

Central Ohio Grotto Squeaks

October 2023



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
chair@centralohiogrotto.com

Vice Chair:

Wendy Orlandi
vice-chair@centralohiogrotto.com

Treasurer:

Suzanne Gagnon
treasurer@centralohiogrotto.com

Secretary:

Bethany Widmayer
secretary@centralohiogrotto.com

Former Chair:

Kim Deal
Kim.Deal@gmail.com

Member-At-Large:

Andy Schofield
scho73@gmail.com

Member-At-Large:

Jennifer Hawkey
jcgalletta@gmail.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.

October 26	COG Monthly Meeting
November 16-19	SloansGiving (see FB)
November 30	COG Monthly Meeting
December TBD	COG Christmas Party
January TBD	COG Monthly Meeting

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**

COG Shopping List



COG is in the process of adding wetsuits to our equipment library. We are planning a wet trip in the Spring and would like everyone to prepare for it ahead of time.

Buying Tips:

- Buy second hand. They can be found for as little as 5 bucks.
- Buy big. You will need room to flex your cave moves.
- Buy thick, 3-5 mm will be warmer if you tend to run cold.
- Buy ANYTHING. Farmer John's, shorties, it's all good!
- Buy extra. I'd like to build a library, so donate an extra if you find a good deal!

From the Editor – Mark Swelstad

Thanks to those who were able to submit material this month. Keep them coming!

Enjoy this month's Squeaks and as always, please send me material to mswelstad@gmail.com.

Thanks!

From the Chair – Aaron Deal

The most caving I've done recently is crawling in my parents attic and crawl space to help run some new electric. Even had some sore hips that made the experience feel more authentic.

The next couple months are important for shaping next year as we go through the election process. In October we will accept nominations for all positions with the vote occurring in November. If you have any questions on the various positions, please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on the executive committee. You must be an active member of the NSS and COG to vote.

We did take an impromptu trip to Seattle for an extended weekend at the beginning of October. We did a lot of walking, ferry rides, whale watching, tour of lumen Field, the space needle, and a couple play areas that Elliott enjoyed. Keeping Elliott on a reasonable sleep schedule was interesting, but overall, we all had fun.



Kim & Elliott – photo courtesy Aaron Deal

COG Meeting Location concerns

We have been meeting at the Worthington Presbyterian Church for decades, and recently they've let us know that the church is no longer available on our normal meeting night (Tuesday). This leaves us with a couple of options.

First – we could simply stay at the church, but permanently change the meeting night.

Second – we could find a different venue and try to keep the 4th Tuesday.

A couple of points – the church is essentially free; we donate I believe \$150 per year. Also, the relationship we have with the church has been long term and positive; however, some feel like we're missing out on an opportunity to bring in students from The Ohio State University, many of whom don't have cars and would find it difficult to make the drive up to Worthington.

For the remainder of the year, we will be meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month. This includes the October and November meetings. We need to figure out what to do in 2024 and beyond. This will be a topic of conversation at the next meeting. If you have any ideas or opinions, please contact Mark Swelstad, Andy Schofield, or anyone on the executive committee.

Mark S.

Introduction to Cave Survey 10/14 – Jennie Hawkey

The Greater Cincinnati Grotto hosted a free 1-day class at GSP to teach a beginner class for cave survey. Stephanie Suen and Beau Gergel conducted a 4-hour morning class which included a presentation, practice group surveying, and practice sketching at the main shelter which was designed to prepare us for a multi-team survey in Climax cave. After a quick lunch break, the class carpooled to Climax cave where we were set up in various points in Climax cave in 4 teams (A,B,C, and D). Each team surveyed and sketched a section over the course of a few hours. Stephanie and Beau walked around to all the groups throughout the process to help with instrument usage and sketching questions.



Photo courtesy Stephanie Suen

Afterward, a few of us checked out the fundraiser event at the Climax Volunteer Fire Department for the silent auction and I bought a few decorative squash for autumn. Later we headed out to the Limestone Grill and their famous Hillbilly Tacos. In the evening hours, we also searched for the railroad cave by the Shell gas station (no luck) and practiced knots with Stephanie at the main shelter.

This class is the beginning of an effort to resurvey Climax cave and improve the existing map as it is an important cave for GSP and the regional grottos. Stephanie and Beau will be holding a virtual cartography session in the following week and will continue survey trips in Climax cave throughout the winter.

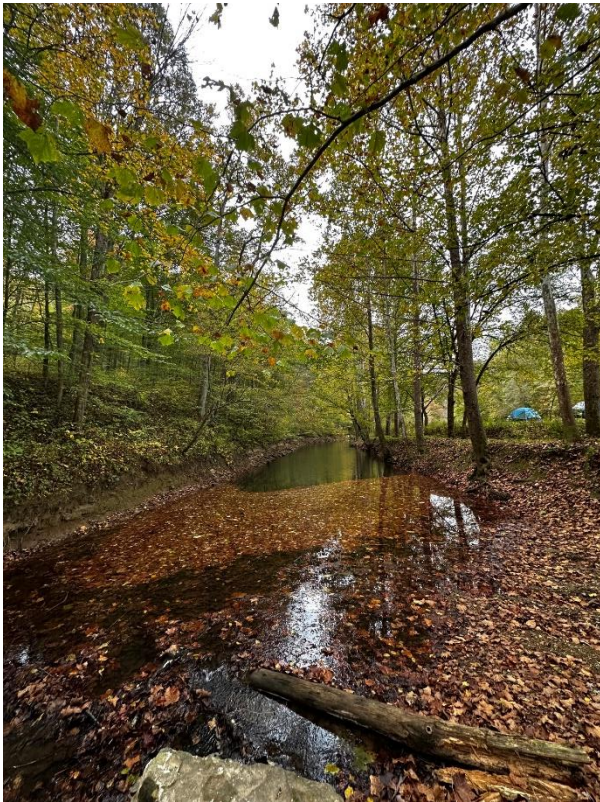
Railroad and Rollercoaster Cave 10/15

After a day of sedentary cave surveying, several of us decided we needed more exertive caving. We headed to the railroad tracks to check out Rollercoaster cave. We first happened upon and explored Railroad cave and realized it was not Rollercoaster based on the map that Ryan Braga brought with him. We kept walking down the tracks and found Rollercoaster cave. It is a nice sporty cave which is great for practicing chimneying and other caving techniques. All around it is a great short, fun cave. On the trip we saw 3 different species of bat (we believe a little brown, big brown, and Rafinesque). We also saw what appeared to be a pure white cave cricket. If anyone knows more about what this might be, please reach out to me.



Photo courtesy Jennie Hawkey

Fall at GSP – photos courtesy Jennie Hawkey



New Member Interview

Interviewer: Ryan Braga
Interviewee: Tory Roland

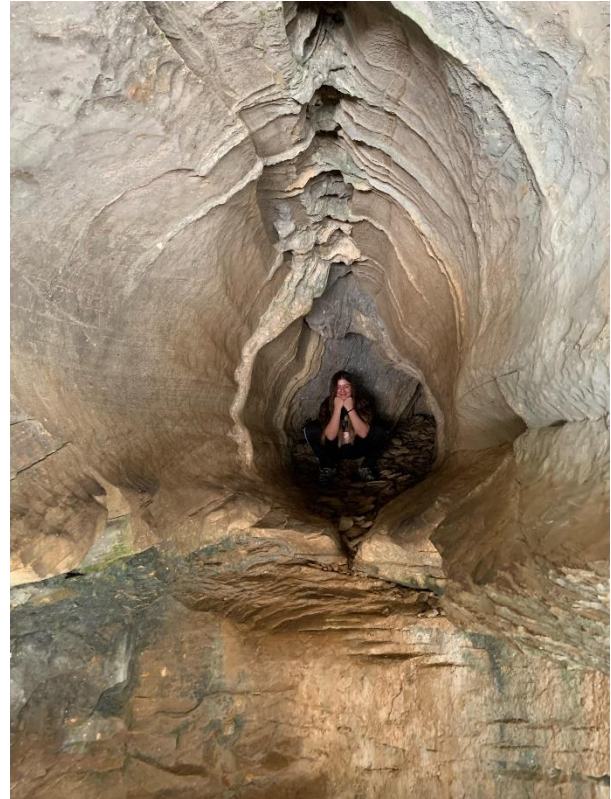


Photo courtesy Ryan Braga

How did you first get into caving?

I went on a wild cave tour of Bat Cave at Carter Caves State Park just on my own and it was the most fun I'd had in a long time, I couldn't stop thinking about it for days. I've been back to that park a few times since and knew I wanted to get into caving in more than a passive way.

What are some of your other interests?

I love to cook and am a general foodie, always looking for new places to eat around town. I watch a lot of movies, I go to an independent movie theater weekly. I love to travel when I can. I've started

working on stained glass at home but definitely still a beginner, will develop more this winter. I also like to see live music whether it's a band I know coming into town or popping into a bar for a jazz night.

What are some of your favorite caving experiences?

My first caving trip at GSP was to Across The Road cave, it's like a playground the way most paths send you back to the same place! Was also the first cave I had to do any real up climbs to get where I needed to go so I also enjoyed the challenge of that.

What guided your decision to join COG?

It seemed the best way to find other people to go caving with and to become more knowledgeable about caving and where to find the caves.

What are you looking forward to learning or participating in?

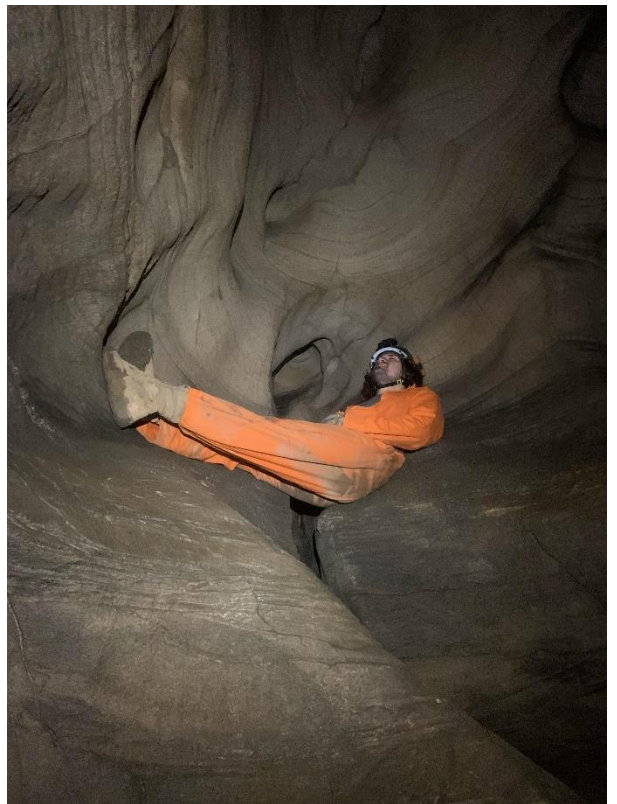
I missed the last vertical practice for the season unfortunately, but I am looking forward to learning since it's all new to me, I don't have any climbing experience outside of caving either. Also excited for Sloansgiving!

Cave Spotlight – Ryan Braga

This month's cave spotlight features the locally known Rollercoaster Cave. Rollercoaster is situated near the Sinks of the Round Stone and was surveyed in the past by an old wiseman named Mark Swelstad and team. (Editor – who are you calling old, young buck?!? 😊) If you plan

to explore Rollercoaster, prepare to emerge with minimal clothing due to the high temperatures inside the cave. Rollercoaster lives up to its name, resembling a rollercoaster with its continuous ups and downs while navigating through multiple canyons. Despite being a relatively short cave, spanning only 635 feet, it feels like a thousand feet due to the constant elevation changes you'll encounter. Upon entering through the main entrance, you'll encounter a left turn crawl leading to your first canyon. After navigating this canyon and putting your canyoning skills to the test, you'll face a somewhat tricky climb down into a walking passage that splits. Turning left will guide you to an entrance typically filled in, while going right and then left will lead you to some impressive domes. Proceeding right, followed by another right into a short crawl, will take you deeper into the cave. Don't expect a break from the canyon's ups and downs; your rest comes in the previous walking passage! Continuing through the canyon, you'll eventually reach the end, where you'll feel a refreshing blast of cool air, believed to originate from Sinks of the Round Stone. You can catch a glimpse of the other end of this passage by venturing into Sinks and reaching the Viking Ship Room and climbing the breakdown. All in all, Rollercoaster is a manageable cave that keeps you continuously active, inducing sweat from the frequent elevation changes. While it might be more challenging for kids with shorter legs, it's not impossible, making it a potential spot for scouts, though be prepared to assist them with the descents. Rollercoaster is primarily a dry cave with patches of sticky mud and offers a lot to explore if you're seeking a quick adventure. During our recent visit to Rollercoaster for photographs to feature in this cave

spotlight, we dined at the Limestone Grill the night before. Let me tell you, this cave quickly burns off those comfort food calories! *Photos courtesy Ryan Braga.*





Editors Note:

We surveyed Roller Coaster Cave back in the early or mid-90's. At that time, this cave was well known by a lot of cavers, but I had never seen a map. The survey took 2 trips but could have been done in 1; none of us were that experienced with cave survey and for a couple of people, it was their first time. The map isn't the best from a cartography standpoint, but it will get you through the cave! A copy of the map is found at the end of this newsletter. The crawl out entrance has been filled in since the time of the survey.

COG Elections

Mark Swelstad & Aaron Deal

It's that time of the year...the frost nips at our heels, the leaves are turning, Ohio State is kicking butt and taking

names...and COG elects its new executive committee. Aaron Deal asked Pat Gibson, Jonna Cartwright, and me, to serve on the election committee. Since our grotto has grown a lot in the last few years, and we have some new people, I think a refresher of what's involved is in order. The below is taken from Aaron Deal's slides he came up with recently.

COG Positions and Elections:

Officer Positions (current):

- *Chair* – (Aaron Deal)
 - *Vice-Chair* – (Wendy Orlandi)
 - *Secretary* – (Bethany Widmayer)
 - *Treasurer* – (Suz Gagnon)
-
- Must be held by a minimum of 3 individuals holding the 4 offices.
 - Chair may not hold any other office.

Executive Committee:

Positions (By Law)

- Four Officer Positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary)
- Immediate past chair (Kim Deal)
- 2 Elected Members At Large (Andy Schofield, Jennie Hawkey)

Responsibilities:

- Discusses Grotto business in a separate meeting and brings recommendations to the Grotto at regular monthly meeting (By Law)
- Attend scheduled committee meetings.
- Meetings organized by chair at least 2 per year (by law)
- Eligibility – Grotto member and NSS member

Elections:

- *Nominations*
 - Committee appointed by September meeting to nominate 1 or more candidates for each of the elected positions (By Law)
 - Pat Gibson, Jonna Cartwright, Mark Swelstad
 - Floor nominations accepted until ballots in November meeting.
- *Voting*
 - During the November Meeting (By Law)
 - COG Regular Members Only (Must be a paid NSS and COG member)
- Elected officers assume roles in the January Meeting (By Law)

Executive Committee Roles & Responsibilities:

Chair

- Responsibilities
 - Preside at all meetings of the Grotto and of the executive committee (By Law)
 - General supervision of the the grottos work (By Law)
 - Maintain proper liaison with the officers and committees of the NSS (By Law)
 - Primary contact person of the Grotto
 - Organize executive committee meetings (min 2) throughout the year as necessary
- Chair can be held for no longer than 2 terms (By Law)

- Benefits
 - Help guide the direction of the Grotto
 - Voting privileges in executive committee
 - Keys to the GSP Kitchen and Cave

Vice-Chair

- Responsibilities
 - Preside in the absence of the Chair (By Law)
 - Succeed the Chair if they resign or otherwise unable to complete their term (By Law)
 - Plan program for the monthly meetings
- Benefits
 - Help guide the direction of the Grotto.
 - Voting privileges in executive committee
 - Keys to the GSP Kitchen and Cave

Secretary

- Responsibilities
 - Take minutes at all meetings of the Grotto and Executive Committee (By Law)
 - Handle all Grotto correspondence (By Law)
 - Include filing annual and other necessary reports to NSS officials
- Benefits
 - Help guide the direction of the Grotto.
 - Voting privileges in executive committee
 - Keys to the GSP Kitchen and Cave

Treasurer

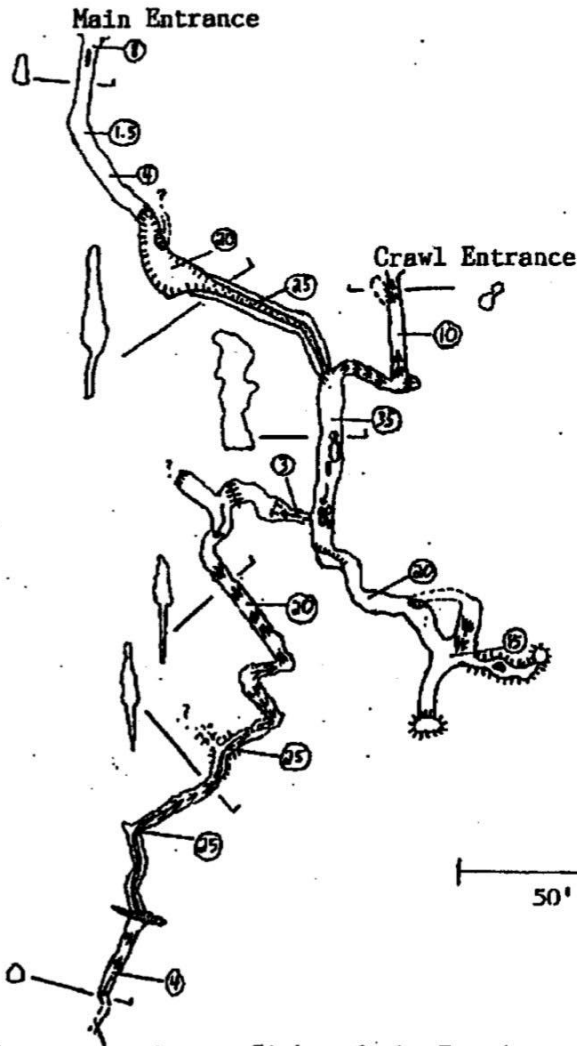
- Responsibilities
 - Maintain all Grotto financial records (By Law)
 - Payment of bills (other than normal operating expenses) must be approved by a majority of the executive committee (By Law)
- Benefits
 - Help guide the direction of the Grotto.
 - Voting privileges in executive committee
 - Keys to the GSP Kitchen and Cave

At-Large and former Chair:

- Responsibilities
 - Attend Executive Committee meetings.
 - Engage new members at monthly Grotto meetings.
- Benefits
 - Help guide the direction of the Grotto.
 - Voting privileges in executive committee



Roller Coaster Cave – Rockcastle County, KY



voice connection to Sinks of the Roundstone Cave

Surveyors

- Mark Swelstad
- Garrett Graham
- Cathy Wicks
- Lisa Agriesti
- Pat O'Connor