



Central Ohio Grotto Squeaks November 2022



THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)

The Central Ohio Grotto (COG) of the National Speleological Society meets at 7:00 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of most months at the Presbyterian Church on the Square in Worthington, Ohio. Please contact a grotto officer to confirm meeting time and place or better subscribe to the COG list server at cog@ontosystems.com by sending an email to cog@ontosystems.com with the subject "subscribe." The meeting site will be announced there and on the Grotto Facebook page.

Check out our Facebook group:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/centralohiogrotto/>

Check out our website:

<http://www.centralohiogrotto.com/>

Grotto Mailing Address:

C/O Pat Gibson, 4211 Caswell Rd
Johnstown, OH 43031 614-496-5345
Email: kd8ion@gmail.com

Grotto Membership Dues:

\$15 per individual or \$20 per family.

The C.O.G. Squeaks

The C.O.G. Squeaks is emailed to dues paying members and to grottoes with which the COG exchanges newsletters. Please send trip reports, caving articles, cave fiction, cave poetry, and cave photos to Mark Swelstad for publication: mswelstad@gmail.com

NSS organizations have permission to reprint material from the C.O.G. Squeaks so long as the author and Squeaks are given credit, unless otherwise stated.

COG Executive Committee:
Email: exec@centralohiogrotto.com

Chair:

Aaron Deal
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Vice Chair:

Wendy Orlandi
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Treasurer:

Kevin Lorms
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Secretary:

Bethany Widmayer
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Former Chair:

Kim Deal
Kim.Deal@gmail.com

Member-At-Large:

Fred Ball
ballassociates@yahoo.com

Member-At-Large:

Ana Scherschel
stoplookingatmefreak@msn.com



Upcoming COG Events:

See the Facebook events page for more information about these events or email a board member.

Note: All COG Monthly meetings (except December) are at the Worthington Presbyterian Church.

November 22	COG Monthly Meeting
December 10	COG Christmas Party
January 24	COG Monthly Meeting
January 26-29	Winter Adventure
May 20-21	Open House - GSP
June 26-30	NSS Convention
July 14-16	Karst-O-Rama – GSP
August 4-6	Cave Capers – Indiana

COG Happenings:

Board elections will be held at the general meeting on November 22. Nominations will be accepted prior to the vote. You must be a current member of COG and the NSS to vote and to hold office. The results of the election take effect on January 1, 2023.

The November program will be by Gary Bush who will be talking about the Ohio Cave Survey (OCS).

The COG Christmas party will be held at the home of Pat Gibson. Please check the Facebook page for more details, or you can contact Pat directly for more information. His phone # is 614-496-5345.

Note: There is no general meeting in December in lieu of our annual Christmas party.

CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO 5-YEAR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

**75 MEMBERS ON OUR
75TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2027**

Why

More members mean a larger pool of volunteers, leaders, and trip planners. Younger members mean that we can continue our grotto into the future.

How can you help?

If every current member brings in just 1 new member over the next 5 years, we will be close to meeting our goal.

Recommendations from active members is the best way to build a solid group of cavers. But showing up to a meeting or two isn't enough! We are looking for people committed to maintaining ACTIVE membership within the grotto.

Additional recruitment ideas (we NEED volunteers to make these happen!)

- Lead **trips** intentionally geared toward recruitment
- **Sponsor local events** or participate as vendors in events that get exposure
- Put together a **guest information packet**
- Teach **classes** at REI
- Hold **joint meetings** with related groups in the community
- Work with students who need **volunteer opportunities**
- Ask me about caving **stickers**



Courtesy <https://parks.ky.gov>

January 26 - 29, 2023: Winter Adventure Weekend — Get back outside in eastern Kentucky at Carter Caves State Resort Park's weekend of hiking, canoeing, wild and commercial cave tours, kayaking, rappelling, winter survival, and other adventures. Participants will select from a list of trips that range from beginner to advanced skill levels. All of the trips and events are led by guides. To get familiar with the event you can see past event offerings, trip level descriptions and photos at www.winteradventureweekend.com. The website will be updated with 2023 information December 2023. Online Registration will start shortly after the website goes live. The minimum age to participate is 6 years-old. What kid doesn't want to technical tree climb, rappel rock formations and crawl in a cave?

Wendy Orlandi has rented a nearby cottage Friday - Sunday for a ladies only weekend. Contact her at 412 965 7870 or use fb messenger if you'd like to join the women of COG for WAW.

Unexplored pit in Sinks of the Roundstone?!

By: Andy Schofield

Cavers: Wendy Orlandi, Aaron Collier, Andy Schofield

This trip was a while in the making and Wendy has been discussing these pits for most of the year trying to get all of our stars aligned. Let me say that I forgot how awesome Sinks is, yes there is a lot of graffiti but outside that Sinks has great soaring ceilings in the main passageway and lots of nooks and crannies for people to explore.



Photo by Andy Schofield

This trip started with a leisurely walk towards Girl Scout Dome and then a slight detour towards the pit area followed by a bit of a climb up. This area clearly people had been in before but had anyone been to the bottom of the pits? There are a couple of windows that open about halfway up the pit/dome with the total

height probably somewhere in the 80ft range.



Photo by Andy Schofield



Photo by Aaron Collier

I rigged a rope around a natural anchor and then rappelled into the pit to explore. There was a small constriction right above the ground that took a little negotiating then down to the ground. The floor was mostly small gravel and soft mud with numerous things people have dropped. There was a small opening on one end which was hard to tell if it went anywhere. The floor of the pit looked undisturbed by footprints so it very well may have been an unexplored pit!

After I climbed out of the pit we began exiting the cave via the pancake route and I made a brief stop to look over the edge into the main passageway. The ledge was quite high up and would make a fun rappel if there was a natural anchor available. The rest of the exit was uneventful, and we enjoyed a nice fall walk back to the cars.



Photo by Andy Schofield



Photo by Andy Schofield

Speleo Who?

Don Beach: Caver, Landowner
Via Wendy Orlandi

All photos/photo editing by Don Beach
Photo descriptions by Wendy Orlandi

While becoming more competent using a virtual format for monthly meetings, we have also made our grotto more accessible to a wider audience and membership pool. Please join me in welcoming Don Beach, a new member from Tennessee and a landowner as well. Don has graciously invited our Grotto to his property, the Beach's Nest, for a caving trip in the near future. The Beach's Nest is cave laden land in north central Tennessee, complete with pits, prehistoric critter fossils and civil war relics. If you are interested in attending or coordinating this trip, please contact Wendy Orlandi.



Don Beach became a member of COG earlier this year. He's the caver-friendly landowner of the Beach's Nest located in Afton, Tennessee.

When were you first drawn to caving?
I grew up in what is now known as the Beach's Nest. We were drawn to the caves as kids. The mystery, the unknown, the formations. It was like entering another world. I am a bit of a nerd, so for a time I was in and out of caving and into other hobbies.



There are 10 caves within walking distance of the Beach's Nest. As they have been in the family for years, you can see they are in pristine condition.

What's been your most memorable experience?

Most memorable experiences were finding new caves. It is hard to describe being the first or at least one of the first into a cave. Every cave has its uniqueness and new caves have that extra excitement. The same excitement I often see on cavers when they visit and enter our caves for the first time. I want people to leave with the feeling that it was worth the trip.

How did you come to acquire the Beach's Nest?

The caves have always been on family property, some eventually willed to me, my sister and my uncle.



The Beach family has donated a number of fossils to the Gray Fossil Site and Museum, including these elk bones and a giant ground sloth tooth!

Tell us about the property. What unique finds have you made while living there?

Since the caves are family owned, the Beach's Nest name was just something that stuck. It is located back in a hollow on a dead-end road. Our little nest. My only regret is that I didn't start hosting it to other cavers sooner and realize what a joy it would be meeting all the nice people I would come to call friends.



A visitor poses in front of the impressive "Wax Wall."

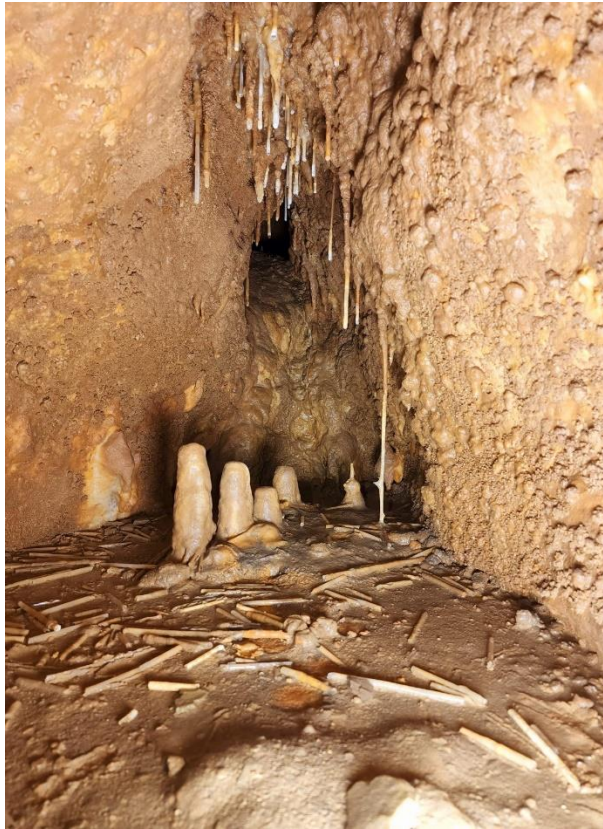
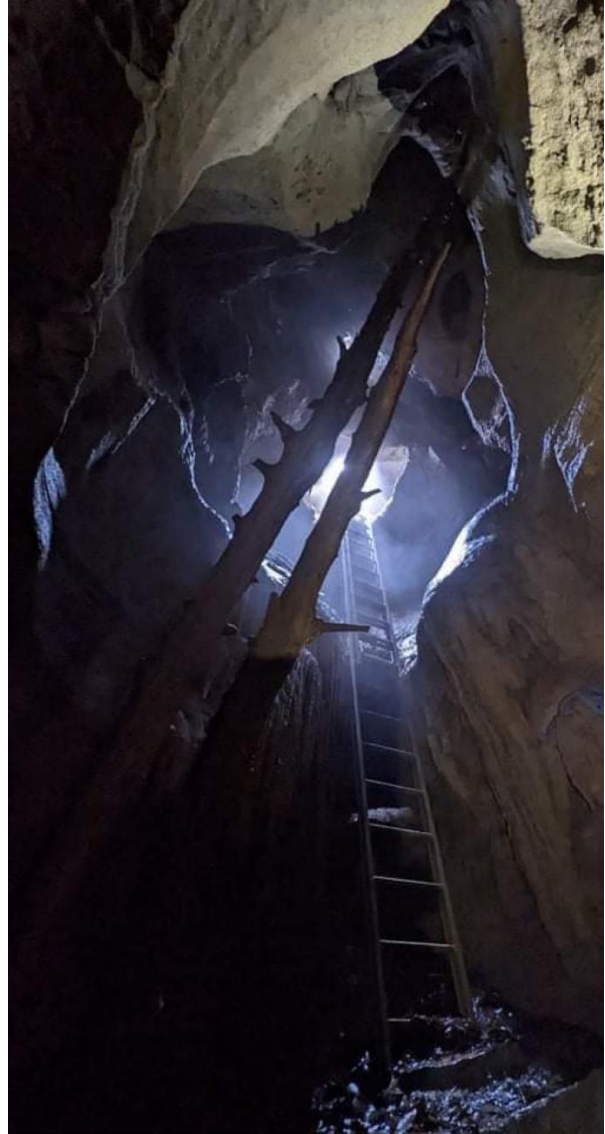


Photo by Don Beach



Looking up from the depths of Pole Cave. There are three caves on site that require rope.

What are your hopes and dreams for the future?

A few years back, I was diagnosed with cancer and had my left kidney removed. Such things give you a new appreciation for life and make you also realize life is short. What is your legacy going to be? Will you even have one? Are our caves worthy of people driving distances to see? Why not give it a try and see how it goes? A young couple from our first official group of visitors are now leaders in a grotto and have just visited us again this weekend

with others, some fairly new to caving. People visiting is nice. People returning a second time is encouraging. Some first timers fall in love and become part of the caving community of tomorrow.

I have been quiet all my life so I still struggle with the social aspect of hosting visitors. No one said it would be easy, but it has been worth it. The endeavor led to putting money and time into creating a bunkhouse for visitors that may want or need to stay overnight. We have been able to offer guided cave trips and lodging at no charge and hope to continue that. I would be kidding you and myself to say it is all about sharing our caves with others but honestly it provides me with additional opportunities to get underground and out of the house. So, it is a win-win endeavor.

Following 4 photos courtesy of Don Beach

