders with black spots that are common in Kentucky caves, a pink and tan salamander with tiny black spots (6 to 7 inches long), and some newts in Neely's Creek Cave. In the lower cave, Bruce and I did not notice any bats or cave crickets until we were in the back part of the canyon passage. In subsequent trips into the lower cave I have spotted these creatures in other parts of the lower cave. I suspect that this is because the cave is normally under water except for the back portion of the canyon passage.

The lake cave is blocked at both ends. I am hoping that the area receives a BIG rain to clear the upper entrance and that the Corps of Engineers will lower Lake Cumberland enough this autumn to enter the river entrance of the lake cave. It should be very interesting if the Corps does lower the lake another 30 feet!



Middle Cave Resurgence

Bill Walden

Helpers Wanted

This is a continuing project and as such helpers are welcome. These are wet caves and one should prepare for such. Polypros are helpful. I don't think that a wetsuit would be comfortable.

Please contact me if you would like to help. wdwalden at hughes.net, 606-340-9569.

Warning

A big rain, while it could be very helpful to open the lake cave entrance, may also flood lower levels of the caves. If rain threatens a trip will be canceled.

A Fractured Fairy Tale

Dale Andreatta

With the lowered water levels at Lake Cumberland there is a story about an out of townner who was walking along the lowered shoreline and found something sticking up out of the sand. He dug a bit and pulled up a genie lamp. He rubbed it and nothing happened, then rubbed it again with the same result. He was about to toss it away, but decided to rub it a third time, at which a genie came out and said, "What'chall want, I was fixin' to take a nap!"

The man said, "Why, you're a genie and I found you, and now you have to grant me three wishes".

The genie replied, "Nuh-uh buddy, that's just in the movies! In real life you get one weesh, and it cain't be nuthin' complicated like world peace or nuthin' like that. There's only so much a genie can do, ya know."

The man said, "Well OK, I've always wanted to go to Europe, but I hate to fly. I'd like there to be a four-lane bridge all the way to Europe....."

"Now what'd I just say 'bout nuthin' complicated! Was you even lis'nin'? How 'bout weeshin' for a big box of Q-tips so you can clean out yer ears. How 'bout weeshin' for som'n simple like an ice cream cone."

"But I don't want an ice cream cone....."

"Whad'ya mean you don't want an ice cream cone! Everbuddy wants an ice cream cone. You tellin' me you don't like ice cream?"

"Well of course I like ice cream, I mean I wouldn't mind an ice cream cone but....."

"Fine! An ice cream cone it is. Yer weesh is my command! Hocus pocus mumbo jumbo, an' all that. Now, here's what'ya do. Reach into your pocket and pull out a 5-dollar bill, and your car keys. Then go down Root 1546 to the Walmart and....."

"Wait a minute, that wasn't my wish. You're the laziest genie I've ever seen."

"Now don't get yer underbritches in a bunch. My brother-in-law's in the genie's union and I'll file a grievance 'gainst you."

The man replies with, "Well I'm a lawyer and I'll sue the genie's union if you don't grant me a reasonable wish!"

"All right fine, I'll grant you a weesh. What is it?"

After calming down a bit the man thinks and says, "As I said, I'm a lawyer, and I'd like to be respected for being a lawyer."

The genie paused for a minute and said, "Do ya think you could be happy with a two-lane bridge to Europe?"



Neelys Lower Cave Looking Out

Bill Walden

From the Editor

Hi all,

Summer caving "event" season is upon us. A time when many cavers take time off from lawn mowers, swimming pools, and survey projects to catch up with old caving buddies at events all over the country. So if you need a break from the seeing the same ugly faces underground week after week, now's your chance!

Regardless, get out there and go caving! Remember - it's natural air-conditioning!

Lacie

Squeaks editor