



# Central Ohio Grotto Squeaks

## June 2024



Cover photo by Ryan Braga – Danika Mayback in Briggs Dam Cave #2

## 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.

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

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**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>June 21-23</b>	<a href="#">Karst-o-Rama 2024</a>	GSP Preserve – hosted by Greater Cincinnati Grotto
<b>June 27</b>	COG Monthly Meeting	Worthington Presbyterian Church
<b>June 29</b>	Grayson Gunner	ADVANCED – contact Wendy Orlandi
<b>July 1-5</b>	<a href="#">NSS Convention</a>	Sewanee, TN
<b>July 25</b>	COG Monthly Meeting	Worthington Presbyterian Church
<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

Contact Info for Trip Organizers:

- Wendy Orlandi - wenlo0319@gmail.com
- Ryan Braga - ryanbraga1007@gmail.com
- Pat Gibson - patrickrgibson@yahoo.com

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 Join us for our next monthly meeting at Worthington Presbyterian Church on THURSDAY, June 27th, 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.

Our June presenter will be Pat Kambesis, bio below. After the meeting, we head over to Villa Nova Ristorante for pizza on 5545 N High St, Columbus, OH 43214. Please bring cash to cover your share.



Pat Kambesis is Associate Director for Science and Exploration at the Center for Human GeoEnvironmental Studies at Western Kentucky University and will present on Cave Exploration on the Big Island of Hawaii.

Pat is an instructor for the Department of Earth, Environmental and Atmospheric Studies at WKU and is faculty for the WKU/Mammoth Cave National Park Karst Field Studies program where

she teaches courses in cave and karst data collection, data management and visualization, and Geographical Information Science. She holds a BS in Biology from University of Illinois, a BS in Geology from Southern Illinois University, MS in Geoscience from WKU and a PhD in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences from Mississippi State University. She also is a registered GIS Professional (GISP).

Hawaii’s Emesine Cave System (23 km) and Kaumana Cave (2km), on the Big Island, are separated by 30 km of lava flow and no known caves or leads at the midpoint gap between the two systems. Inspired by suspicious looking dark spots on Google Earth, we basalt-walked over miserable stands of Ohia and other entrance-obscuring vegetation with an occasional pig trail for respite. Blind ambition and the blessing of Pele allowed us to score a couple of entrances that eventually connected into the beginnings of a cave system that went “mauka” (up the mountain) toward Emesine and “makai” (down the mountain) toward Kaumana. So far an integrated 6.1 km of cave has been explored and mapped with open leads on both ends. The gap to Emesine has narrowed to 2 km and that to Kaumana to “only” 18 km. A connection of the two has the potential for a 50+ kilometer cave system with a vertical extent of over 1000 meters.

CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO 5-YEAR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

**75 MEMBERS ON OUR  
75<sup>TH</sup> 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**

**Odds and Ends:**

**Dues**

Individual Dues    \$20  
Family Dues        \$25

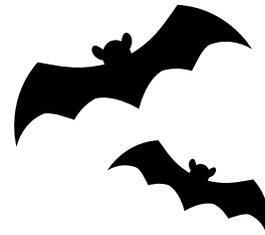
Dues may be paid during the Grotto monthly meeting, mail, or Venmo and should be paid by the end of March.

Suzanne Gagnon  
10548 Elderberry Drive  
Plain City, Ohio 43064

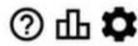
Venmo: @suzgagnon (Suz with red helmet)  
<https://venmo.com/u/suzgagnon>

**2024 Budget**

Central Ohio Grotto - 2024 Budget	
<u>Income</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>
<b>Dues</b>	
Individual - \$20	55    \$1,100.00
Family - \$25	15    \$375.00
<b>Donations/Gifts</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,475.00</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Meeting &amp; Website</b>	
Domain Name Registrar	(\$10.14)
Online Meeting Expense	
Meeting Location	(\$125.00)
Web Hosting	(\$95.95)
<b>Memberships/Awards/Recognitions</b>	
Ohio Cave Survey Membership	(\$30.00)
RKC Membership	(\$25.00)
Joe Gibson Award	(\$25.00)
Volunteer Recognition	(\$100.00)
<b>Community Outreach</b>	
Conservation	(\$50.00)
Community Support	(\$100.00)
Marketing	(\$100.00)
<b>Events</b>	
Grotto Events	(\$200.00)
Survey	(\$50.00)
<b>Other</b>	
Library	(\$100.00)
Survey	(\$150.00)
501(c)(3) fee	(\$275.00)
<hr/>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(\$1,436.09)</b>
<hr/>	
<b>2023 Net Profit (Loss)</b>	<b>\$38.91</b>
<hr/>	
From Savings	
Vertical Gear	\$900.00



**Wordle**



What do you mean 'Disto' isn't in the word list!?!?

**COG History**

**50 Years Ago**

In the June 1974 Squeaks there is a small blurb stating "A thousand feet was surveyed on March 30 to put Sloan's over the 22 mile mark. The team surveyed "about a thousand feet around the Fountain of Youth and a series of little overlooks near the First Lake Room."

There was an article titled 'Homo-spelunkus or Who are These Cavers' by Dr. M.S. Lewis (a pseudonym). The article is a tongue in cheek analysis of 4 types of cavers:

*Scientists* – those who are seeking to learn more about caves.

*Adventurers* – the thrill-seekers

*Sado-Masochists* – those who enjoy the pain and suffering of caving.

*Retreatists* – those who cave to get away from home, their jobs, or responsibilities.

According to the article, these can be reduced to cavers who want to find something or cavers who want to get away from something.

I think most of us are motivated by all of these from time to time!



**May COG Survey – Briggs Dam Cave #2**

~ Ryan Braga

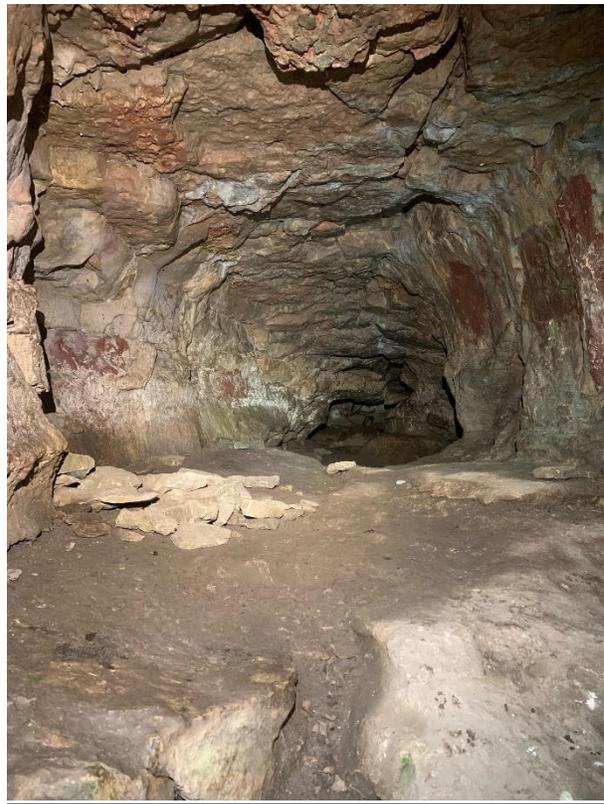
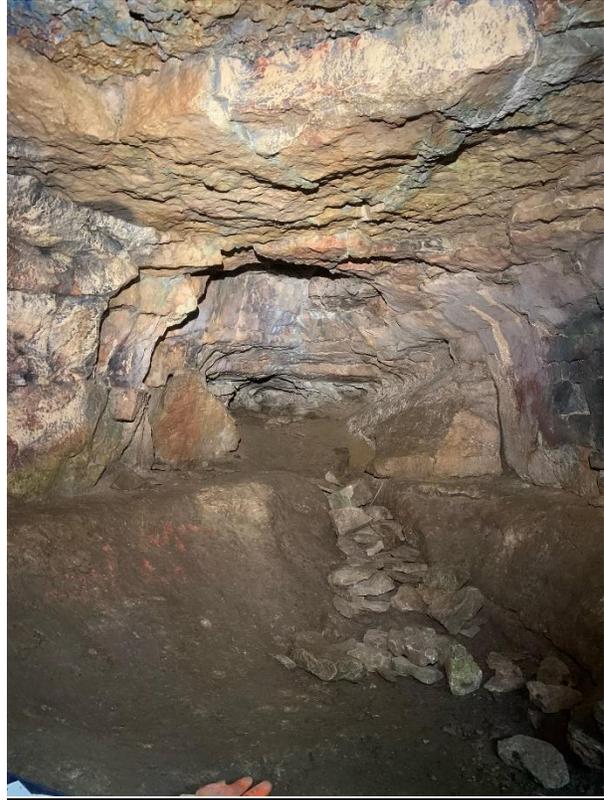
Wrapping up this 80ft cave in our backyard, it made me realize how nice it truly is to have caves, even very small ones, so close to home to explore and in which have fun on a weeknight. After surveying Briggs Dam Cave 1, I opted to continue in the same canyon and do the other cave right next door before moving on to other locations around Columbus. After the initial reconnaissance I did of the canyon, I returned to do a solo survey of this cave with a disto. There is a particular fish store close by that I just adore so while surveying, I could not stop thinking about how after the survey I'd swing by and pick up some new friends. With this I

committed the ultimate sin... I surveyed and got the data for the cave but I didn't sketch and opted to come back at a later time. After over a month later, I finally returned with Danika Mayback to do some sketching. While sketching it was apparent that my last survey shot was much off so with only having my suunto tandem and a distance laser with me, we reshot the final passage.

Now onto the cave info! While being a small typical Ohio cave, this cave still has the most character out of any of the small Ohio caves I've visited so far! When entering this cave it feels like (for my Rockcastle people) a baby Goochland. You are immediately hit with a split in the passage just like the main Goochland entrance. To the right is 20 feet or so followed by a subhuman crawl that trends to Briggs Dam Cave 1. To the left is a long hallway with a tiny passage breaking off to the right filled with cobble that has an interesting stump of a stalagmite and some baby bacon pieces surrounded by a billion tiny flies. Continuing in the main hall you'll slip under some dangling rocks and into a little room that turns left. To the left is some nice flowstone and further in is some subhuman crawl that is believed to circle on itself and no go anywhere. To the left of this is a tiny cubby hole with some more nice tiny cave bacon. With that you've seen the whole cave! The multiple passages and cave formations makes this truly a nice cave for Ohio standards.

(Editor – map included in this newsletter towards the end.)

All photos courtesy of Ryan Braga





### Roppel Weller's Entrance Trip Report

~ Ethan Link

Ethan Link, Ryan Braga, Kevin Market, A'dra Peterson, Danika Mayback and Tory Roland

A trip to the seldom accessible Weller's entrance of Roppel Cave (mammoth cave system) was offered at Speleofest for only 6 people, including the leader, Kevin Market. Signing up for tours at Speleofest is always pretty aggressive, but the five of us knew that it would be extra difficult this time. Three of us grabbed pens and stood around the cave trip sign up area; when the signups were posted, everyone rushed in and very quickly started pushing each other around. The three of us each wrote one other's name and somehow we managed to get everyone's name on the sign up sheet. (To get out of the area, I had to climb down under the sign up sheet).

The day of the trip began with a short drive to Cave city to a small property off the side of a country road. The hike to the cave consisted of a short hike through a junkyard littered with cars, metal and a tree which has grown into a camper towards what looks like a house from the Hobbit, with a 3 foot door, seated in a small depression. After getting inside the small shack, Kevin threw open a small hatch in the floor and opened the door to the worst part of the trip, 150ft of ladders down into the cave. While the way down into the cave was not exactly fun, it would be much worse on the way out (flash flood warning anyone?)

After reaching the bottom of the ladders, off to the right we saw a small river, and a walking passage. Off to the left, there was a small hole in the ground into a canyon that we followed into a dome, with a small waterfall. The Weller entrance includes many *improvements* put into place by the landowner including ropes, the ladders, plank bridges, and chiseled passages, including this canyon. The thing about chiseled passages, when you take a chisel to rock, you make it incredibly sharp. My back and sides were covered in deep cuts after walking through this passage, and I would get more on the way out.

After reaching another large room with several passages and some formations, we climbed up some breakdown and inched down into a narrow canyon which dropped out beneath us with the ground around 10ft below. In front there was a break in the side of the canyon that you kinda had to "flop" your body into to make it into the next room through a 10in squeeze. Navigating this part of the cave took the entirety of our group around 10 minutes to complete. Tory, Kevin, and I were waiting up a side passage atop a canyon waiting for the others to come through for around 5 minutes, before we suspected that something had gone wrong. In the small room, above the 10in squeeze, there was an 8-ish inch hole that A'dra and Danika had chosen to go through instead of pushing

down into the canyon. Ryan had followed them through the hole and had to struggle for a while to get completely through. At the top of the canyon, we were bewildered as to what had happened because there was no other way for the others to go, the passage only led up into the canyon.

Above the small room there was a walking canyon with many interesting formations that continued on for quite a while, many with very interesting shapes indicative of very high winds in the passage for many thousands of years, which intermittently stopped. Throughout this part of the cave, there were several sporty climbs up and down, along with many other interesting structures including horn coral and crinoids.

After several climbs and crawls we entered a very large trunk passage with several piles of breakdown and many gypsum formations. As we went down the passage, we began to hear a very loud rumbling in the distance from a waterfall. At the same time, Kevin retold the story of being caught in this passage when it was flooding after very heavy rainfall. Due to the flash flood warning, Kevin decided to check it out and see what the water level looked like. (This is part of the cave where water flows down towards the mammoth cave connection area). Once we reached the source of the water we saw two very large waterfalls, creating a small stream which flowed off into a canyon.

After resting by the stream for a second, we decided to start heading back out of the cave. On the way out several passages with no water and very small trickles were emitting large amounts of water into the cave. The formerly dry chisled passage now contained a few inches of running water along the bottom, the waterfalls were louder, and worst of all, there was now a waterfall on the ladders into the cave. After completing the loop and heading back towards the ladders, we decided to head down the other walking passage to look at some other formations and

fossils before heading up the ladders and out of the cave.

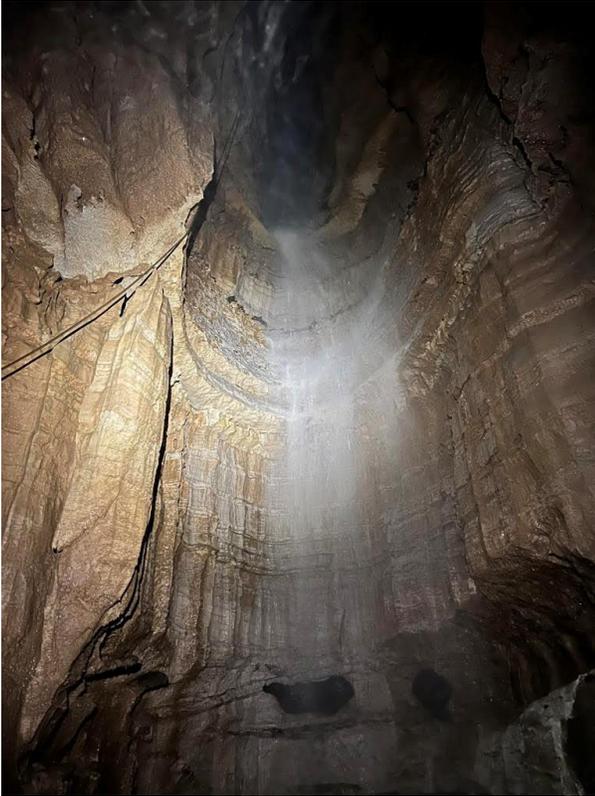


Picture courtesy Ryan Braga



Picture courtesy A'dra Peterson

THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)



Picture courtesy Ethan Link



Picture courtesy Ethan Link



Picture courtesy Ethan Link



Picture courtesy Ethan Link

THE CENTRAL OHIO GROTTO (COG)



Picture courtesy Ethan Link

Picture courtesy Ethan Link

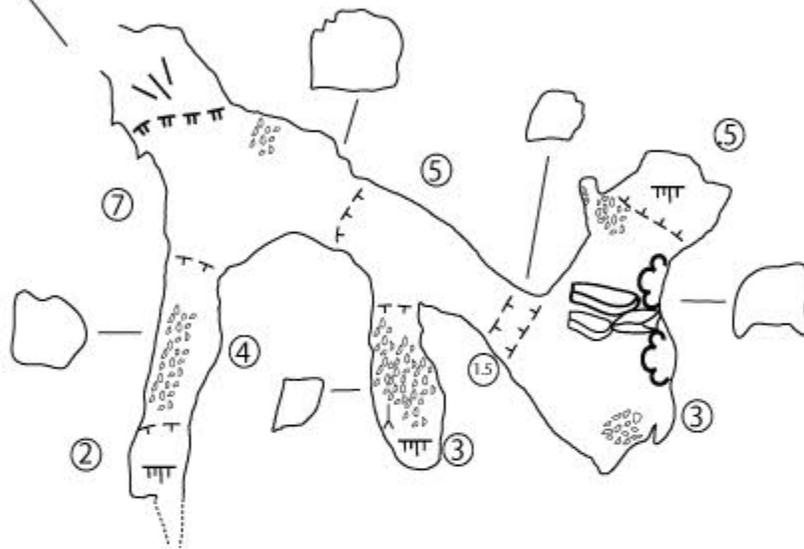


Picture courtesy Ethan Link



Briggs Dam Cave 2  
Franklin County, Ohio  
5/2024

Entrance



Tight Trends  
to Briggs 1

Disto & Suunto  
Survey

80ft of total  
passage



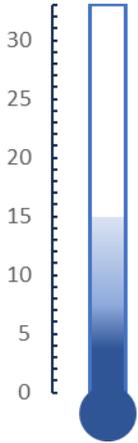
Legend

Drip Line	TT	Soda Straws	TTT
Stalagmite	A	Slope	//
Ceiling Height	③	Cave Bacon	wavy
Ceiling Drop <small>(Hatchmark point towards Low side)</small>	T	Large Rock	T
Flowstone	wavy	Cobble	circles

Survey:  
Ryan Braga  
Danika Mayback

Cartography:  
Ryan Braga

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