

Central Ohio Grotto Squeaks January 2024



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:

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Chair:

Andy Schofield
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Treasurer:

Suzanne Gagnon
treasurer@centralohiogrotto.com

Secretary:

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Aaron.Deal@gmail.com

Member-At-Large:

Joe Chaput
jchaput@gjpepsi.com

Member-At-Large:

Mark Swelstad
mswelstad@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. NOTE: Our meetings have for now moved to the 4th Thursday of the month due to a conflict with the church's schedule.

January 5-7	DUG Wormfest - GSP
January 25	COG Monthly Meeting
January 25-28	Winter Adventure Wkd
February 22	COG Monthly Meeting
March 28	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!

About the cover

Congratulations to Wendy Orlandi for her winning the inaugural GSP Caver of the Year award! This award was well deserved for Wendy's significant efforts in helping with Scout caving trips throughout the year, among other achievements.

Congratulations, Wendy – we're proud of you!

From the Chair – Andy Schofield

Happy New Year!

My name is Andy and I'm the new chair for the Central Ohio Grotto. Many thanks to outgoing chair Aaron Deal for stewardship of the grotto the last two years! He will continue on the board as a member at large.

My goals for the grotto next year are:

1. *GSP Involvement*

GSP is a great resource to the grotto, providing a home base to explore many of the caves of Rockcastle KY and surrounding areas. COG has expanded our involvement this past year and I would like to see that continue. There are opportunities for COG cavers to leave their mark on the property through projects or to explore the caves on the property or find new ones! The scout program at GSP is always in need of guides or tail gunners and is a great way to learn caves in the Rockcastle area. Additionally the scout program provides substantial financial contributions to the GSP budget which provides everyone visiting a pleasant experience.

2. *Vertical*

This past year the grotto has held several vertical practices and had numerous cavers show interest in vertical caving. As both Chair and Vertical Chair I plan to continue a regular practice with the hope we will have hardy corps of vertical cavers by this time next year.

3. *Survey*

Survey is another topic that saw some interest last year but did not gain the momentum like vertical did. I would like to add some focus to this area this year and build this muscle. I think surveying is a great way to explore caves in a way you haven't seen them before or explore

brand new caves. COG has a rich history of project caving and surveying, if you've ever been to Sloan's then you've likely seen a map produced by Lou Simpson/COG.

Operationally we will be reviewing our governing documents and making recommendations to be voted on by the membership. Our bylaws have not been revised in several years and need some clarifications and updating.

Looking forward to the next year I foresee a lot of caving in our future. Goals are great and all but at the end of the day I think the most important thing for the grotto is to continue to get underground and cave together.

COG Meeting Location update

We have been meeting at the Worthington Presbyterian Church on the 4th Tuesday of the month for decades, and recently they've let us know that the church is no longer available on that evening. The board continues to explore options but for now we will move our meeting night to the 4th THURSDAY of each month. It is understood this causes conflict with a few members but for now this is the best solution.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please raise them to any board member or at a meeting, which for now, will be the 4th Thursday of the month. 😊

Mark S.

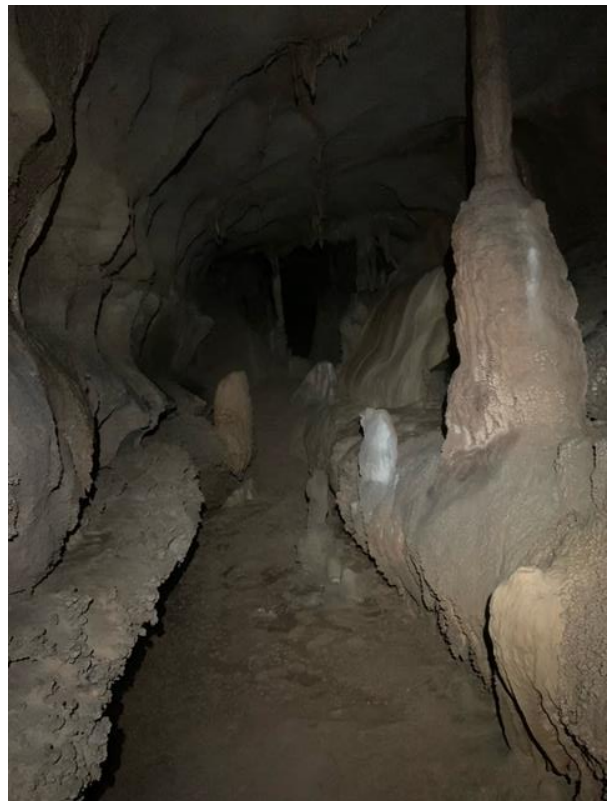
Trip Report: Jennifer's Work – Ryan Braga – December 9th and 10th

Nick Wayne, Kyle Kreutz, Stephanie Suen, Doug Nolan and I went to Jennifer's Tight Hole/ Boatdock Springs and rigged a new hand line at the entrance that added more foot loops, longer rope that touches the bottom and a better tie to the tree base to not strangle the tree. While Nick, Kyle and Doug finished up the entrance



rope, Stephanie and I went to bolt a traverse to check out the other side however, the rock was too chossy so we elected to attack it from the bottom rather than the side. We set up another handline to safely get halfway up however at the top it got quite sketchy so we opted not to go for it. The next day Nick, Kyle and I took a fun trip back in and poked around and discovered some next to us stuff like a dome that was in a crawl that we always passed. We're looking forward to getting back and doing more survey work in the future in the cave!

Pictures Ryan Braga, Kyle Kreutz, Stephanie Suen





Sloansgiving Weekend – Nina Soluski

Hi, this is Nina Soluski, GCG, BIG, BAG member, unfortunately not COG. I live in Bellevue, KY, right across the river from downtown Cincy.

Thursday, maybe 1:50pm-ish, I met Patrick Gibson [PG] & Jamie Thompson [JT] at the Florence, KY rest stop off 1-75S and we all carpooled down together. I have a lead foot, so we get there to the Cumberland Lake area around 4:30 pm. Once in Somerset, we ate at a cute hot dog stand "The Goodie Shack", which served "K-Mart" flavored cheeseburgers...

not great. The fried mushrooms, onion rings, and mini corn dogs were quite amazing tho. This is by the "Trifecta"



of dollar stores: Family Dollar, Dollar Tree, Dollar Gen.... Never seen by me in the wild before. The Dollar Gen was right across the street.

Thursday evening was filled with fun and excitement, as everyone was just giddy to be finally there, after months of planning.

Everyone was responsible for their own dinner on Thursday, so no communal dinner that night. JT & PG started brineing the turkeys in their bags, and I



thought that moment was worth taking pictures, but it really wasn't; I guess I was just tickled about them wrestling huge hunks of meat and being grossed out.

We cooked snacks, we drank, and I forced almost everyone with eyeballs on the TV to watch the Bengals lose to the Ravens... and I wasn't happy. This entailed "Ninner" to come out and to overindulge in the Fireball. Thanks Nina. I started drinking water after the game, and



I was all good then. People are hanging out upstairs on the large covered porch. There are hook & ring games and

surprisingly, a massage table...? Well, PG gave out massages to willing participants. As the night wore on, I shut my fingers in the inner part of a door-jam... a metal door to note, and I fractured my middle finger (confirmed the following Monday.) So caving on Friday was out for me, as it was too much pain on my end. Andy S helped me with a bag of ice for my hand & JT loaned me some freeze spray. I probably fell asleep at 4:30am, as the pain in my hand was unbearable.

Friday was an early one for me, as always. I helped clean the kitchen after breaky, and most everyone, except for a handful of us, went caving in Sloans Valley. Debi & Scott Pavey, JT, Tera W., Jennie H., Mark S., and I went "hiking". That is what I was told; We went caving. I had no gear except 2 lights lol. Our first stop was to "look at the entrance of" Dyke's Bridge Cave in the Lake Cumberland/ Pulaski County area. Very

easily walkable: almost like a storm sewer in the city, & yes, we saw life; 1 bat sleeping it's cute little hangover off. We continued through the entire passage and poked our heads out the second back entrance. Jennie went on to explore more, as the rest of us ladies just hung back. Please note, I'm in an expensive dress coat and Northface "boots" that were more for show than walking.



Afterward, we went to Wells Cave, where Mark decided to almost back into Jamie's loud red "rental" car, but all was good. The entrance was very wide-mouthed and beautiful with trees lining the perimeter; but at this point, my hand was throbbing and I was nauseous, so I sat at the cute bench at the front, and watched Tera and Jennie traverse in. Outside, Scott tried to dishevel a 100+lb boulder from its loose crevasse with a single dry-rot wood stick. It was the most entertaining thing I've ever seen an 'ego' go for. He's our Pavey tho, and he feeds and keeps us hydrated, so I didn't give him too much shit. Went to Wal-Mart, then went back to the house, my hand got all fixed up, and started on the lunch.

The rest of the night is just our normal shenanigans: Joe made some pizzas from



Costco (first dinner), and the Paveys made 4 styles of wings (second dinner). People are playing Twister in the main living room after dinner, I partake and then bust out my yoga moves by showing off like a dummy and get disqualified. The party was still

going on in the living room as I hit the hay.

I woke up early, 5:30am at this point. I stay up and I clean maybe 100+ cans, cups, drinks and weird goo off the floor. Whatever. I'm a clean freak.



Eventually, more cavers start to arise and we make coffee, breaky and hangover cures for the group. We leave for Sloans at about 10am, it takes about 35 minutes to get there. We pit stop at the Marathon gas station to exercise the butt demons and shoot the shit with the other group that is already there. Dan F, Terri W, Bill P, Suz G., Matt J., Nick W. are in the other group. The morning is starting out quite nice now: the sun is shining, JT and Dale A. are feeling in pretty good spirits about the cave. We get to the Crockett's entrance, and to my surprise and delight, my Cave

'Zaddy', Mike Goltzene & Mikey H. from the area are there! The first group descends the ladder at about 11am, then immediately the rest of us: myself, JT, Mike G, Dale, & Ashely. We walk along the passage, and we eventually just say, let's just do most of the cave together (as the other group was going to "Post



Office", and we were not planning on it). The passages inwards reminded me of "Peachers Cave" in Indiana: decorated with short stalagmites on counter level hills, but then opened up to huge borehole rooms/breakdown areas, similar to "Breathing Hole", also in Indiana.

I am the first to admit: I'm impatient and a little too fast in-cave. I forget to look around and observe, some say a 'sport' caver. I just want to keep moving to keep warm. So poor Bill was left in the 'dust' of my tracks. We had to stop to chill and wait for others to catch up. We saw many beautiful huge rooms, and eventually came to a dozen or more pools that would



eventually lead us back to the 'Fountain of Youth' formation/waterfall. We hang out here for a good chunk of time and explore/have some snacks, both on the lower and upper level. We have been caving for 3 hours at this point, and some

people are just done. I could have done a little more caving, but I'd rather stay with the larger group then break off. I put some dance music on from my downloaded playlist on the phone to keep the energy



up. We exit out the back, and walk through water that is maybe knee height on me, keep walking and then we see the daylight! We do a short crawl on hands and knees, then it opens up to beautiful "Great Rock Sink" entrance with a bowl/canyon-like feel of woods surrounding it. We then hike back to the cars; maybe a mile walk, not bad. Mike G got permission to leave this entrance from the landowner himself. Highly recommended to do so for future cavers, as they closed this entrance in the past.

JT and I have a snack at some Tex-Mex place in Somerset, and it's fine, it does the trick. Night is fast approaching as we pull into the drive of the rental, since it's late November. We all regroup with the Paveys. We cooked ample amounts of food. Scott deep-fried the 2 turkeys out back. I helped Nick with his mashed potatoes, along with my 3 dishes I made. Many shots were had with me and others I have converted onto Fireball (teehee). After dinner, Patrick has a series of weird games to raise money for the hot tub project at GSP, in which he never collects money. Way to go Patrick! Later in the night, JT & I started up the fire outside. I bought 3 bundles of firewood, but the huge logs on the property were actually

quite dry and burned slow. Eventually half the house was out there. I got too drunk. I fall asleep on the couch upstairs, as I gave Ashley my bed for the night.

Sunday morning I woke up with a major hangover, my own dang fault. We start packing up and cleaning the house. I am ready to go by

8:30am, but I "lost" my car keys. I help clean the house and straighten everything up. Found my keys at the bottom of my clothes bag. Drunk Nina never told Sober Nina. We eventually say our goodbyes and depart. The boys attempt to keep up with me and follow

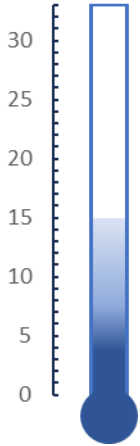


me back to Cincinnati, where we go to Jungle Jims in Eastgate at about 12:30pm. PG has never been to this location, and I grew up down the street from there, so I know it well. To much of our enjoyment, we bump into Dana Sutherland in the fish aisle. The lines for checkout are insanely long. We get out of JJ at about 2pm. The boys are hungry, so we have lunch at Mt. Carmel Brewery, which is delicious! We say our goodbyes and go our separate ways.

I tried to be helpful: clean, cook and make due all weekend. I enjoy helping. At the end of the day, I love my community and cave fam. Caving that weekend was so much fun, as I've never been in Sloans before.

-Peace out, Nina

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