

COG SQUEAKS

March 2007



Stories of
Mud
and
Pencils

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.

Cover Photos from Grayson Gunnar Cave by Robert Coomer

Karst Calendar

March 27, 2007	COG meeting
April 21, 2007	ACCA Spring Cleanup, Hart County, Kentucky
April 24, 2007	COG meeting
May 19-20, 2007	GSP Open House-Volunteers needed. http://www.caves.org/conser-vancy/gsp/
May 25-27, 2007	Speleofest, Lone Star Cave Preserve http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto/Speleofest.htm
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.
August 17-19	Wormfest, DUG's annual caving event, will be held in Lewisburg, West Virginia.

Contents

Karst Calendar	2
Frustrating Finish	3
More digging...and Frustration	3
Connecting the Corkscrew	4
New Years Weekend Report	5
From the Editor	5
Bits and Pieces	6
ACCA Cleanups Planned	6
Cave Biota Survey Work Planned	6

Copyrights

All submissions remain the property of the author, and may not be reproduced without their permission,

Frustrating Finish

For several years a group of cavers have periodically focused their sights on a dig near the Grayson Gunnar Cave entrance. Their hope: to get into a completely different cave. Countless Sunday mornings and Saturdays have been spent laying on their stomachs, often in a couple inches of water, digging countless turkey pans of dirt and dragging the pans out to the hillside to dump.

We've had a lot of fun at the dig. It's been a chance to catch up on life events of our friends as we wait for a chance to dig. We've found caver dogs, Caver Cody running over top of any caver in his way on his way to the dig frontier. We've had doodyball contests. The objective: form a mud ball and roll/bounce the ball back out the cave entrance and down the hillside, hopefully missing any cavers peering into the hole.

However, all "good" things must come to an end. This one just didn't end the way we had hoped. Instead of opening up into mile after mile of cave passage, we recently came to the end of the road. Janeen, Buddy, Aeron and I, along with a few other friends waited (im)patiently at the hole's entrance while Pat, Greg, Harry, and Eric were digging a hundred plus feet in.

The day had turned from sunny to cold and windy while we waited. Our hearts, however, were hopeful. We reasoned that since the guys had been gone for so long, surely they were on to something and had found that elusive borehole. Alas, it was not to be. Aeron and I had finally given in to the cold and returned to the car for warmer clothing when we spotted Greg coming up the hill. His report: No Go. After all the blood, sweat, and tears spent on the dig, it was at an end. The floor and ceiling, rock now instead of dirt, were too close together for sliding through. It appeared to close off.

I suppose, someday, somewhere down the line, we might be able to change that, but it doesn't look good. Still, the time spent at the dig was far from wasted. We had fun, made friends, and discovered caving dogs. Worth the time...

Lacie

Cody, Lucy, and Bubba - dogs gone before their time - we miss you and will always remember the fun we had with you!

SQUEAKS

More Digging...and Frustration

Early in March I once again attempted to head south and go caving. I was pretty pumped about finally getting underground after not going caving since mid-December. I'd only been down to Kentucky once since then and we spent the day at the dig opposite GGC (*see Frustrating Finish*).

So Eric, Janeen, Aeron and I piled into Janeen's new Mazda and headed for Wayne County.

On Saturday morning I awoke to Buddy, Pat, Brenda, Darrell, and Alice in the front yard talking with Eric and Aeron and making plans. Janeen, having been sick, was spending the day with our friend, Synda. The day was pretty warm and a little overcast but still a good day for digging. Brenda was pretty sure we could get into one of the ongoing digs near Half Moon Cave. It sounded good to me, even if it meant spending the day nearly above ground again. At least I'd be able to socialize with friends. We quickly ate breakfast and headed for the hills. Before long we were changing clothes and splitting up to head for a couple of holes. Buddy and Pat worked on the dry crawl dig into the collapse at the back of an old cave. Older area residents have told tales of there being passages beyond before a collapse sealed them off. Darrell, Alice, and I took our turns in the dry dig. Eric and Brenda were digging on what could be the top of a possible pit.

Several of us would wander off occasionally to check the hillside for other openings. I found a spot where a trickle of water disappeared into the ground and I could hear it dripping beneath the surface. Later Darrell lifted a rotten log away and pushed on the ground and I watched with glee as it fell away. Alas, the hole was only a couple of feet deep. The water was draining down out of it, not filling it up, and I could hear a hollow sound when I pounded on the rock in the bottom, but it would take a lot of work to open it up more. We had better prospects elsewhere.

Hours passed and both digs made good progress but eventually we had to admit that we weren't going to break through that day. Once again, we would have to wait for the elusive borehole. We stripped off our muddy cave gear and went our separate ways.

On the drive home the next day, Eric said, "No digging next week! Next week we're getting underground!"

I agreed.

Lacie

Connecting the Corkscrew - Surveying in Triple S

Late last September a group of cavers began a resurvey in Triple S Cave in Wayne County, Kentucky. Previously two different maps have been produced. Since then, mapping technology and techniques have changed quite a bit and significant portions of the cave not yet mapped have been discovered. On one of the early resurvey trips Eric Weaver decided we would survey down the Corkscrew climb and just get it done, even though we hadn't surveyed from either entrance to that point. We started our survey at a station left from an earlier map. If you've ever been on a through trip in Triple S you've been down the Corkscrew. The first part of the climb is more of a controlled slide than a climb. The caver pushes arms and legs and various other body parts against the walls and slowly shifts his/her feet to the next lower foothold, turning 180 degrees at one point.

We're gonna go down that?

If you've caved with me before, chances are you know heights are not my favorite thing and let's face it, your first look down the Corkscrew generally brings a "We're gonna go down that?" reaction. My first reaction was, "You guys are f-in crazy!" Luckily for me, Bob Yuellig was on the trip and he was tall enough to climb back up the Corkscrew (not an easy feat) and help me down through it. We used a just long enough handline that day. Since then an etrier has been rigged there and makes the climbdown much easier.

Okay, back to the survey story...

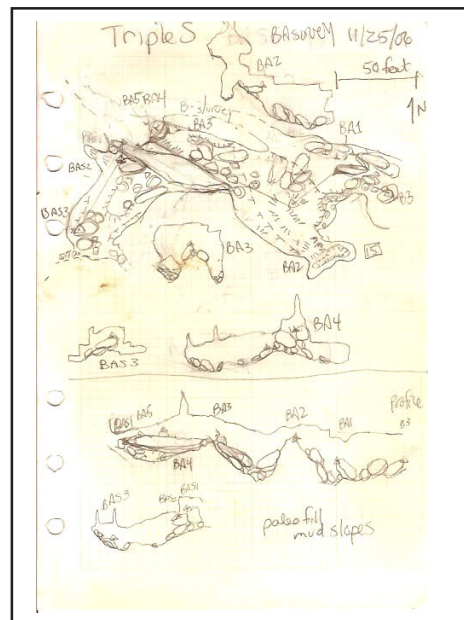
So we did survey the Corkscrew and even put a couple of stations in the passage below that day. That made one awkward survey down, several more to go. Of course, we also now had a hanging survey in the middle of the cave.

Last fall several more trips were made into both the upper and lower entrances and the resurvey progressed rapidly. But the Corkscrew was still hanging, both above and below the climb.

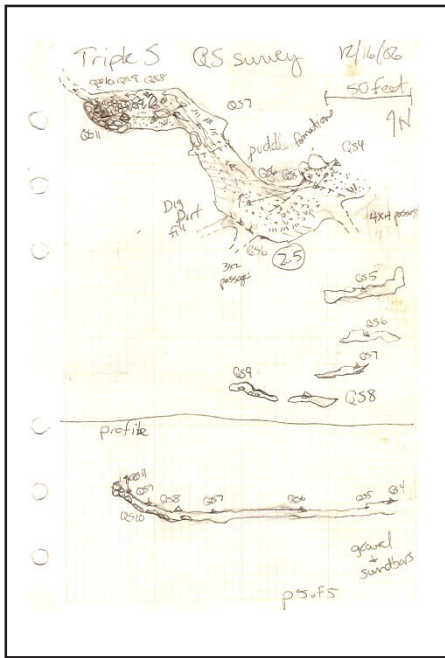
But not for long. Eric, Janeen, and I all felt it had been far too long since we went on a real cave trip and got some mapping done. So on a sunny Saturday morning we loaded up Janeen's new Mazda (again), picked up Bob Yuellig and a few cases of beer for a friend, and drove once again to Wayne County, Kentucky.

We dropped off the beer and bedding at the house and went on to Triple S, filling out the Liability release on the way. After changing into our cave gear and a quick chat with the landowners we walked back through the field and up the hill to the cave's upper entrance.

Twenty minutes travel in the cave brought us to the end of the resurvey and the start of our day's work. At the request of the cartographer, we are keeping a running profile view of the cave this time as well as the usual plan view and cross-sections. This makes the sketcher's task more complicated. Fortunately, with four people on our team, we could split the sketcher's job up between two people, me and Bob. Our team slowly worked our way through the passage, often squeezing beneath a breakdown ceiling or between two flowstone coated boulders, long fallen from above. After a few hours and several hundred feet of survey, many shots only eleven or twelve feet long, we tied into the Corkscrew survey from above.



Below the climb several hundred feet of survey remain to tie the survey together. They would have to wait for a future trip. It was time to head out of the cave.



The lower portion of Triple S is pretty cool. Well, right up until you reach the cow poop entrance. If you're not careful there you can step into thick, gooey mud mixed with cow manure. Yum. Before that, you wade through thigh deep water, duck under ledges, slide down a slot in to water, and jump across mini-canyons carved in solid rock. I learned a lesson about helmets on the way out last weekend. They don't cover your face... I was hurrying through the low ceilinged stream passage, leaned over to duck beneath a ledge in front of me and slammed my temple into a ledge beside me. I hit hard enough to bring me to my knees. Luckily I just scraped and bruised my temple. I was really glad I carry an instant ice pack in my cave tote. We were almost out of the cave by then so it wasn't long before I was able to use the pack on my face. I also learned makeup has its limit when it comes to covering bruises. I went to work with a green temple for a few days this week. Eric and Janeen planned to continue the survey the next weekend, picking up in the lower passage in an attempt to tie in the survey from entrance to entrance. I had to work so no caving for me. Soon we will be heading into the unsurveyed realms of the lower cave. The adventure continues...

Lacie
P.S. Since I don't have any photos of photogenic Triple S, you'll have to look at sketch instead.

SQUEAKS

From the Editor

This is the first Squeaks of the year. No submissions often equals no newsletter. I've finally been south enough to write a couple of trip reports. BUT, I'm sure you all don't want to read only about what *I'm* doing. Please share what *you're* doing, too! Then maybe we'll have another newsletter in a few more months...

New Years Weekend Report:

Karen and I went to our KY house for New Years weekend. Saturday we spent 12 hours underground on a survey trip in Redmond Creek Cave. Lots of traveling inside the cave for a few feet of survey — well worth the effort. I named the area the Arches Area because of the many small arches there. The area is very close to Hillside Cave and I was really hoping to make the connection. But, Redmond Creek Cave is slow to reveal her secrets. Katie and Aron Schmid, and John and Tama Cassidy rigged and dropped a pit in the Arches Area while Preston, Bruce, Bise, and I surveyed to and down the pit. Once down the pit the vertical team discovered a breakdown slope which allowed easy access via a different passage. At the bottom of the pit is a crystal clear lake. No one attempted swimming across as it is deep and cold. There was a low passage about 15 feet above the lake which they pushed through several small rooms. They reported finding candy wrappers and Styrofoam pieces in that passage. The first name I gave to Hillside Cave was Trash Cave but renamed it Hillside after the 2002 OVR cleanup there. So, the passage is likely immediately below Hillside Cave. The survey shows that too. I'm looking forward to the next survey trip there. Sunday night Karen and I hosted a New Years Eve party for cavers and cave owners. Raisin, our Manx cat, had such a good time that she slept all day Monday! We served pork roast with sauerkraut, carrots, onions, apples, and potatoes. I gave a short PowerPoint presentation on Katie and Aron's wedding, the Indiana Convention DVD movie, and a hodgepodge of caving photos. I think that everyone attending had fun. Oh yes, I used a projector to yield a 6-foot wide image.

Please plan to attend the next New Years Eve party at our KY house. Hopefully this will become an annual event.

Bill Walden

Bits and Pieces

****Happy Birthday Paul Unger!****

****Bill and Karen Walden have sold their Galena, Ohio, house and moved to their new home in southern Kentucky. ****

****A Wells Cave Preserve cleanup will be held in early April. Watch the COG listserv for details.****

****The first Annual Carter Caves Restoration Camp, sponsored by the ESSO Grotto and Carter Caves State Resort Park, was held March 24-25th. ****

****The March Mammoth Cave Cleanup will be held the weekend of March 31-April . Participation is limited to 40 people. GCG (Greater Cincinnati Grotto) is now planning the March cleanup so check their website for details - www.GCGcavers.com.****

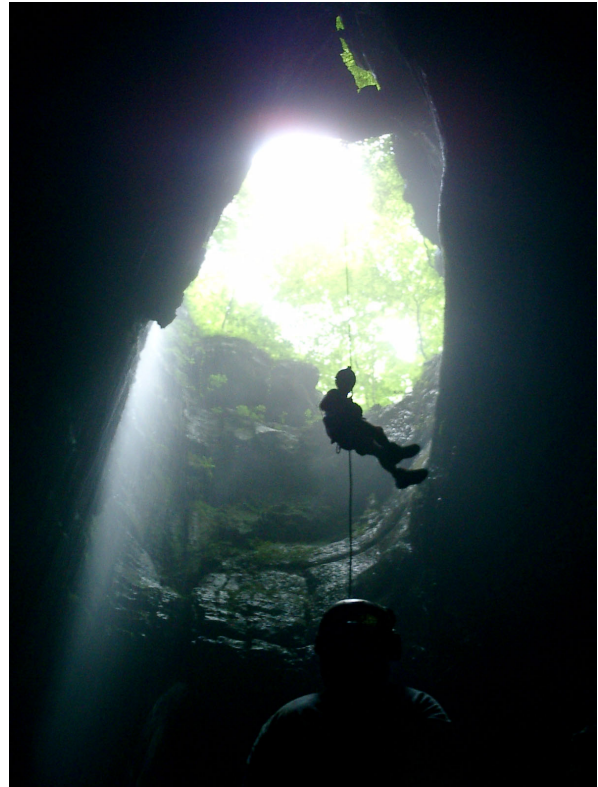
****April 30th - Caves closed for bat hibernation open!****

****The NSS Convention is within easy driving distance this year so register early and get ready****

****The annual Open House at Great Saltpeter Cave is coming up soon. The Preserve is now run by the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy and cavers must sign a liability release and be members of RKC, GCG, DUG, or BGG to get the combination for the gate. For more info check out the website at www.rkci.org****



*A sign designed to catch a caver's attention near Marquette, MI
L.Brale*



Stephens Gap, Alabama

L. Braley

ACCA Cleanups Planned

The American Cave Conservation Association has set dates for cleanups and conservation projects. The Spring Cleanup will be held on April 21 in Hart County, Kentucky. Cleanup of roadside dumping and cave entrance trash is planned.

Later this year, after the NSS Convention, the cleanup of Saltpeter Pit (Mt. Trashmore) will be continued. Last year nearly 200 cubic yards of trash was removed from the cave entrance pit. Saltpeter Pit is the habitat for one of the world's largest known colonies of Rafinesque's Big-eared bats.

If you want to volunteer to help on either of these projects contact Chris Clark, ACCA program Coordinator, at the American Cave Museum and Hidden River Cave (phone (270) 786-1466) or by email at clark_c17@yahoo.com.

Cave Biota Survey Work Planned

Erin Hazelton, a WUSS trained caver now working for the ODNR (Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources) is part of a group planning on updating Dr. Hobb's 1988 Ohio Cave Survey. With landowner permission, the group will focus on caves with endemic endangered species to start. If interested in helping, please contact Erin at Erin.Hazelton@dnr.state.oh.us or by phone at (614) 265-6433.