



# Central Ohio Grotto Squeaks

## August 2024



## THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)

The Central Ohio Grotto (COG) of the National Speleological Society meets at 7:00 p.m. the fourth Thursday 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:**

\$20 per individual or \$25 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](mailto:exec@centralohiogrotto.com)

**Chair:**

Andy Schofield

[chair@centralohiogrotto.com](mailto:chair@centralohiogrotto.com)

**Vice Chair:**

Wendy Orlandi

[vice-chair@centralohiogrotto.com](mailto:vice-chair@centralohiogrotto.com)

**Treasurer:**

Suzanne Gagnon

[treasurer@centralohiogrotto.com](mailto:treasurer@centralohiogrotto.com)

**Secretary:**

Bethany Widmayer

[secretary@centralohiogrotto.com](mailto:secretary@centralohiogrotto.com)

**Former Chair:**

Aaron Deal

[Aaron.Deal@gmail.com](mailto:Aaron.Deal@gmail.com)

**Member-At-Large:**

Joe Chaput

[jchaput@gjpepsi.com](mailto:jchaput@gjpepsi.com)

**Member-At-Large:**

Mark Swelstad

[mswelstad@gmail.com](mailto:mswelstad@gmail.com)



**Upcoming COG Events** – Note: Details of our events can be found on [our Facebook page](#). You do not have to be a member to be in our Facebook group.

<b>August 10</b>	COG Beginner/Casual Trip	GSP – Contact Wendy Orlandi
<b>August 10</b>	<a href="#">Crawlathon</a>	Carter Caves State Park
<b>August 15-17</b>	<a href="#">Indiana Cave Capers</a>	Indiana
<b>August 22</b>	COG Monthly Meeting	Worthington Presbyterian Church
<b>August 24</b>	Misty Cave Cleanup	Contact Wendy Orlandi
<b>September 26</b>	COG Monthly Meeting	Worthington Presbyterian Church
<b>October 26-27</b>	GSP Halloween Fundraiser	GSP

Contact Info for Trip Organizers:

- Wendy Orlandi - wenlo0319@gmail.com
- Ryan Braga - ryanbraga1007@gmail.com
- 

+++++  
 Join us for our next monthly meeting at Worthington Presbyterian Church on THURSDAY, August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm in person or online. To join virtually, find remote meeting information in the Discussion in Facebook. You do NOT have to be a member to attend, everyone is welcome. Contact Wendy Orlandi if you need help with the link.



Cave Formation Repair Project founder and author Mike Mansur strongly desires the techniques he and his volunteers have developed to be widely available to other cavers nationally and internationally so they might undertake formation repair work in their own local caves.

He is the author of The Cave Formation Repair Project: Restoring the Beauty of America's Great Caves. In addition to the informative text, each chapter features high-

resolution photographs from work trips conducted by the Cave Formation Repair Project. Mike has generously donated a copy of his book to the COG Library.



**Odds and Ends:**

**Dues**

Individual Dues \$20  
 Family Dues \$25

Dues may be paid during the Grotto monthly meeting, mail, or Venmo and should be paid by the end of March.

Suzanne Gagnon  
 10548 Elderberry Drive  
 Plain City, Ohio 43064

Venmo: @suzgagnon (Suz with red helmet)  
<https://venmo.com/u/suzgagnon>

**COG History**

The August 1974 COG Squeaks contained an article authored by Paul Unger about some recent digs, mostly in the Cave Creek system. There was a short story written by Paul Rowley, and an open letter about the ethics behind 'State Cave Lists' (SCL's).

**From the GSP Chair**

- Debi Pavey

There are tools and other items around the preserve for your convenience. I ask that if you use or borrow something to please have the consideration to put it back where it belongs so that it is there for the next person to use.

Splitting mauls and hatchets do not belong left lying around for small children to find and hurt themselves. On the Sunday of KOR they were all put away in the kitchen where they belong. On July 5th 3 of them are missing and 1 splitting mail and 1 hatchet were found at the fire pit.

After KOR there was a trailer full of trash and other items found and picked up from around the campground and shelter. Everyone packed up and left on Sunday and left the mess for 4 of us to clean up; 4 of us that

weren't even on the KOR committee. We had to put everything back in the kitchen that had been pulled out and left out. This was by far the biggest mess left behind after KOR ever. Some of these KOR specific items are still sitting around the shelter.

If you use the kitchen, please put everything away, clean your dishes and put them away, mop the floor and for the love of God don't leave food out (or hidden) to draw the mice in. They will destroy the kitchen GSP and COG have worked hard to build for events.

GSP is a nature preserve, it needs to be treated as such and respected. In the 16 years I've been coming to the preserve, this is the worst I've ever seen it.

Bottom line, as in the rule of caving, leave no trace.

Thank you.

Debi Pavey  
 GSP Chair

**GSP Cave and Kitchen Key Policy**

- Dan Zubal

Hello fellow COGsters! Your friendly neighborhood GSP Rep Dan Zubal here with a message about the GSP keys.

To get the GSP cave key, you need to fill out the following form (Editor – I'll include this when I send out the newsletter. It's also in the group documents page in Facebook.) and send it to me, along with your trip dates. I'll make sure you're a COG member in good standing, then, if the loaner keys have not been lent out, we'll make a connection to get you the key, then figure out how to get it back to me. If the loaner keys have already been lent out, or are already reserved, I'll put you in touch with whoever has them and let you guys work it out.

To get the kitchen keys, you need to have a kitchen training form signed by your instructor on file with Debi Pavey. If you don't have this

form on file with Debi, but have taken a training course, please reach out to the person who did your training with the date of the training and ask them to sign and send the form to Debi. If that form is on file with Debi, the process for the kitchen key is the same as the cave key.

In either (or both cases ), YOU ARE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDITION OF THE CAVE AND / OR KITCHEN! So please follow the rules and leave it cleaner than you found it. When you're done using it, please remember to lock the kitchen back up before you go on your trip. If you open the cave or kitchen and find a mess, or something odd and out of the ordinary, please take pictures and let me know as soon as you can. You don't want to be blamed for a situation you didn't create, and you don't want to be outed as the phantom pooper of the shower house.

We started the key form process a couple of years ago when we had a professional locksmith rekey the locks with special keys you can't buy blanks for to eliminate cloned keys. We started the kitchen training process a few years after that when the kitchen was found in a terrible state that required a lot of cleaning up to make it usable.

In happier news, Mason ( the reason I haven't been caving or at GSP as much as I'd like ) is doing well, he's babbling like a brook and getting over his first bacterial infection after starting daycare last week. I'm hoping to bring him down to GSP for Caver Appreciation and get him underground.



*Picture courtesy Dan Zupal*

### **Trip Report- Shawn Mullins Cave**

- Joe Chaput

KOR-Friday June 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>

On Friday June 21<sup>st</sup> during Day 2 of Karst-o-Rama Wendy Orlandi had a lead from local landowner Shane Mullins that he had the potential for unexplored passage within the cave on his property.

Wendy was accompanied by Aaron Collier, Jason Glancy, Joe Chaput, and Caroline Kuiken. We set off on the trek to the Mullins property late morning after breakfast. Shane Mullins property is not too far from Mt Vernon so it was a pretty short trip from GSP.

Upon arrival we waited for Aaron to bring Wendy's cave gear because it was accidentally left behind at GSP which gave everyone a good opportunity to meet Shane and his wife Chanda. The cave was an extremely short walk from the back of the house (maybe 250-300 feet at the most).

Walking up to the cave entrance there was a really cool walkway cut through the limestone. The cave entrance itself was very narrow and tight but only for about 2 ft to get into the main passage or entrance area.



From there we proceeded to descend to the below passage that Shane wanted us to see and determine if this could qualify for some project work in order to open up a piece of rock which could lead to additional virgin cave passage.

The trek to the bottom of the cave was a ton of fun. It was about a 40-50ft drop to the bottom, but the decline went back and forth on both sides on the way down which made it somewhat easy to descend. The climb back up required a little coordination and upper body strength to be able to manage (but not incredibly difficult).

At the bottom of the chute, you come into a stream passage. From there we had about a 20ft belly crawl through 3-4 inches of water to enter into a room with a magnificent piece of flowstone that covered the walls 360 degrees with lots of cave bacon (20-25 ft high). From

there we made our way through another hands and knees crawl to an opening that led to an open passage through breakdown. The ceiling was tall enough to duck walk or climb over. There was a long rock at the end of the passage which made it difficult to get through even for the skinniest of people. Caroline attempted to squeeze a few feet but thought better of it.



Jason thought that this rock was capable of being trimmed back with a limited amount of micro blasting. Plans were made to re-assemble and show up the following day. The group had a fantastic time eating at a local Mexican establishment prior to heading back to GSP.

Day 2-

A different group went back to the Mullins property on Saturday (Day 2). Jason, Caroline, and Joe loaded up all of the tools and made the trek down to the stream passage. Doing that initial drop to the bottom followed by the short belly crawl with Jason's 50lb bag of demolition goodies was a new experience for me (tons of fun though). Once at the bottom we unpacked the tools and Caroline and I received drilling and soda straw lessons from a very patient Jason.



Caroline by her own account was having the time of her life drilling those holes in the limestone. Chandra and Shane came down to be a witness to all the drilling and micro blasting as well. We went through three rounds of drilling and blasting with soda straws until a large enough passage was created for someone to make it through. Caroline and Chandra traversed into virgin cave passage which was really neat to see and hear. They only went in 30 feet or so as Caroline was concerned with some breakdown that looked incredibly loose. But they both said there's further passage and some stream crawling that could be explored at a later date.



Andy Schofield and Brent Smith stayed in the upper passage and came along to begin work on rigging bolts, carabiners, and rope so that there'd be a permanent solution for future cavers to drop the 20-25ft pit on the upper level of the passage.

By the time that the lower passage work was complete everyone came up to watch Brent and Andy finish off the mounting of the last couple of bolts. As soon as it was done Brent was able to drop his first pit ever within a cave. Congrats Brent!

While all this was going on, Caroline and I went to the back of the upper passage of the cave with Shane Mullins. We forgot to take a camera, but we went through a fairly tight borehole crawl (75-100 ft) to get to three consecutive rooms that had some of the most beautiful formations we had ever seen. There were mini dome rooms that were about 20 ft high but were highly decorated. It was totally worth the crawl to get back there to see those formations.

It was a great two-day trip getting to spend time with Shane and Chandra. It was the first time that Shawn had caved in a few years

due to health ailments. Overall, a great trip for COG at KOR.



### Grayson Gunner Trip Report

- Report and Photos: David Ryskamp

COG and GCG members arrived at the shelter Friday night. We slept soundly, knowing that Caroline had seen two bears on the road approaching the shelter. At around 10am the next day, we entered Grayson Gunner led by Harry. In the water passages we encountered many spectacular rimstone dams, several salamanders, and a few albino crayfish. The rimstones were remarkably large, most had walls 4-6 inches thick.

We exited the water and took our first break in the junction room (BFR), where we discovered small cave pearls. We continued our trek towards the H passage until we encountered a ravine approximately 10 feet deep. A portion of our group crossed the ravine, but others were hesitant. We placed a handline, which had to be repositioned after initially ripping through the rock, and I formed

a human bridge over the gap. Despite these efforts, the more discerning members of our group were unwilling to place their lives in the hands of our haphazard handline and bridge, prompting us to exit the muddy passage and return to the stream.



*Ravine*

We continued in the stream passage, eventually exiting to make a crawl through the H passage towards the guardians. We encountered large gypsum deposits during the crawl. Wendy tasted the crystals to confirm they were gypsum and not calcium carbonate. For unknown reasons, she swallowed the crystals.

There were many formations in the stretch of cave past the guardians. We encountered soda straws, stalagmites, and chert that had been undercut into thin layers with formations arising from them. There were small scallops on the ceiling and Harry pointed out areas where water flow had washed away large amounts of dirt, suggesting this section of cave experiences rapidly flowing water. We

continued our crawl to the whale room, where Harry noted that the footprints from prior trips had also been washed away by the water. After a brief break in the whale room, we crawled through the H passage, back to the stream. On the return trip, Caroline and Suz did an ear dip in the stream passage.



*Stream Passage*

Harry expertly guided us out of the cave where we were immediately hit by the intense heat of the day. The many large rimstone dams made this especially unique and well worth the journey. During the trip, no one took more abuse than Ryan's pack, which he rocketed into the water at every available opportunity. After returning to the shelter, we had dinner at the Black Stallion Steak House in town.



*Wendy 'eating' Gypsum*

We had planned to explore a wet cave in Monticello the following day. However, rainstorms overnight caused us to change our plans. We suited up and headed towards Blowing Cave; however, Tera popped a tire while crossing a creek on the way to the cave. Together, COG and CCG members changed the tire in the field and constructed a rock path over the creek. We returned to the shelter, Tera began locating a replacement tire, and other Grotto members continued onto their next destination.



Whale Room

### **COG Conservation's 2024 Trashlympics**

- Jennie Hawkey

As the 2024 Olympics get started in Paris, France, COG Conservation's Trashlympics is in full swing. We have a number of dedicated participants in the caving community and the Scout programs who have contributed their time and effort to clean up trash in caves and the Great Saltpeter Preserve this summer. Their commitment to conservation is truly commendable, and their actions have a positive impact on our environment. While picking up trash may seem like a simple task, it plays a crucial role in conservation efforts. Even small actions, such as removing litter, contribute to preserving our natural resources. When Scouts and cavers collect trash, they not only improve the aesthetics of the caves but also raise awareness about environmental impact. Their efforts inspire others to be mindful of their actions and consider the consequences of littering. The "Trashlympics" program, which encourages clean-up activities, exemplifies

the power of collective action. By coming together, participants create a positive ripple effect. Their work not only benefits the caves and preserves them directly but also fosters a sense of responsibility and stewardship among all who witness their efforts. Through teamwork, they demonstrate that conservation is everyone's responsibility. In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt thanks to these unsung heroes who venture into the depths of caves, armed with trash bags and determination. Their commitment to preserving the caves and our past-time is a shining example of how small acts can lead to lasting change. Let's continue to support their endeavors and ensure that future generations can explore and appreciate these underground wonders.



Click the icons above for an article on Keeping Caves Clean or visit:  
<https://www.mocavesandkarst.org/keeping-caves-clean/>

**COG Conservation Hosts**  
**The 2024**  
**Trashlympics**  
*Preserving nature, one cave at a time*

*"Clean caves, grand prizes!"*

**How to become a trashlympian:**

1. Bring trash bags on all your adventures
2. Collect trash while having an amazing time
3. Flaunt your trash for bragging rights
4. Report your trash amounts (by bag) to Jennie Hawkey at [jcgalletta@gmail.com](mailto:jcgalletta@gmail.com) for a chance to win a grand prize at the end of the year

**P.S. We have a special trip planned for Misty Cave this August where COG Conservation will be hosting a cleanup effort. Contact Jennie Hawkey at [jcgalletta@gmail.com](mailto:jcgalletta@gmail.com) if you're interested in participating or check out the event on COG's Facebook page for details.**

**Spelunger's Cave**

- Report submitted by Brian Devine

7/27 we did a trip into Spelunger's Cave in Wayne County KY. I'll set the scene with when I drove up to the field house in the morning; I'd not seen so many cars at the Hideout since probably the Great 4 Survey Team Bowman's Trip of I Want To Say 2017. I knew there was projected to be lots in attendance, so I had decided to overnight en route in Lexington to avoid any tent setup if beds were in short supply. Unfortunately that and other decisions in the week before the trip had left me short on time to pack. Plan was to have me leave with Cave Team 2 i.e me and Andy Schofield at 10, and once I get started loading out it was clear we wouldn't make that timeline. The upshot, dear reader, is that 3 hours is correct packing time for a bolting trip as we had planned.

Now, Cave Team 1 slated for 9am had also gotten off later by 40" than planned, which fact I let assuage my guilt as I got all the last consolidation packing going. Plus, during the drive from the hotel I had listed all my questions about trip logistics to ensure they got asked before the teams all splintered apart. Our team was going to bolt climb an objective, sandwiched in terms of entry time between teams 1 and 3 surveying. What ended up happening was the teams collectively had such a mishmash of needed exit times, no 2nd day participation planned, and broadly late entries to cave that Chris Bauer punted on our bolting objective, and I was paired with Caleb Crubaugh and Chelsea Parada to survey. The bolting equipment was pushed incrementally ahead to stage near station XZA 19, and I had Chris show me to our objective even though only I had been there before — Chris himself had neither been there before nor was conversant with the survey designations to spell out which station to head for.

However, I'm getting ahead of myself a bit. As to timeline, Andy and I left the Hideout almost an hour after the anticipated 10am. And I should mention the hike to the



Post KOR cleanup by Darryl Marsh(!!)



Troop 221 Wyoming Ohio – Sinks of the Roundstone – Photo by Wendy Orlandi

cave being an overland route I'd not taken before resulted in much of Team 3 leapfrogging us. Suffice it to say the redrafting of objectives once all were down from the 190 foot in-cave drop occurred by 4pm. The other teams were mapping peripherals to passage previously surveyed as a simple lineplot. Chelsea and Caleb wanted to fully survey the canyon passage I and Nathan Canaris had discovered recently but didn't map.

We happened to decide on a survey designation of "SOM" after randomly discussing The Sound of Music in pinpointing Julie Andrews' costume as a type of dress Chelsea was trying to describe. I got the point setter job, and tied in from XZB-14 if memory serves. The initial 5ish shots took us through breakdown, and then we rappelled ~35 feet and started getting bigger distances. The SOM canyon is 8-15 feet wide, very prettily decorated, and the flooring was overwhelmingly gypsum sand and often flat enough to complete sketching quite comfortably. I was really enjoying setting point, having typically been a sketcher and so knowing how to set stations so they were as few as needed to get the data logged. There was not a lot of side leads to check, and although it took us a good 4-5 hours to finish, the plan, profile, and data completely capture the passage. Plus I'm confident no followup needs revisited there. In fact, we probably could have de-rigged and won back 40' of rope and probably should next trip.

After packing up to head back to exit, we had a few slowdowns routefinding. The time by then was 10:15, and we figured it out only to find the big exit climb was out of the order we planned on & everybody's car re-assignment was decided. I underwent a slew of gear issues throughout the trip, and when my turn to climb arrived I was using a loaner footloop that unnervingly snapped with a jarring 'POP' about 1/4 the way up the 190 feet. Also, my new short cowstail was on the long side so I tried halving it with a tieback bend, and once I got to a rebelay just shy of the final ledge I had to strong-arm the

cowstail a bit, and overall climb almost entirely on a pantin (thank you baby Jesus for helping me remember to bring it). There was one final climber in Caleb behind me and it took all his ascent for me to cool down. Fast forward to a disorienting wander through the benighted woods before we even found the road, and we eventually made it back a bit after 4am. Our survey netted 350ish feet of passage, and us 3 closed the kitchen down over pizza and not-so-promptly went to bed in the 5am neighborhood.

### **Speleo Who? – Joe Truskowski**

- Wendy Orlandi

*By now, a few COG members have had the pleasure of meeting Joe and Marsha Truskowski on their property in Rockcastle County. They're on a very short list of cave landowners within COG. Joe is exceedingly generous in sharing his land with others. There's much beauty to explore and there is still work to be done, but more on that at a later date.*

*Joe exemplifies the best qualities of an ideal COG member. He has a strong bent toward conservation and believes in coming alongside the next generation of cavers. He has a spirit of volunteerism and community is important to him. Please join me in welcoming him!*

*Wendy, Membership*

### **Meet the new guy! - Joe Truskowski**

The basics - I am a Christian; been married to the same sweet, kind lady since 1982; have two grown children; served in the USAF; worked as an engineer; and am now retired.

### **Why caving?**

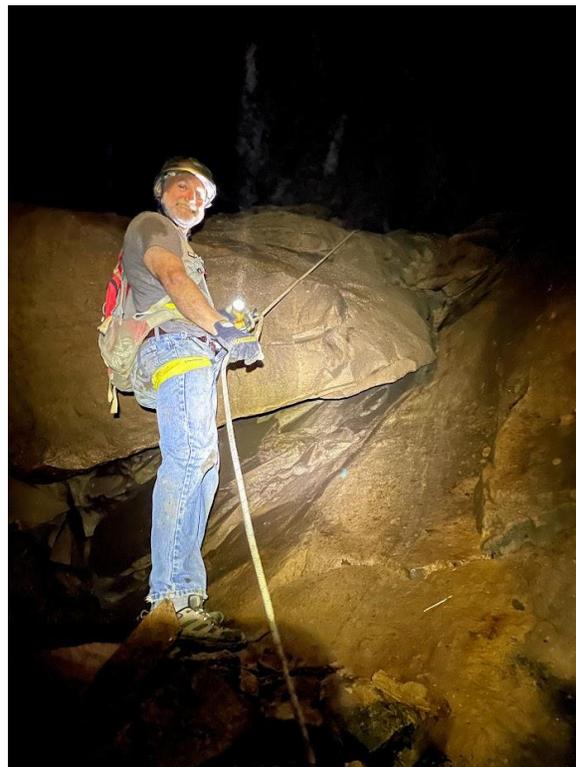
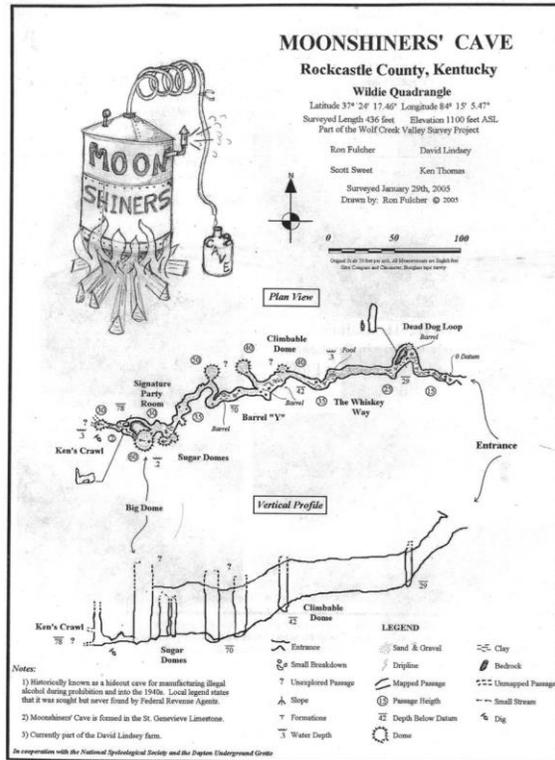
My wife and I moved to Rockcastle County a few years ago and have a few little caves on our property. One, Moonshiners', is a short canyon cave that I enjoy and want to share with others that might appreciate it.



Joe poses during a break from a recent Learn to Lead training. Although new to Rockcastle, he's wasted no time volunteering in vital areas of our caving community and beyond. Photo credit: Chris Bell

Moonshiners' is a beautiful, tall canyon passage cave which is also historically significant.

I love the outdoors - archery hunting, kayak fishing, hiking (not camping), and just being out there. Caving seems to be a good fit. I've thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail, the Long Trail in Vermont, and the Cohos Trail in New Hampshire. I've run a few ultramarathons when my goal was to complete, not compete. And there was a time when I was into rock climbing - on rocks, not in a gym. My daughter and her husband are also avid outdoors people. They were active in the TAG caving community back in the '10s. My wild 5-year-old granddaughter is an adventurer in the making. When they make their annual pilgrimage to see the folks, I want to take them through some of the caves in the area. In order to do that comfortably, I need to get familiar with the local caves available.



Joe exploring one of the many caves on his property. Photo credit: Jessica Robnett

**Caving preferences**

I currently prefer caving that does not rely on equipment so vertical is not on my short list. I enjoy an occasional tight passage but prefer seeing the beauty and diversity of the caves in this area. I love the thrill of discovery!

**Current goals**

I have been involved with a few of the *Learning to Lead* and *scouting* caving trips with Darryl Marsh and Wendy Orlandi over the past few months. It's been really good, and I've met some fantastic individuals. I appreciate propagating the conservation aspect and enjoy being able to help others being introduced and experiencing caves with a respectful attitude. My current desire is to become a trusted, competent asset as a good tailgunner who would be able to assist emerging leaders.



Joe tackling the birth canal in Climax. Photo credit: Chris Bell

I also want to get to explore the other caves on our property. That is going to involve some work opening them up and I will need help to do it safely. It could be an opportunity for others to share the property we are blessed with and maybe experience the thrill of discovery.

**L2L Climax, 7-14-24**

- Wendy Orlandi

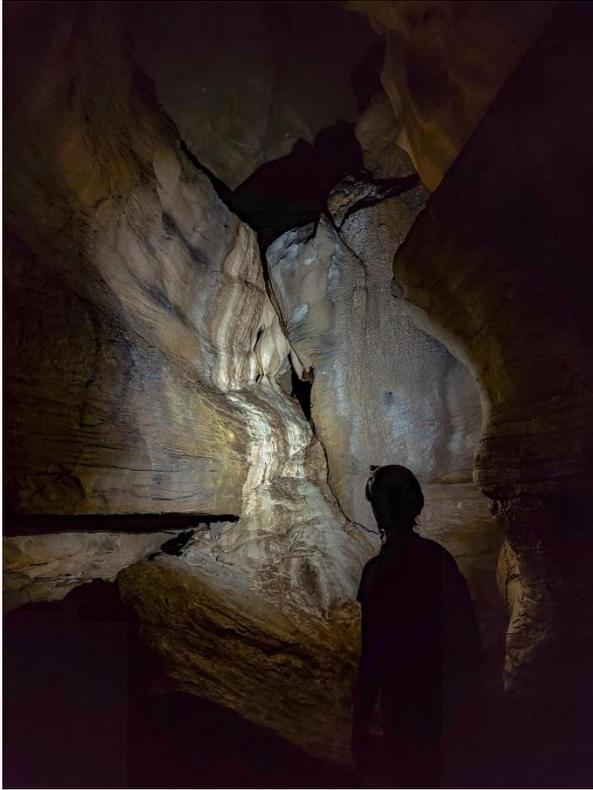
All photo credit: [Chris Bell Music & Photography](#)

If you're new to Central Ohio Grotto or Greater Cincinnati Grotto you may have noticed these two grottos work closely together to support Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve. GSP is managed by member volunteers from GCG, COG and two other grottos. Learn to Lead trips are the product of collaboration between GCG and COG to ensure the success of the Youth Outreach Program. Groups such as Scouts of America troops pay to camp at GSP while volunteers lead the youth on wild cave trips. Not only does this introduce the next generation to caving and conservation but also provides GSP with a significant portion of its operating budget. Anyone interested in leading or tailgating (assisting the guide) a youth trip can join a L2L trip. We prepare you to lead confidently.

On Sunday, July 14, 2024 we tackled Climax under the leadership of Darryl Marsh. Climax is a great youth cave because it's easily adaptable to a wide range of abilities and is always reliably dry during any time of year. It's also a BIG cave. While you can certainly get from entrance to entrance in less than 15 minutes, its multiple levels and side passages would take some time to explore in their entirety. We started the trip by making a beeline from the south to north entrance. Once there, we did the birth canal and checked out a pack rat nest.



Angie makes this column near the south entrance look good!



*Flowstone near the Dragon's Backbone.*



*North Entrance. From left to right Wendy Orlandi, Joe Truskowski, Darryl Marsh, Angela Marie, Doug Nolan, Chris Toivonen and Kyle Kreutz, not pictured, Chris Bell.*



*Our team takes a break. Left to right Joe Truskowski, Wendy Orlandi, Doug Nolan, Darryl Marsh, Angie Marie, and Kyle Kreutz. Chris Bell and Chris Toivonen not pictured.*

After that, it was back to the breakdown room to explore the MANY ways to make the connection from one side to the other such as the Sun passage, the Blade passage, another passage to the left of the Lily Pads and finally Jesus Saves.

We took a break back at the South entrance and then explored some scout highlights there such as the old saltpetre works for free play, the Grand Canyon room and a couple other opportunities for squeezes.



Angie taking a close look at one of the many crayfish inhabited pools of the Grand Canyon Room.

We ended the trip by exploring some side passages off of Jesus Saves that had some really beautiful white formations Darryl named "the chandeliers". We used the old map (BGG survey) frequently to orient ourselves but we are definitely looking forward to the new map being produced by Kyle Kreutz's GCG survey team. Sadly, we didn't have time for the lower level on this trip, but we will visit this cave again soon.



Our intrepid leader, Darryl Marsh

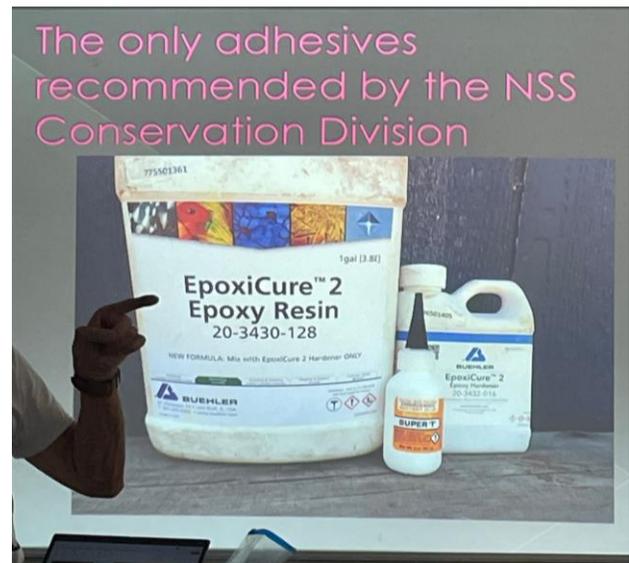
Thank you, Darryl, for another great trip! You do so much for scouts, for GSP and for the caving community. We look forward to the next Learn to Lead trip with you!

## The Cave Formation Repair Project Workshop, NSS Convention 2024

Wendy Orlandi

On July 2nd and 3rd Aaron Collier and I participated in Michael C. Mansur's Cave Formation Repair Project Workshop. Mike is the chair of the Sandia Grotto and the Founder and Project Leader of the CFRP which currently has over 1000 repairs under its belt, mostly in the Southwest US.

We started the workshop with a short presentation and lecture focusing on pre-repair considerations, tools and materials, and a host of examples of the strategies adopted to repair formation in a number of US caves. As any good teacher knows, Mike understands that students learn best from hands on experience. He had several stations set up throughout the room to simulate what we would encounter in cave. We learned how to match broken formation, to mix and apply epoxy, line up drill holes in which to place stainless steel reinforcement pins, and assemble various sized stalactijacks made of springs and pvc pipe.



Epoxy and hardener have to be mixed in a strict 4:1 ratio. Super T can also be used to repair small formations instantly when dried with a butane torch.

## THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)

The next day we headed out to Wonder Cave, which was, at one time, one of the area's premier show caves. After chatting with father and son landowners, Bruce and Brandon Born, we entered the cave through a picturesque yet dilapidated stone building which was added to the Register of National Historic Places in 1987. You could see there were several contrivances present that at one time assisted tourism, such as a carbide lighting system and iron grating over the walking paths.



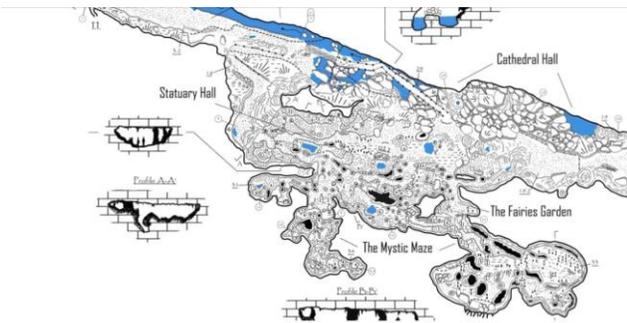
*The commercial entrance of Wonder Cave.*



*Wonder Cave had a 200 light system run on acetylene gas.*



*It's hard to describe the enormity and complexity of the huge formation rooms and pictures certainly don't do them justice.*



Although part of a much larger system, this is the portion of the cave we focused on for repair. More information about the history and survey can be found [here](#).



*The Team assembles in Statuary Hall before breaking into groups.*



*A stunning view of Cathedral Hall in Wonder Cave*

The cave was a stunner but had many broken stalactites and stalagmites. We split into groups and went in search of suitable formation to repair. That proved a bit more challenging than we expected. Since the commercial cave's heyday, many of the broken speleothems had been moved or had become cemented to the floor with calcite accretion. We ended up having three teams repairing three separate stalagmites.



*Aaron Collier and Sierra Shepard (DFW Grotto) attempt a small formation repair with Super T and a butane torch.*



*Sierra Shepard drills the first hole in the base of the stalagmite for the stainless-steel pin.*



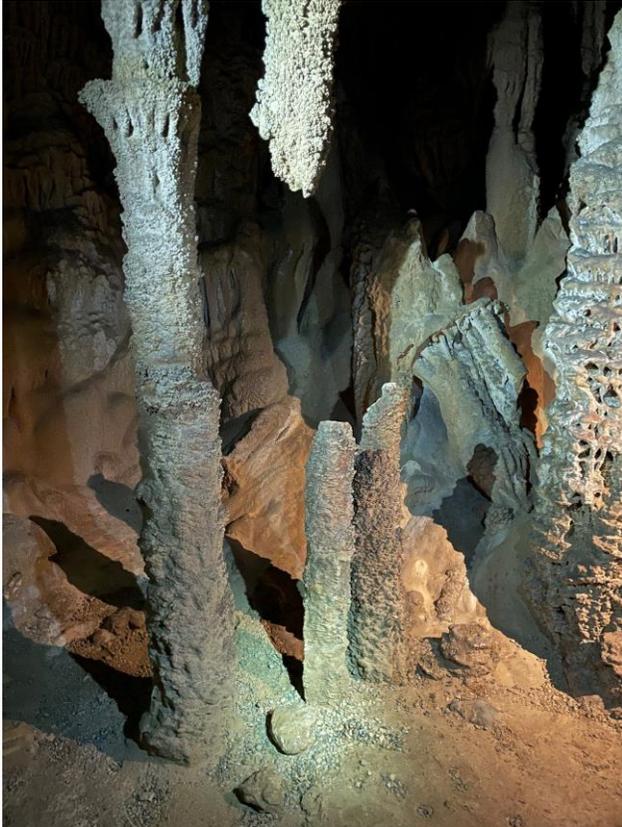
*Aaron Collier uses the hammer drill setting while Meredith Hall Weberg (BATS) steadies the formation.*

After the speleothem has been matched, it is cleaned with pressurized water and a nylon brush and then thoroughly dried with a small butane torch. Holes need to be drilled in both the top and bottom pieces to accommodate a stainless steel reinforcement pin. We used the hammer drill setting for this repair but diamond drill bits also work well, especially in more delicate formation.



*Wendy Orlandi applies epoxy to both surfaces before Quinn Brooks (Huntsville Grotto) on puts the speleothem in place while Michael Mansur supervises.*

After the drilling was finished and the fit had been checked, it was time to apply the epoxy. The resin and hardener has to be mixed in a 4:1 ratio, stirred slowly so bubbles don't form and set aside for 30 minutes before use. Both joining surfaces need a thin, even layer of epoxy. It's best to avoid getting it too close to the edge because it will be squeezed out onto the surface when the pieces are joined. In that case it will need to be wiped away with a cloth.



*The stalagmite in the center has been repaired! It will take several days for the epoxy to cure.*

A paste or slurry can be made with mortar, small pieces of broken formation, dirt and drill dust then applied to conceal any cracks. We had to skip this part as we ran out of time but as you can see, it's looking really great already!

Michael Mansur is passionate, creative and extremely supportive of others. His enthusiasm for formation repair is contagious. He will be COG's guest speaker for our August 22nd monthly meeting. He has donated his book, [The Cave Formation Repair Project Restoring the Beauty of America's Great Caves](#) to the COG library which explains each step of the repair process in detail. Mike has also invited us to bring a team to work with him in Carlsbad Caverns. Please contact me if you're interested. Also, you can check out his workshop presentation here: [CFRP Workshop Presentation](#) For even more information

check out [Preservation, Restoration and Repair](#).

Additional note: We have been invited back to Wonder Cave by the landowner. Let me know if anyone wants to plan a TAG trip.

### [Finding Brian, a Mystery in Pictures](#)

- Wendy Orlandi

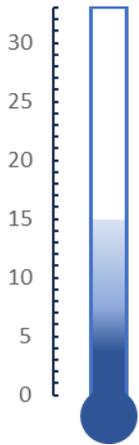


## THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)



For more information about the NEW CaveSim click [here](#).

Be a part of History, Join the GSP 33!  
We Need 18 more people to meet our goal!



Will you be one of the 33 who will commit to supporting GSP with a small \$25 monthly donation over the next 5 years?

Proceeds are used to pay off the loans used to purchase the Caretakers Residence.

Are you interested in a free family camping pass for the next 5 years, a free polo shirt, and a celebration at the end of the commitment period?

Please contact Patrick Gibson for more details!  
614.496.5345, kd8ion@gmail.com

Payment Options:

1. Mail a check Monthly or some other defined period such as quarterly/yearly
2. Pay once in Full
3. Paypal as a recurring payment with GSP 33 in comment

Payments should be made out to "Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve" and mailed to

GSP 33  
% Patrick Gibson  
4211 Caswell Rd  
Johnstown, OH 43031