

COG SQUEAKS

A black and white photograph of a rocky coastline. The foreground is filled with dark, jagged rocks of various sizes. In the middle ground, waves are breaking against the shore, creating white foam and spray. The background shows the ocean extending to the horizon under a dark sky. The overall tone is dramatic and somewhat somber.

April 1996



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GROTTO INFORMATION

The Central Ohio Grotto of the National Speleological Society meets at 8:00 p.m. the second Friday of each month at the Worthington Presbyterian Church. The Church is on the north west corner of the square in Worthington, Ohio (intersection of High Street and SR 161). Parking is available behind the church. Please contact a grotto officer or committee person for information and caving trips.

COG OFFICERS

Chairperson	Kathy Franklin	15856	614-766-6381
Vicechair	Doug Burke	41817	614-983-9336
Secretary	Stephen Clark	24145	614-237-4006
Treasurer	Karen Walden	15678	614-965-2942

Executive committee

Past Chairman	Pat Kelly	38938	614-885-1270
Elected	Steve Aspery	38931	614-841-1846
Elected	Darrell Adkins	29084	419-253-2320

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

YOUTH Pat Kelly (38938) 614-885-1270
(Pat is responsible for Boy Scout activities with the COG.)

BOONE KARST Dick Maxey (28034) 614-888-2285

SQUEAKS Bill Walden (11573) -- editor
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Andy Franklin, Kathy Franklin and Karen Walden -- Staff

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The COG Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Subscription is \$10.00 per year per address. The Central Ohio Grotto publishes the COG Squeaks ten times per year. The club welcomes articles on cave exploration and study, cave trip reports, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave related cartoons, or cave related art. Please send to Bill Walden via mail, disk, E-mail, or fax. Free disks and mailers are available from Bill at the meetings. Contact Bill for information on modem or fax transmission.

NSS organizations may reprint information from the COG Squeaks. Please give credit to the author and the COG Squeaks.

Karst Calendar

April 12	COG Meeting 8:00 p.m. Dick Maxey will be presenting a program on conservation. Please plan to attend.
April 13	Help move our chairman. Call Kathy Franklin or Bill Walden for details.
April 20	Grotto Cave trip
May 4	Scout trip
May 10	Grotto Meeting 8:00 p.m.
May 11	Dry Cave clean up trip.
May 24-27, '96	Speleofest - contact Alex Hicks, 502-499-0768. Louisville Grotto
July 12 - 14	KARST-O-RAMA Contact Mark Seyfang 513-351-4382 GCG
Aug. 3-9, '96	NSS Convention , Salida, Colorado.
Jun. 23-27, '97	NSS Convention , Sullivan, Missouri.

Cover: Popcorn in Overlook Cave, Pulaski County, Kentucky. From a 1996 photo by Bill Walden

Central Ohio Grotto Minutes, February 9, 1996

In Attendance: Steve Aspery, Darrell Atkins, Bruce Wartman, Alice Woznack, Chuck Dahnke, Steve Fisher, Bill Walden, Karen Walden, Greg Karoly, Tony Akers, Jon Gardner, Pat Kelly, Cheryl Early, Dick Maxey, Don Conover

Officers: Kathy Franklin, Presiding
Doug Burke, Co-Chair
Stephen Clark, Secretary

Treasurer Report: \$70.00 collected in dues; \$30.00 in donations for the field house; \$24.24 in Misc collection; bringing a report total of \$300.52

Editor's Report: Bill Walden reports that costs for publishing the Squeaks has dropped to manageable levels, but that for the season we are suffering from a shortage of articles and he urged members to submit. Bill also reminded the members about the availability

of library materials from the Grotto book shelf.

Topical Business: Preparation for a future vertical class was discussed and several sites mentioned as possible hosts. The Chillicothe climbing gym, among others, were considered as positive leads.

The National Cave Rescue Commission is providing several seminars for emergency skills development, rescue techniques and preventive procedures. Those interested are to contact Grotto Chairs for more information on signing up.

Kathy Franklin recapped the Grotto's success with the Dry Cave project and suggested that the group's efforts should be recruited for a consistent bi-monthly schedule of visits for work on the site. A launch date of March 9th was advocated and formalized.

The Grotto Chair also encouraged Grotto participation in several tri-State seminars, conventions & conferences including Karst-o-Rama, Crawl-o-thon, Spelo-fest, among others. All accommodate family activities and promote diversity with program offerings, thus insuring that boredom isn't a factor.

Pat Kelly recounted his recent scouting trips from November & December at Pine Hill and Sinks of the Round Stone. He also announced the horrific death of Chris Weiss in an auto accident, a good friend of his and aspiring caver of talent.

Doug Burke talked about a news item which narrated the death of a Tennessee local, who fell in a mine shaft reported to be one thousand feet deep while repelling. His fall apparently triggered a partial collapse preventing a body recovery.

Trip Reports

Farmer System: Darrell reports that Alice, Steve and himself have been digging inside the cavern, but despite the gung-ho enthusiasm of Steve, who Darryl described as "young & stupid," the dig was severely hampered by low ceilings, water flow and chilly conditions. Steve admitted that "it was the most miserable dig I have ever done," while Darrell added that "It was the first time he wasn't concerned about being scooped."

Despite the misery of the dig other possibilities are being looked at, including a "new hole," and Darryl openly invited other participants to join them--considering what had been described earlier, the place was deathly silent!

Nameless Cave: Steve Espy recounted a ridge walking trip where he located several possible leads including a large sinkhole that had heavy water intake.

Central Ohio Grotto Minutes: March 8, 1996

In Attendance

Darrell Adkins, Alice Woznick, Steve Aspery, Tony Akers, Bruce Warthman, Karen Walden, Bill Walden, Jay Kessel, Don Conover, Stephen Fisher

BSA Visitors: Steve Thickstun, Alex Thickstun, Adam Goldstein, Eric Gibson, Joe Gibson

Officers: Kathy Franklin, Presiding
Doug Burke, Co-chair
Stephen Clark, Secretary

Treasurer's Report: After the usual costs & donations, the Grotto has \$260.08 in its account

Topical Business:

Steve & Doug talked about their experience with the Rescue Seminars, which were held during the previous month. An example of the instruction they opted was in hyper thermal recognition & care. They stated that the \$30.00 entry fee was well worth it.

The Dry Cave project is a go and those who are able are to meet March 9th for the trip. The object is eliminate fresh defacement in order to send a message to the locals that the cave is monitored.

Bill Walden announced that he was planning on taking a trip to Pulaski County, Kentucky, March 16-18, for the benefit of Katie and a few of her college friends.

It was announced that Garbage Pit (Sloan's Valley, Crockett home) was closed to cavers because of a Greenhouse mishap. Apparently a caver mistakenly left the door ajar, which resulted in the complete loss of the Greenhouse's botanic stock. Not an especially bright way of enhancing land owner relationships!

Tony Akers recounted how his group, preparing to enter an Indiana cave, were asked by a paramedical rescue group, on site, to assist them in extracting two drunk locals, who had managed to fall into a twenty-five foot pit.

Troop 271 of Reynoldsburg came to the meeting to introduce themselves and arrange for a caving trip with the Grotto. It was agreed that May 3-5 would be a decent date for the trip, weather permitting. Twelve to fourteen scouts, plus 4-6 adults are expected.

Demonstration:

The Grotto, after all business was concluded, spent the remaining time sharpening their skills at surveying techniques. For several it was an introduction to the tools of the process and their use. The survey committee set several points about the meeting hall and led a few pairs of novices about, allowing one and then the other to take readings. The duel effort was then compared for accuracy. A splendid time was had by all!

Dry Cave Clean Up March 9, 1996

Ten COG members and friends scoured Dry Cave and removed two 30 gallon trash bags full of broken glass and other trash. New graffiti was also attacked with torches and wire brushes.

We set up a picnic table in the third room along with a Coleman lantern and stove. Kathy Franklin prepared a large pot of soup. After the lantern and stove had been running for a couple hours, we discovered that the heat from those devices set up quite a strong air current between the room and the entrance.

The next scheduled clean up trip is May 11, 1996.

TRIP REPORTS

Hail Cave, Stykes Cave, Pulaski County, Kentucky

by Lou Simpson

March 23, 24, 1996

Greg Cotterman, Harry Goepel, Lou Simpson, &
Bruce Warthman

SCOOP FEVER

With visions of a big scoop in our heads, the four of us planned to return again to the Googol section of Hail Cave. We planned to dig in both ends of the passage beyond the Jail Bars, map more of the area, and try a sound connection with the Googol Room by placing my 108 decibel personal alarm in the dig at the left end of the Beyond the Jail Bars (Prison?) passage. Harry wanted to work on the short-term dig at the right end of the passage. I was motivated to start digging on the more difficult lead to the left, where the airflow goes. Harry said something about not wanting to disturb the breakdown there because it looked like it could come down on you, but I hadn't seen what he was referring to. We considered camping at Bee Rock, a nearby Daniel Boone National Forest campground, near to the cave area, but Bruce had a cold so we reserved a room at the Best Western in London, KY. It has an indoor heated pool and Jacuzzi and there are nearby restaurants. The campground has pit toilets, I recall.

Saturday, March 23 dawned cold and sunny. We traveled in two vehicles and stopped at Jean's Restaurant in Mt Vernon, KY for a second breakfast. In the parking lot we encountered Scott Sweet, whose group of Pathfinder teens had just emerged from a cave down the hill from the restaurant. Scott gave me a digging tool that was a knife with a hooked end. It looked like something to stab and disembowel with. It was razor sharp. "This is the best digging tool, Lou! You can have this one for your dig in Hail."

Inside Jean's, cavers outnumbered normal people. Craig Ham was there with about ten from his outdoor club. Jim Odom, and Bill Carr and a lady were there too. Jim and Scott's group were planning to look for entrances in a hanging valley. It sounded so nice, I was tempted to go along, but didn't want to delay the big scoop in Hail. Craig's large group planned to tour Teamer's and other Rockcastle County classics. We finished our eggs, biscuits, gravy, sausage, grits, juice, and coffee and continued down the four-lane. At Bee Rock we turned to check out the campground. It was closed. Good thing we weren't staying there. But it was sunny, the birds were singing, and there were cave cars at Wells Cave and at Farmer Cave. Would we be alone at Hail? Cavers were everywhere and all seemed well with the world and we were gonna scoop.

"BUT THERE'S A DARKER SIDE, NOT SO BRIGHTLY LIT"

At the crossroad called Hail, we were shocked to see that the familiar old one-room church had burned to the ground since our previous trip on March 3. Now the directions to the cave will be to turn just past where the church used to be. We parked near the

cave and got ready. Pointing at the right rear tire of my car, Harry said, "Your tire's low, Lou." I wasn't too concerned, but then, this was only the second bad omen. I brought a 50-foot rope to try to rig a hand line so we could stay dry getting into the cave. We gathered our gear and walked merrily toward the huge main entrance, since Greg hadn't seen it. We toured the series of karst windows, trying to keep as dry as we could. When we reached the Googol entrance, really a separate cave, I started in with the rope. Then my Wheat lamp, which had worked thus far, stubbornly refused to light. I took it off the belt and got out my second source, a TAG light. I attempted to rig a hand line in a couple places, but didn't do it with much thought. People don't like it when I rig vertical caves either. I managed to stay dry until the last climb down to rocks in the stream, then I slipped in with my left leg up to the crotch. Everybody else succeeded in staying drier than I did.

Now I realized that I had not brought my personal alarm for the sound connection. Bruce was still at the entrance and returned to my car to get it. While waiting on him to return, my TAG light suddenly seemed dimmer. I took it off and fooled with it, but the light was definitely much dimmer than usual. "When TAG lights get dim they go out soon," Harry commented. OK, I got out my third source of light, a MegaPetzl. Although I didn't have an extra set of batteries, Harry had plenty. The Petzl worked pretty well except whenever I bumped the battery case, which was every other step. Harry suggested that I should not keep batteries in the lamp between trips so the springs stay springy and file the corrosion off the contacts. I'm thinking a strong rubber band around the battery case might help.

I gave Harry and Greg my hammer and chisel and one of the two trowels so they could proceed to the right side dig. I noticed that the hammer was one that had a short handle. Harry said he had my real hammer at home from last trip. Evidently he carried it out three weeks earlier. When Bruce returned, we entered the side lead and started mapping a couple shots from before the Jail Bars, tying in the previous survey to known stations. When I reached in my pack for the survey gear, my hand came out bloody. I had stabbed myself with the "scalpel," as Scott's gift digging tool became known. I smeared one side of a survey card with blood and contemplated using it to take notes, but then I became concerned about the blood loss and applied pressure to stop the bleeding. I did note the blood type of B positive on the note card.

After tying in the survey beyond the Jail Bars, Bruce and I quickly crawled the remaining five stations to the dig and mapped the last two shots. Bruce started digging in the sandy trench on the left side and below the floor slab. To keep warm, I excavated a path to the right wall to investigate a ceiling crack. It didn't open up. My Petzl was continuing to blink on and off a lot, so I fired up my white cyalume. It didn't seem to work. When Bruce tired of digging, I took a turn. After a while I asked Bruce to see if Harry and Greg would let us use the hammer. He got it and I entered the upper level of the dig, sandwiched between the floor and ceiling slabs. I could only advance one of the two body lengths to the frontier, so I started trying to dislodge small breakdown blocks on the right side. I took the hammer and swung it forcefully against a key rock on the right, smashing the SHIT out of my right thumb against the rock.

Soon I had excavated some room there, but one persistent rock refused to budge. Hammering on it repeatedly, I did break part of it off, but the rest was strangely tight between the ceiling and the floor. You know, you don't always think clearly when you're hot

and sweaty and crammed into a tight space. I continued to hammer on this rock. Suddenly, two vertical slabs of rock peeled off the opposite wall beyond my feet. "What caused that?" I wondered, and then the thought started to form in my feeble brain, "THE CEILING IS MOVING!" I grabbed the tools and scooted out of the sandwich. The two fallen slabs were surprisingly large!

We set the alarm and returned to the Jail Bar junction. I returned the hammer to Greg. Harry said, "Next time, bring your own hammer." Bruce and I descended into the lower level and sloshed through the cold water to the Googol Room, listening for the alarm. We couldn't hear it after we passed the Jail Bars, and not after that either. We went all the way to the dig at the far right end of the Googol Room, which is 600 feet long, not 300 feet at I previously reported. The map is plotted at 100 feet to the inch. Even so, the Hail System map is eight feet long.

SCOOP

Bruce's cold was getting worse, so he left the cave, giving me his flashlight. I joined Harry and Greg and helped hammer on the ceiling rock at their dig. Harry had retrieved the alarm, but didn't know how to turn it off, so he was leaving it there when I returned and explained to him how to insert the plug. I thought I had lost the scalpel, but Harry didn't see it in the dig and nobody wanted to risk crawling under the unstable ceiling slab.

In their dig, Harry and Greg had excavated mud from the floor until they hit rock. I helped hammer on the bottom edge of a ceiling slab lodged vertically in a crack. The hammering paid off, and Harry eventually wiggled through feet first. He scooped about 60 feet of passage, including a room he could sit up in. He said it would take maybe 7 survey stations to map what he saw. Harry said it seemed like he was near the surface.

We left the cave. Since I was already wet, I helped Harry and Greg stay dry since they hadn't brought a second pair of boots for a Sunday trip. I offered piggy back rides, but they settled for an occasional hand hold on my shoulder. After a while I couldn't feel the pain of the cold water. My car's tire was flatter. Greg saved the day by having an electric pump. It was too late to go ridge walking, although I'd like to climb to the saddle south of Googol to see what must be a spectacular overlook of Lake Cumberland. With the tire restored to plump roundness and the feeling restored in my feet, we motored to London, noting that the cave cars at Farmer and Wells were gone. We checked into our accommodations, took showers, ate spaghetti and the salad bar at the motel restaurant fifty feet from our room, and luxuriated in the pool and hot tub. Leaning back in the Jacuzzi, Greg said, "You DUG cavers sure know how to camp." By 10:30, we were in bed with lights out. I guess we were real tired. In fact, we thought we might not go caving on Sunday, but instead visit cave owners. I didn't even bother to charge my lights. Harry kept bumping into my feet during the night (I was sleeping on the floor) and waking me. "Sleep on your side. You're snoring." I was wearing a Breathe Right, but it was more like a Snore Right tonight. I didn't sleep well. My arms hurt and I kept imagining being trapped between the ceiling and floor slabs, like the peanut butter and jelly in a sandwich. Perhaps I would have been the first to be rescued in pieces, with body parts removed and reassembled later. In my despair, I might have contemplated opening my veins with the scalpel.

"YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WALK ALL THE WAY"

Things looked more hopeful on Sunday. After a good breakfast, I found that my Wheat lamp now worked perfectly. I even took apart the battery cover to check for a loose wire, borrowing a screw driver from Greg's well-equipped truck. I found the scalpel in the bottom of my pack, where I'd probably placed it so I would be less likely to get sliced again. We thought we'd like to go caving after all, and the plan had been to go to Stykes, the cave I write fiction about, but it really exists, trust me. The fictional Uncle Seymour is lost in another dimension beyond the Disappearing Canyon, the narrow crack at the junction of Main St. and 25th Ave that mysteriously gets bigger only during a full moon. Today it was probably just the tight crack that threatened to trap me in 1974 when I was "Stuck in Stykes." Reaching the cave after a scenic drive and a couple miles of hiking, our plan was to visit the right end of 25th, a 675 foot straight joint two feet wide, and try to extend it. Harry was interested in returning to Stykes, since he hadn't gotten to see much of it last year because the soaking rain made him too cold to stay very long.

When we reached 25th, I told of being able to see a light all the way from the end and said, "I don't remember what it's like to go through it, but I think you won't be able to walk all the way. I'll stay here at Disappearing Canyon so we can see how far away we can still see each others' lights." Bruce said the passage also has interesting acoustical properties. He was right. I could hear the other three crawling all the way to the end and even hear them talking. I could understand an occasional word. I could hear hammering. For entertainment, I crawled to the other end of the passage, 170 feet the other direction. It ended in breakdown fill, but the breakdown was coming from a higher level than I had seen on the way to the end. This end probably is near the surface of the valley where the entrance is located. The other end, where the other cavers were hammering, is far along the ridge, just 200 feet from a 27-foot pit entrance named Pot o'Gold.

I found it difficult to catch my breath in the shorter end of 25th, and when I returned to the junction at Disappearing Canyon (a tight crack, sure enough), I started getting nervous when I thought I heard periodic sighs, as if someone were stuck. After a while, I heard rhythmic tapping, probably Bruce, and that calmed me down. If somebody were stuck, he wouldn't be playing. It didn't sound like SOS. More like TAP TAP tap-tap TAP. When the three started back I turned out my light and watched for their lights. Soon I saw a point of light, appearing not to move, like a star. I turned my light on so they could see it too. Many minutes later, I saw two lights, then three, and they did move around a small amount. I was relieved to not be alone any more in this creepy place. Harry laughed and said, "Now I understand what you meant when you told us 'You won't be able to walk all the way.' It was all crawling."

THE SUCK-INS KEEP ON COMIN'

We toured the more spacious lower-numbered avenues, stopping briefly where Fred Zuck and I had started digging at the end of 6th Ave., another point in the cave that is only 200 feet from Pot o'Gold. We came out of the cave into the glorious early afternoon. "I'd like to check an entrance I found last spring when I was looking for Stykes," I told the others. I think I can find it. They agreed to follow, and I led them down the side valley, reaching a place where water comes out of an apparently artificial wall and sinks soon after. This wasn't the cave I had in mind, but a bit later, fighting our way through the brambles and fallen trees, nasty already even though the leaves weren't out yet, Harry

spotted an orange ribbon I had tied to a tree. This was indeed my entrance. "It's a stoopwalk at first," I told Harry. Harry entered and soon called for Bruce to follow. Greg decided to enter as well. I told Greg I would remain on the surface and ridgeway for half an hour. "Somebody should stay topside since nobody knows where this entrance is," I explained.

I raced on down the valley and located two more possibilities. By the time I finally got back 45 minutes later, the others were out. I was hot from the hike. Harry was standing outside the entrance with his shirt off. He said, "The cave was real wet and low. It wasn't stoopwalk. It seemed to go straight into the ridge, but it got too low."

I enticed Bruce and Greg to follow me to the two additional entrances. One was a blowing hole in a limestone cliff about 40 feet above the valley floor. Bruce said it was blocked by breakdown, but confirmed that it blew cold air. Bruce checked the other lead also, a eight-foot climb down into a steep sinkhole on the bottom of the valley at the edge. There was a sump under a limestone ledge. We packed up and headed out of the gorge, a miniature version of the Obey gorge in Tennessee. After wandering around in some dense briars, we found the water coming out of an artificial wall and soon, the Stykes entrance. We followed our ribbon-marked trail back to the jeep trail at the arched tree and finally walked the last mile on the trail to our cars. The puddles looked fairly intimidating and I was glad we hadn't tried to drive the trail today. The unreliable tire on my car was still OK.

We met on the way home at Hardees in Renfro Valley and again at my home in Cincinnati. When everybody departed, I decided not to clean my gear. I was too tired. I found a tick on my wrist. Spring must be here. My thumb continues to bleed. There's a big black clot under it. Found a few splinters from the brambles. I've got a cough that I might have picked up from one of the others. It was a rough trip. I think the stress at work predisposed me to self-destructive behavior. Caving meets that need, it seems.

Maybe we can get back into the Cedar Creek gorge before the season gets too advanced. There's potential there for more entrances, who knows? I plotted the Hail survey data and realized that the Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich (Solitary Confinement?) is headed back toward and over the stream passage. Perhaps the airflow goes to the upper entrance. The map shows a lead heading toward it from that entrance. Now I'm curious about the maze of lower level passages that aren't mapped in the area. A good place to scoop is the first side lead you come to, since everybody ignores it and plunges deeper into the cave. -

Scout Weekend Report

by Cheryl Best

The weekend was outstanding! As usual, the trip down and back was the worst part and I wasn't even driving! We had a bazillion Scouts--actually only 23 but it seemed like a bazillion! Pat let me "lead." Since I didn't know where I was going most of the time, I made several false starts but learned a lot in the process. The lake (Cumberland) was as high as I have ever seen it. We went down through the Duck Under and crawled quite a way until it appeared to me that the passage ended in water, so we returned to the main passage and headed for Lost and Found Corners (I think). We waded through (cold!) water that was knee deep on me, deeper, obviously, for some of the boys who were much shorter than I. We sent the kids up into the Dome Room (I think). If there previously were two entrances as I seem to

remember there being, Pat says a recent rock slide appears to have closed one of them. We turned around because there was only about 10 inches of air space above the water at this point, we were all wet, and some of the boys were beginning to complain about being cold. I took out part of the group. Pat ducked down a side passage with the rest and found ultimately that the Duck Under passage was open after all.

Sunday we went to Sinks of the Roundstone. I loved it! It is my new favorite! The graffiti is such a shame, though. What a pretty cave.

*** Advertisement ***

Chef Caver Pierre's RK Cafe

JUST SOUTH ON US RT. 27

News from Chef Cave Pierre at the RK Cafe

Thanks to your overwhelming support (plus some help from the county animal disposal unit), Chef Cave Pierre and Clyde have built a "bio mass composter." "Simply throw in some wood chips, unusable road kill critters, waste from our food and boot businesses, and some dirt and let it compost for 50 to 70 days." Says Chef Caver Pierre. So starting in June Clyde's Boots will also be selling garden compost. Clyde says they expect to sell the compost for about \$2.00 per 2 cubic foot bag.

Clyde indicates that he and Pierre spent about \$7,500 on the project and that they expect it to pay off in two or three years.

Skunks for food program.

Chef Caver Pierre reports that the March program providing free meals for skunks was very successful. Pierre says that he plans to repeat the skunk program next March. Pierre confidentially told this COG reporter that a particular caver who belongs to multiple grottos won the most free meals by bringing in over 250 flattened skunks.

Clyde's has the following **cave equipment** available:

<u>Toe Light Boots</u>	Black with white stripes, sizes 8 through 14 in whole sizes \$160.00 pr. Includes charger.
<u>Claw boots</u>	Fine deer skin boots with sharp claws to aid climbing slippery slopes. \$99.50 pr.
<u>Pontoon boots</u>	Fine deerskin boots. Great for water walking. \$360.00 pr.
<u>Rope bags</u>	Fine deer skin bags that also double as rope pads. \$86.50
<u>Cave packs</u>	Full skunk hide packs that may be used as back pack, side pack, or drag pack. \$45.50 ea.