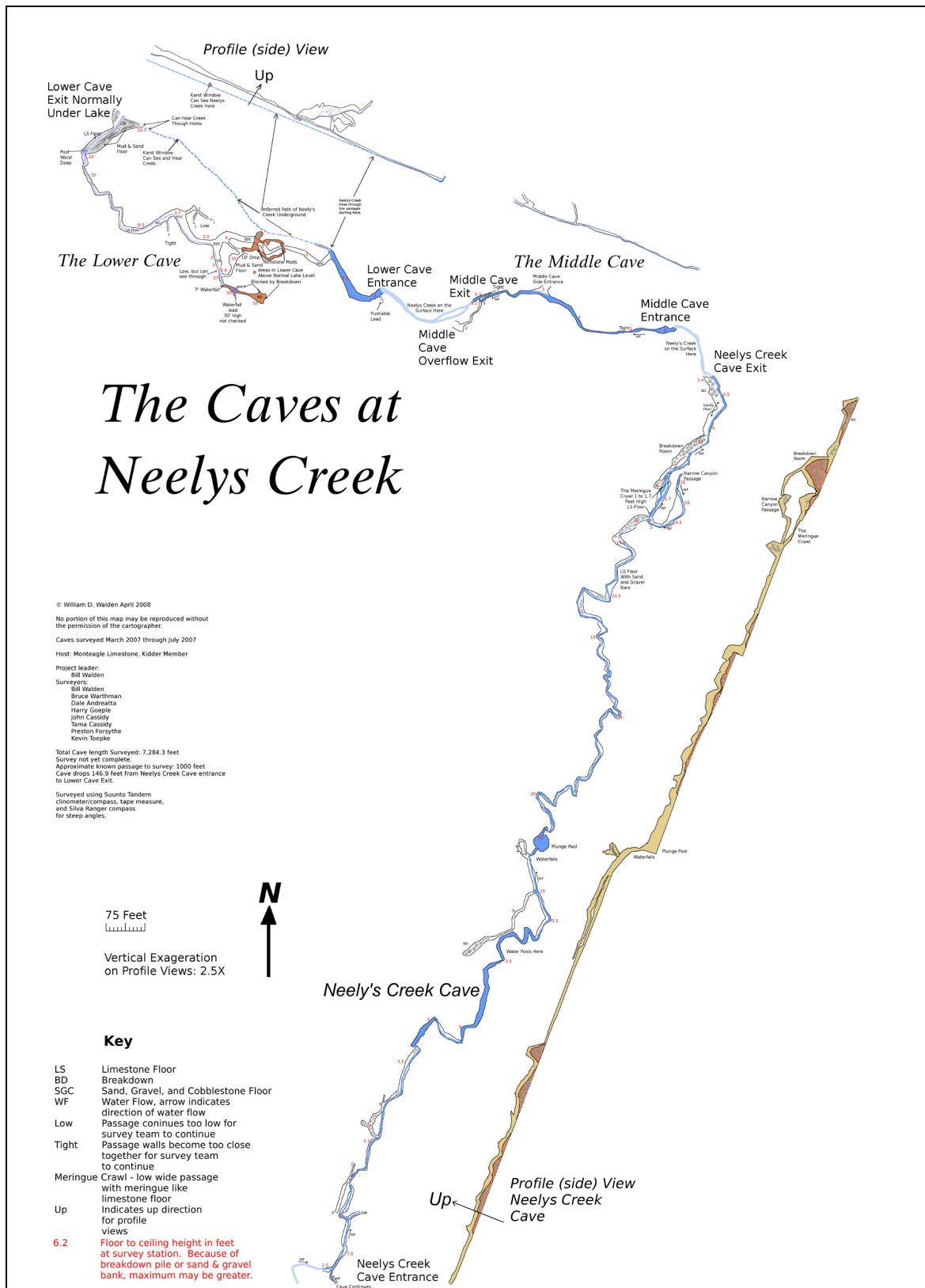


C. O. G. Squeaks



September 2008

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 WEB site.

Grotto Mailing Address: C/O Joe Gibson, 6883 Cedarbrook Pl., New Albany, OH 43054-9738 614-855-7948
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Grotto Membership Dues:
\$15 per individual or \$20 per family.

Grotto Officers Name Telephone

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The C.O.G. Squeaks

The C.O.G. Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Articles regarding cave exploration and study, cave trips, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave-related cartoons, cave art or photographs are always welcome. Please note that we have a 35mm film scanner and a flat bed scanner. I can handle negatives up to 4 X 5 inches. So, please send your photos, negatives, or slides for inclusion in the Squeaks. Material may be submitted via mail, e-mail, disk, fax, or even dictation to Bill Walden.

The C.O.G. Squeaks is mailed to dues paying members and to grottos with which the COG exchanges newsletters. The C.O.G. Squeaks is also available by E-mail as an Adobe Acrobat file (PDF) or Word Document. Please notify Bill Walden or Andy Franklin. If you would like a file of the Squeaks to reprint. The Squeaks is available as a PDF at:

Website 1
<http://www.tuningoracle.com/cog>:

Or

Website 2
<http://www.centralohiogrotto.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.

Karst Calendar

September 27 Jim Blankenship is hosting the annual Halloween-O-Roast at his home near Circleville, Ohio. Please refer to the article on page 9.

October 9 – 12 The 31st Annual TAG Fall Cave-in at the Tag on the Mountain site on top of Lookout Mountain, Georgia. The Dogwood City Grotto is the host for this premier caving event. For pre-registration contact Nancy Rodgers at 423-877-8683 nrodders4@comcast.net. Check the website: <http://dogwoodcitygrotto.com/hosting/dcg>. Registration forms are under "Events." [Hint under events click on "more" to get a complete listing of events.]

July 19 – 26, 2009 The 2009 NSS Convention and the 15th International Congress of Speleology in Kerrville, Texas. Visit the website: www.ics2009.us.

July 26 – 30, 2010 NSS Convention in Essex Junction, Vermont.

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Please notify Joe Gibson of any changes or additions.

All photos by Bill Walden unless noted otherwise.

Ice Cave



Ice Cave Entrance left from the top, right from inside.

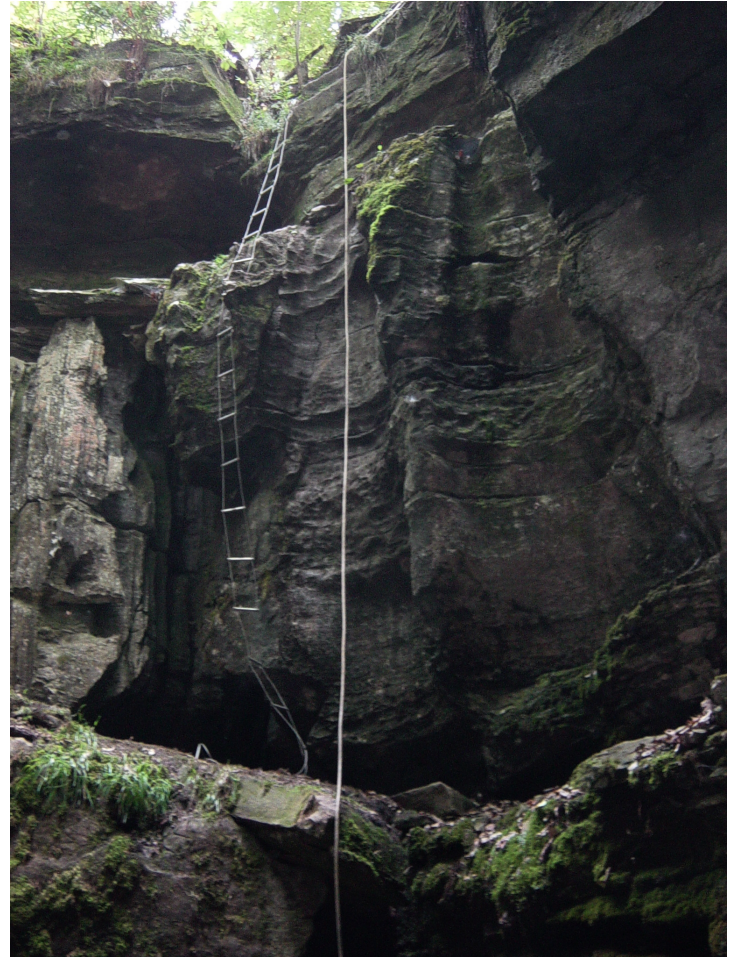
Background

I was first introduced to Ice Cave in July of 1972 (if my memory is correct). I visited the cave with COG members Paul Unger, Dan Murphy and others. I believe that it was local resident Junior Guffey who led us to the cave. I drove my 1970 Land Cruiser wagon to the entrance. Junior told us that the cave retained ice through the year following particularly cold winters and that the cave has a bottomless pit inside. He said that when one tosses rocks down the pit, one never hears them hit bottom.

We rigged a cable ladder near where the barbed wire fence can be seen crossing the far edge of the pit in the above photo, landing by the slanting rock seen in the lower center of the photo. Indeed the cave was loaded with ice formations. We soon located the pit Junior had told us about. There was an ice coated, sloping rock at the edge of the pit. We could not look down for fear of sliding off the slippery rock. We tossed a rock over. No report. We tossed yet a bigger rock over the edge, again no report. More rocks followed none of which produced any sound other than the whooshing of air. I climbed out of the cave to get a rope and vertical gear. We rigged the pit and I cleared the ledge. I could see the bottom. It was about 60 feet deep. As I rappelled down into the pit, I could see a number of small holes in the soil below. Once down I sank thigh

deep into a fluffy mixture of sand and ice. The mix was so light and fluffy that I could wade through it!

I didn't return to Ice Cave until February of this year with Jim Kennedy (BCI) and Chris Clark (ACCA). Jim and I started to survey a canyon complex in the cave while Chris waited topside. We only spent a couple hours in the cave. Over the summer of 2008 I continued the survey of the cave with help of COG members and other cavers.



Description

Ice Cave is on the top of a ridge above Jennings Hollow, Wayne County, Kentucky. The cave begins in the Pennington sandstone, then goes through the Bangor limestone, through the Hartselle Formation of shale, and finally into the Kidder member of the Monteagle Formation of limestone.

Ice Cave has five levels. They are:

The entrance level or Level 1. This is a large open area consisting of one large room with a breakdown-covered floor.

Level 2 is 26 to 36 feet below Level 1. As one tours this level it becomes apparent that the floor of Level 1 is a breakdown bridge forming the ceiling of Level 2. Level 2 does have distinct passages including one that has some airflow. Unfortunately this passage becomes too tight for me to follow.

From Level 2 one can rappel down to **Level 4**. There is a steep exposed climb up to **Level 3**. Again on Level 3 it is obvious that the ceiling is the breakdown floor of Level 2 above. When Buddy Gibson and I were resurveying Level 2, Harry Goepel and Marvin Miller were surveying Level 3. We could see each other's lights through small openings in the breakdown

From Level 4 one can rappel down to **Level 5**. Level 5 is apparently the bottom of the cave. There are crawlways leading off from this level. None have airflow.

Level 5 proved to be a bit of an enigma. Harry Goepel and Marvin Miller surveyed levels 3 and 4 and surveyed to the top of the pit, which drops to Level 5. When Kevin Toepke and I went to drop the pit to Level 5 we could not squeeze through a tight space above the pit. We returned a week later with a hammer drill and enlarged the opening. We got through OK only to find that we didn't bring a long enough rope and enough rigging. Both Kevin and I purchased 100 feet of PMI rope at Karst-O-Rama to do that drop. So now we had double the equipment required. The next trip in was with John Cassidy. John and I successfully dropped to Level 5 and continued the survey. John and I dug into two crawlways. He pushed one that appeared hopeless and I started into a second. After rounding a sharp corner, this lead opened to walking passage with a 20-foot high ceiling. The walking passage didn't last long and it became tight for me.

The next and last trip I talked Lee Florea and Kevin Toepke into continuing the lead on Level 5. They did but they only added 6 stations before it became too tight for Lee.

Level 5 has very soft soil on the floor and lots of bat bones. The walls are stained red but the staining, per Jim Kennedy, is mineral and not from bats. Although we looked very carefully, we could not spot anything living on Level 5 except for a few bats flying around. Even the few dead bats on the floor showed no visible evidence of mold. The temperature is 41 degrees F.

Wrap up

The survey is complete with 1602 feet of surveyed passage and 160 feet of vertical relief. In all 3 rope climbs are required and two exposed free climbs are required. It is a complex, interesting, and scary little cave. Levels 3, 4, and 5 were all virgin when we surveyed those levels. Now all I have to do is draw the map!

Jim Kennedy is sending 4 data loggers to me to install in Ice Cave for one year. These will record the temperature, barometric pressure, and humidity inside the cave. So, there will be at least two more trips into Ice Cave. Interested?

We never did locate the "bottomless" pit I dropped in 1972. Perhaps it has been covered by breakdown.

Cavers

Bill Walden	Bruce Warthman	Kevin Toepke
Marvin Miller	Buddy Gibson	Lee Florea
Jim Kennedy	John Cassidy	Harry Goepel
Will Bickel	Grant Harley	



Jim Kennedy climbing over the ledge on the second and longest drop in Ice Cave



Archimedes fossil. Lots of these are found on Level 2.



Kevin Toepke Climbing out of Ice Cave

Neelys Creek Caves

Background

Lou Simpson and I first visited Neelys Creek in the early 70's. We found our way through the cave and exited the rear entrance (insurgence). A quick look at the thick vegetation convinced us that it would be easier to return back through the cave, which we did. It was a fun, wet trip. We made at least one more visit. On that trip we found a way around the scary waterfall climb. We never did survey the cave.

Neelys Creek is a very pretty karst valley just east of Sloans Valley. From Sloans Valley take Sloans Valley Road east to the first major valley past the Great Rock Sink entrance to Sloans Valley Cave. To the left is a drive going down to Lake Cumberland and to the right is a large sinkhole. One can park just off the road and walk upstream. Once at the overlook of the first sinkhole, one will spot the gaping entrance of the Lower Cave. The entrance is 70 feet wide by 20 feet high. This little cave is well worth visiting. One will get wet at the entrance. Follow the entrance canyon. The canyon will become an easy crawl through several low rooms. At the 3rd room, look for a climb to the right. This will take you to another canyon and a beautiful dome.



Lower Cave Entrance. Above from outside the cave and below inside the entrance.



Above Lower Cave Dome -- Below Middle Cave Resurgence

Continuing up stream from the first sinkhole one will come to a second. In this sinkhole is the resurgence and overflow resurgence of the Middle Cave. Neelys Creek flows from the Middle Cave, then on the surface to the resurgence of the Lower Cave. Spend some time here. One can go all the way through the Middle Cave when the water is low.



From the second sinkhole go upstream again by wading through some brush and you will come to the 3rd sinkhole. Here is a window into the Middle Cave.

Proceed upstream to the next sinkhole where one again finds Neelys Creek Flowing on the surface. Follow the water downstream to the resurgence of the Middle Cave. Follow it upstream to the Neelys Creek Cave resurgence.



Neelys Creek Cave Resurgence

All the land in the karst valley up to the Neelys Creek Cave resurgence is on US Corps of Engineer land.

At this time, one should not consider going into Neelys Creek Cave nor should one venture further up the karst valley because a coal strip-mining operation is going in above the cave.

Getting Involved Again

A coal mine is being proposed above the Neelys Creek Caves. All drainage from this mine will go through the Middle and Lower caves and much of it will go through Neelys Creek Cave.

Hilary Lambert contacted me for help. I volunteered to survey the caves and to help with dye tracing. Dr. Ralph Ewers was doing the dye tracing and I collected the dye bugs and got them to Dr. Ewers. This was done once a week for a couple months and then every other week until Neelys Creek ceased to flow into Neelys Creek Cave as a result of prolonged drought during the summer of 2007. Most of these trips were solo trips, which meant solo trips into the Lower Cave to change the two dye bugs inside that cave.

One of the objectives of the dye tracing was to obtain a positive trace from Neelys Creek to the Sloans Valley Cave. Only very weak traces of the dye were found at Great Rock Sink. That may well have been the result of dye coming downstream in Lake Cumberland and back washing into Sloans. As for the dye tracing through the Neelys Creek caves – visual evidence was overwhelming – red water everywhere!

The only place the dye was not detected was in the upper canyon of the Lower Cave. The stream there is obviously separate from Neelys Creek.

The stream in this upper canyon comes from two higher-level passages in the dome. Kevin Toepke and I bolted our way up to the lower of the two passages. It went 80 feet and ended with the water coming out from between breakdown blocks. We have not attempted to bolt up to the second passage.

The map of the caves at Neelys Creek was completed in time for a hearing in Burnside, Ky. Copies were distributed to both sides – those for the mine and those against and to people who live in the area.

To be done

- The bolt climb mentioned above.
- A side lead that we missed in the Lower Cave near the resurgence.
- There are two gaps in the survey of the Middle Cave. When Dale and I surveyed the Middle Cave, water was too high to get through two lengths of passage. Later I traversed these two areas solo when the water was low.
- No one was brave enough to climb the waterfall in Neelys Creek Cave. The survey shot tying across the waterfall was shot with compass and clinometer but the distance was guessed – not measured.
- The survey of the small canyon above the meringue crawl needs to be completed.
- None of the caves in the Bangor limestone have been looked at. Indeed the entire Neelys Creek comes from one of those Bangor caves.

Thanks

Thank you to all the cavers who helped with this project. It was fun. - Bill Walden

Follow That Bat Cave

February 2006 I was searching for new caves at Redmond Creek. I located what is now named Head of Redmond Cave in the Bangor limestone, which was surveyed a short time after its discovery. I also located a small sinkhole on the side of a cliff between the known end of Redmond Creek Cave and what I had assumed to be the resurgence of Redmond Creek Cave. I could hear water crashing somewhere below the bottom of the sink.

Autumn of 2007 I returned with Dale Andreatta and another caver with the intent of digging through the bottom of the sinkhole. Digging quickly proved to be hopeless without the aid of heavy equipment. While I was standing in the bottom of the sinkhole and Dale was about halfway up the side, I noted a bat circling at roughly Dale's head level. The bat disappeared. I watched and spotted a second bat. I hollered at Dale, "Follow that bat!" Dale just gave me a dumb look. I explained and continued to watch. Spotting yet a third bat again I hollered to Dale, "Follow the bat, see where it goes!" This time Dale did. The bat flew into a very

low opening. A little digging and Dale was quickly in a low crawlway about 20 feet long. With a little more digging I was into the crawl. It opened into a room in Bangor limestone with a waterfall. We looked around the room and I stepped through the waterfall and was instantly drenched. I could not see where the water was going. Not seeing any place to go we departed.

Thanksgiving weekend of 2007 I returned with my daughter Katie and her husband Aron Schmid. There was no waterfall. I found a place to climb down but it looked too dangerous to free climb. Aron, being a good rock climber, cautiously climbed down and was gone for about 20 minutes. He reported finding a room about 20 by 40 feet and some passage. We departed.



The 20 by 40-foot room

Next Buddy Gibson and I entered the cave with vertical gear. We rigged the climb and rappelled into the pit, quickly found the 20 by 40-foot room, and continued on to find our way through the breakdown. We came to a fairly large room with leads going off in several directions. We choose the biggest, which led to a tall dry canyon. The canyon ended in breakdown and tree roots.



Junction Room



Dry Canyon Passage. Photo by Kevin Toepke.

Backing up we found a low passage that continued in the same direction as the canyon. We followed it. It teed into a canyon stream passage. I took off running upstream. The canyon got bigger and it appeared to have many leads off the side.



Stream Passage

Most of the leads off the stream passage turned out to be upper level canyon meanders. There are three significant stream inputs. One I assume comes from the Redmond Creek resurgence, a second from the stream that comes from Carpenter Rock House, and the third from an unknown source. The cave goes well south of the Redmond Creek resurgence. That was quite a surprise.

Buddy's rope remains in the cave although we have all learned to free climb the drop and the rope is no longer needed. Next trip in we need to remove it and return the rope to Buddy.

In all we have surveyed 0.78 miles in the cave. We have not found a connection to Redmond Creek Cave – big disappointment – nor have we been able to follow the stream north.

Watch for the map in the next Squeaks.



The Warthman Bypass

This bypasses the low crawl to the stream passage.



Aron Schmid looking into the Entrance Crawl



The Climb Down that only Aron Braved Thanksgiving 2007

Note the rope hanging down.



Fossils in FTB Cave. Photo by Kevin Toepke. This is obviously in the Kidder Limestone. The cave begins in the Bangor Limestone, breaks through the Hartselle Formation, and into the Kidder, where most of the cave lies.

Halloween-O-Roast

Starting time 12:00

Diner around 5:00 PM

Actives:

- Swimming (Weather permitting)
- Bonfire
- Horseshoes
- Cards
- Fishing
- Eating
- Nighttime stargazing. Should have two high power binoculars and two telescopes.
- Program: The Caves of Wayne County by Bill Walden

Hosted by Jim Blankenship at his home near Circleville, Ohio.

27374 Jackson Road

Circleville, Ohio 43113

Home Tel: 740-474-1040

Cell: 740-412-6608

Directions:

Take Us Rt 23 to Circleville.

Follow Rt 22 through town.

Bear Right on to Rt 56

Follow Rt 56 east.

Cross Rt 159 (don't turn)

About 2 miles past Rt 159 turn left on to Jackson Road.

Jim's house is about ¼ mile on the right – long driveway back to the house.

Map is on the rear cover (p 10)

Jim is providing food. If you want, you may bring a dish to share.

Oh yes, bring your own alcoholic beverages if you are so inclined.

All members of the Central Ohio Grotto, friends, and cavers are invited. Come, renew old friendships, and have a good time.

Grotto Election of Officers

It is time to submit nominations for grotto officers. We will try to have a short meeting at the Halloween-O-Roast. You may make nominations at that time or send nominations to Joe Gibson.

Joe Gibson

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Email: joegibson6591@sbcglobal.net

Joe has indicated that he is unable to attend the Halloween-O-Roast.

Regular grotto meetings should resume in October.

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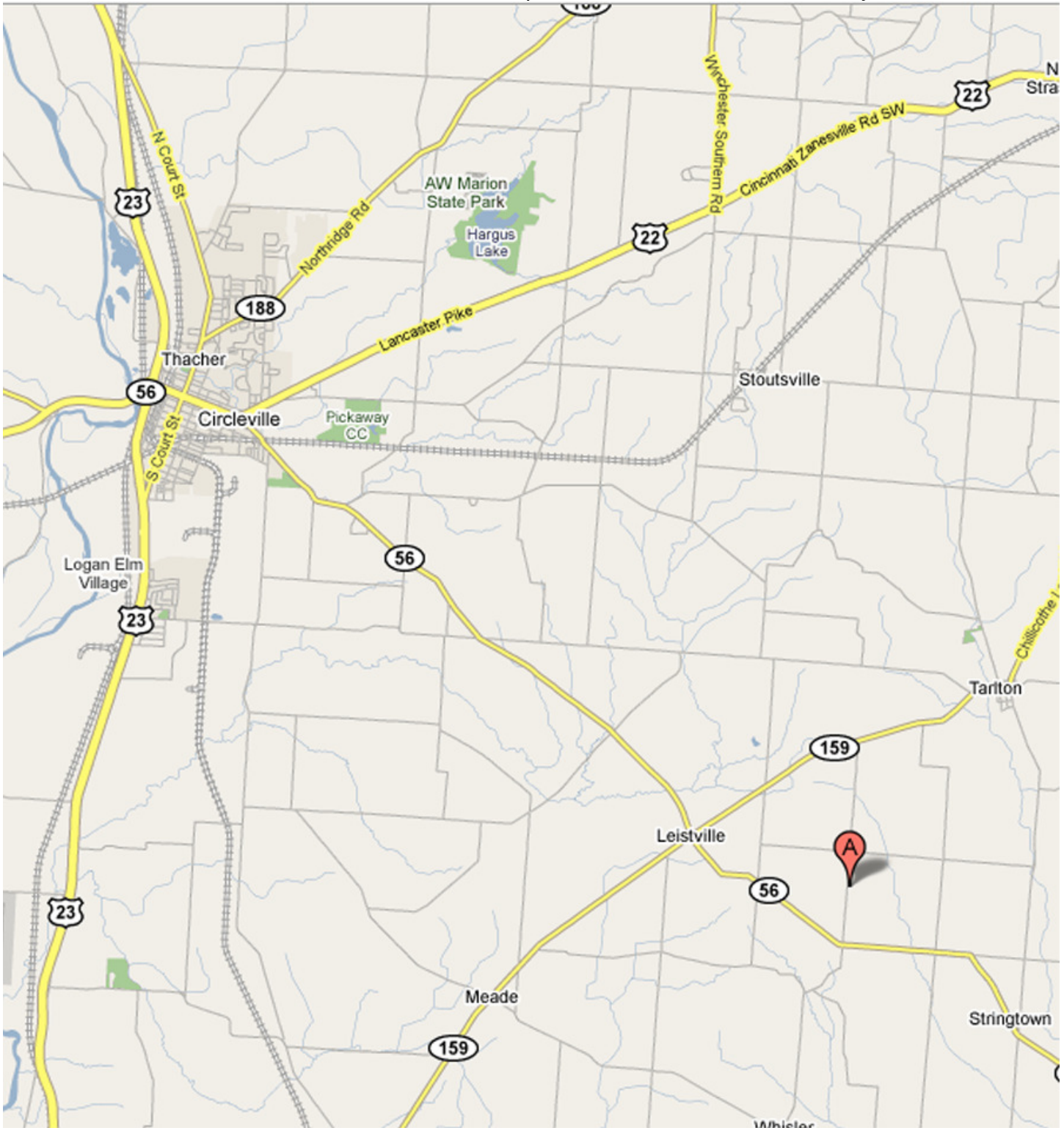
Cincinnati, OH 45229

513-559-9153

Cell: 513-559-9153

Map to the Halloween-O-Roast

“A” balloon is 27374 Jackson Road. Jim Blankenship’s house is on the east side way back from the road.



Please plan to attend Saturday, September 27th from noon to whenever. Diner served around 5 PM.