

## MEETING NOTICE

The May meeting of the Central Ohio Grotto will be held Friday, May 9, 1986 at the home of Bill and Karen Walden. Please plan to arrive early. The official meeting time is eight o'clock; however, our social hour will begin at seven.

Bob Strosnider from the Winchester office of the Daniel Boone National Forest will be attending our meeting. Bob has a slide presentation for us and will answer questions we might have regarding the Forest Service.

As usual food and beverages will be provided. To assist the host and hostess, it has been a COG custom to "chip" in for the food and beverages. Please plan to attend.

Bill and Karen's address is:

223 Fallis Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214  
Telephone: 614-268-5865

## General Information

The Central Ohio Grotto meets in various members homes at 8:00PM on the second Friday of each month. Because of conflicts, the meeting host may on occasion elect to have the meeting on the Saturday following the second Friday. Please watch the Squeaks, the club newsletter, for the meeting dates or contact any officer or committee member for meeting information.

Dues are \$6.00 per year per mailing of the Squeaks. Dues are intended to cover the cost of producing and mailing the Squeaks; therefore, additional members at the same mailing address are not required to pay additional dues unless they want a copy of the Squeaks.

The date on which your dues are payable is printed on the last line of the mailing label. Please make sure that it is correct. Send dues to the COG Treasurer, Karen Walden.

The Central Ohio Grotto does most of their caving in Pulaski County and the surrounding counties of Kentucky. One of our members, Paul Unger, owns a cabin in Pulaski County and is kind enough to let grotto members use the cabin as a base. The cabin has a well (you pull the water by bucket) and electricity. (All the comforts of home.) All Paul asks is that the cabin be left clean, that you take your garbage with you (No curbside collection service in the woods!), and occasional help with maintenance (You may be requested to take a lawn mower down).

1986 officers of the Central Ohio Grotto include:

Chairman:

Jim Blankenship  
2777 Shelly Drive  
Columbus, Ohio 43207  
614-497-0402

Secretary:

Nancy Mahoney  
24 Estates Lane  
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

614-866-6767

Treasurer: Karen Walden  
223 Fallis Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214  
614-268-5865

Squeaks Editor: Bill Walden  
223 Fallis Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214  
614-268-5865

Other Individuals to contact include:

Trips and  
Vice-Chairman: Paul Unger  
8213 U. S. 35 East  
West Alexandria, Ohio 45381  
513-839-4258

Trips: Chuck Daehnke  
664 Wetmor Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214  
614-263-7011

Vertical: Andy Franklin  
426 North Park Place  
Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387  
513-767-9405

## Minutes April Meeting

The April 11, 1986 meeting of the COG was held at the home of Clovis and Carol Dawsom. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jim Blankenship.

The minutes of the March meeting were read and apoproved.

The treasurer's report showed a balance of \$169.74 in the treasury.

### Committee reports:

Squeaks: Bill thanked everyone for the articles that were submitted. He made his standard request for articles and also for artwork suitable for the Squeaks cover. Postage for the last issue was approximately \$22.00.

Verticle: Andy Franklin and Mike Gray have set a new day for their climbing practice. The new date is June 7, 1986.

Safety: Bruce had nothing to report.

Old Business: Paul said the Forest Service has signed the MOU. He discussed plans to carry out the program and what will be involved. He reminded us that Bob Strosnider will be at the May meeting. The main concern now is getting organized with the other grottoes. The COG will need a co-ordinator for this. Volunteer agreement forms must be filled out, which will be done as soon as possible. He explained more of the involvement we will have with the Forest Service.

Bill went over the upcoming convention again. So far, grotto members who will be going are: Bill and Katie Walden, Paul Unger, Len Gibler, and Jim



Blankenship.

New Business: The upcoming Speleofest was discussed. It will be hosted by the Louisville Grotto. Bill suggested we support it since they supported our Karst Encounters.

Bill read a letter from Linda Lee Baker on the NSS controversy over the gating of Trout Cave. She claims it is not needed and will cost over \$20,000.

Bill then read a letter from Janet Thorne on the same issue. She says gating would be advisable, especially during the bat hibernation. It is felt that the cave is a suitable habitat for the Indiana Bat, which is becoming an endangered species.

Bill had forms for grotto members to sign concerning this matter. One form was for gating the other against it.

There was a discussion concerning whether the grotto should use grotto funds to join Bats International Association.

After all the discussion concerning bats and cave gating, a vote was taken. The grotto was 100% for gating but 100% opposed to doing it with NSS money. The vote was unanimous in favor of a separate fund being established for gating purposes.

Len Giber, using Clovis' and Carol's word processor, wrote a letter voicing the grotto's feelings on the issue. All of the members at the meeting signed it. A copy was sent to Linda Baker, Janet Thorne, and the Board of Governors addressed to the NSS office.

There were no trip reports.

The May meeting will be at the home of Bill and Karen Walden.

Submitted by -- Nancy Mahoney

## THE LETTERS CONCERNING THE GATING OF TROUT CAVE

Board of Directors  
National Speleological Society  
Cave Avenue  
Huntsville, Alabama 35810

April 11, 1986

Dear Directors;

At our regular monthly meeting on April 11, our Grotto thoroughly discussed the issue of the gating of Trout cave. We are unanimous in our desire to see the cave gated, but have serious reservations about the propriety of using limited Society funds for such a costly project. We feel that so much money might be better used to further other aims of the NSS.

We are also unanimous in our support of establishment of another fund, similar to the purchase fund, to finance the building of a high quality gate.

Yours most sincerely,

The COG membership

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William D. Walden  
223 Fallis Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214

April 22, 1986

Dear Bill:

Many thanks for your letter and for sending me a copy of the COG members' position on gating of Trout Cave.

COG's statement does mention a concern with the use of NSS funds "for such a costly project", and I certainly agree that the one estimate which the Society would have to raise through donations. The gate which this amount would fund is one which has been constructed by the Cave Conservation Institute at a number of bat caves around the country and which has been shown by experience to minimize potential long-range costs resulting from vandalism.

I am in the process of investigating alternative designs for gates which would result in less of an initial expense to the NSS, although we should recognize that the longer-term repair costs for these less expensive gates may be greater. I also am investigating alternatives to construction of a gate as the closure mechanism. Hopefully, we will be able to discover some means to reduce construction costs to the Society while at the same time ensuring that closure effectively will eliminate human disturbance of the hibernaculum.

If you or other members of COG have experience with alternative methods of closure, I certainly would be glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Janet Thorne

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Mr. William D. Walden  
The Central Ohio Grotto, NSS  
223 Fallis Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43214

April 21, 1986

Dear Bill:

I received your response to my open letter concerning the Trout Cave gating.

Thank you very much, and please pass along my thanks to the Central Ohio Grotto, for taking the time to discuss the issue and send me your comments. I much appreciate your well-written and thoughtful response.

For your information, I plan to compile the responses I receive and make them available to the BOG and any and all other interested persons.

In your letter, you mentioned your grotto's serious reservations about allocating limited NSS funds to the construction of the gate. These



reservations are shared by many of us. The NSS BOG, at its October 1985 meeting, created the Trout Cave Gate Fund in order that persons and organizations in support of the gate could donate money specifically for the construction and maintenance of the gate. At the present time, this fund is woefully lacking in contributions and is several thousands of dollars short short of having the sum needed for the project. Since your grotto is in support of the gate, I would like to request that you give serious consideration to making a donation to this fund; it would truly help. You may send your contribution to the NSS Office in Huntsville.

In addition, the building of the gate apparently will require a sizable number of volunteer laborers. I hope that, if your grotto is located within a day's drive of Trout Cave, you will seriously consider offering manpower when it is called for in the future.

Thank you once again for taking the opportunity to voice membership opinion.

Sincerely,

Linda Baker  
NSS Director

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## **Donations?**

Well, COGers, we recommended a special fund to raise the money to build a gate for Trout cave. Can we follow through and make a donation?

## **OHIO VALLEY REGION NSS**

by Bill Walden

Received a letter from Gary Bush concerning the Ohio Valley Region of the NSS. The letter included a questionnaire as to the members feelings about OVR. I did not return the questionnaire as I have not taken an active role but feel that OVR is needed.

I called Gary and have invited him to the May meeting. He has obligations for a work week end in Rockcastle County and will be unable to attend. However, he will try to attend the June meeting. Meanwhile, we might give some thought to the region and how we might support it.

## **BIG KENTUCKY TREES**

by Paul Unger

Trees, the giants of the plant world and our most spectacular visible natural feature, have always had a special place in man's life. Originally used as a source of warmth and light in dark cold caves, man now enjoys the cozy atmosphere wood structured buildings afford us. However, with the growth of our civilization, and particular the rapid expansion west, most of the magnificent stands of timber have been cut, leaving only the remnants. As a result, people became interested in locating and protecting individual trees which represent the "grand daddy" of their species.

The search for the largest trees of each species was began in 1940 by the American Forestry Association. A list, now called the National Register of Big Tress, contains the names of 661 species. Kentucky is the residence of eight of these champions and two co-champions.



Kentucky also maintains a list of state champion trees. The list was initiated in 1968 by the Kentucky Division of Forestry and now contains the names of 118 species. This lists only the largest reported specimens. Some species have not been reported which are known to be native to Kentucky. Further, this list is continually changing as new species are added to the list, and former champions are replaced either because they die or a larger specimen is reported.

For trees to be included in this list of state champions, only those shown as native or naturalized trees in the Check List of Native and Naturalized trees of the United States by Elbert Little are included. Kentucky uses the American Forestry Association's index system to determine which tree is the champion.

Data needed on each tree must include the following to be considered a champion candidate:

1. Correct species or variety name.
2. Circumference in feet and inches at 4.5 feet above the ground.
3. Total vertical height to the nearest foot.
4. Average diameter spread of crown to nearest foot.
5. Location of tree.
6. Date Measured.
7. Name and address of owner.
8. Photograph with date.
9. Description of physical condition and state of preservation.
10. Name and address of the nominator.

Methods of measurement are rather involved. It is suggested you contact state Forestry personnel for further information.

Since cavers are known to frequent remote sites in backwoods of Kentucky, the Forest Service request that we be on the lookout for champion candidates. There are some in our caving area you might want to visit:

Species	Circmference	Location
American Chestnut	4 feet, 11 inches	Southside Mt. Vernon
Eastern White Pine	11', 10"	Twelve miles east of Parkers Lake on 896.
Downey Serviceberry	5', 1"	Broad Gap Hollow 1.5 miles north of Sawyer
Sourwood	5' 8"	Off Highway 90 on FS 839 McCreary County.
Yellow Poplar	17' 8"	Off Rt 90 in Pole Rd Hollow of Beaver Ck.
Winged Sumac	1' 11"	Bowman Ridge, McCreary County.

The largest circumference is a national champion. American Sycamore at 39 feet, 0 inches on Highway 52 near Highway 1571 in Estill County. The tallest at 174 feet is the yellow Poplar above.

Taken in part from Kentucky Big Trees, Kentucky Division of Forestry.  
Paul Unger.

**Trip Report**  
**Double Waterfall Cave**  
April 19, 1986  
Andy Franklin/Mike Gray



"Gee, Andy, with the weather we've been having, Double Waterfall should be pretty dry."

Wanna bet?

Double Waterfall is in Dry Valley, opposite from that tourist attraction, Doublehead. It features a drive-up entrance, and some of the most beautiful passages I have ever seen. The entrance is a window into a stream that flows through a twisty canyon with a myriad of small, deep pools and rimstone. 200 yards downstream into the cave is the first of two consecutive 30 foot waterfalls that must be rigged. The second drop begins atop a large formation and ends in a mid-thigh (on me) deep pool. Opposite the pool is a spectacular 50 foot high column. The stream continues down a formation-filled passage which ends in yet another pool.

Those of you along for the view can go back now. The remainder of the cave is amazingly featureless. In fact, its endless featurelessness is one of the intriguing facets of this cave. Several years ago, Mike and I followed downstream in a passage that stayed 6 feet wide, 2-3 feet high, and had 6-9 inches of moving water. We traveled about half an hour, being stopped by the cold, without the cave hinting that it might change. This time we traveled in the opposite direction.

We quickly came upon a watery passage, flowing towards us into a rabbit hole (albeit a very wet rabbit), presumably into the aforementioned stream. This means that there are TWO streams feeding this cave! Mike convinced me to "look ahead" some to see what the cave did. It was 6 feet wide, 2-3 feet high, and had 6 to 9 inches of moving water. So I looked on ahead. It was 6 feet high, 2-3 feet high, and had 6 to 9 inches of water, except for the places it was only 18 inches high with the 9 inches of water. I was able to check my watch before it died, and noticed I had crawled for twenty minutes. By now I was really cold, and when I got back to Mike we exited as quickly as we could. It was almost 90 minutes after we hit the surface before I stopped shivering.

We have now traveled almost one hour, both upstream and downstream, in this cave. We are yet to find any indication that the cave will do anything but be 6 feet wide, 2-3 feet high, and have 6-9 inches of moving water. It is a small cave (in cross-section) that carries a lot of water. Where is it from? Where is it going? Into the mythical Dry Valley Cave?

I think it warrants a good survey by those of you who can endure the conditions.

## Off The Wall

This month we present three shorts for your edification.

1) A Climbing Workshop! A climbing school will be held on Saturday, June 7, 1986, at the Springfield Gorge. This is just north of I-70 on the west side of US 68. Park on the shoulder. In addition, all COGers are invited to the Miami Valley Grotto meeting on Friday, June 6 at Andy Franklin's in Yellow Springs (426 Park Place 513/767-9405). Feel free to stay over. Be forewarned - MVG seem to need less sleep than COG. If you come over on Saturday, we will begin at 10 AM. If, per chance, we are not yet there, look for us at Young's Dairy.



Instructors will include Mike Gray, Andy Franklin, Farrell Ballenger of Mariah's Equipment, and Ron Welch of the Bluegrass Grotto. The emphasis of the course will be to make you feel comfortable around rock and ropes. There will be the opportunity for both rock climbing, including chimneys and canyons, and fixed rope work. All COG rules apply.

Wear comfortable clothes (ie, shorts). Tennies are preferred on your feet, but your boots are fine. If you have vertical gear, bring it, too. I encourage all of you to attend both the party (oops, I mean meeting) and this workshop.

2) While Mike and I were in Pendleton Hollow last month, we had the opportunity to test some gear. During a rappel, Mike rather gracefully dropped a sizable rock on the end (fortunately not the middle (or ME)) of the rope. As you will remember, last November the NSS NEWS had an article concerning the use of knives around ropes. The upshot of the article was that the two were a dangerous combination due to the ease at which a load-bearing rope could be cut.

What an opportunity! Since we had to cut off the damaged portion of the rope anyway, why not load the rope first? We stretched the rope between two trees with a come-along, setting just enough tension that we could still bend the rope with one hand, which is either significantly less than body weight or we are more animals than we dreamed (nightmared?). Paul Unger then used his semi-sharp knife to cut the rope. After three strokes he was through the sheath. The next pass went through the remainder of the rope so fast that he lost his balance and almost fell down.

The moral is: **NO KNIVES!!!**

3) Recently, Edelrid, the world's premier rope maker, sent samples of all their manufacturing runs from the past 20 years to the UIAA for testing. These ropes had been stored under ideal conditions. The test used was the standard 'fall test' that all ropes undergo. *Every rope 5 years and older BROKE on the first fall.* Dynamic ropes, at least, have a set life to them. We are still researching if static ropes have a similar expectancy.

Next month's column will be all about ropes.

