One Science Fund Result!

Look for something else from the Science Fund in the next JOURNAL OF KARST (or, maybe, the one after). Thanks again for all your support! - Curt Harler

A signed copy of the 206-page thesis Melisa Bishop wrote on Scott Hollow is now part of the Cleveland Grotto library. It is called "A Detailed Hydrologic Study of the Scott Hollow Groundwater Basin, Greenbrier and Monroe Counties, West Virginia" [Casey is the table].

The Cleveland Grotto gets acknowledgement and thanks in the thesis...both for its financial support via the Science Fund and for field assistance.
Updated Dogwood City Grotto Closed Cave List11-1-11

By Andy Zellner (Marietta, Georgia)

Thanks to all who sent me updates and improvements for the Closed Cave List. The latest and greatest version (November 2011) can be found here: [http://www.dogwoodcitygrotto.org/files/closedcavelist.pdf](http://www.dogwoodcitygrotto.org/files/closedcavelist.pdf)

There are a number of ways to get to the above page, but if you plan to publish the link anywhere else, this is the best one to use. Please look it over and let me know what I missed or messed up, if anything.

NOTE that while the SCCI has plans to soon re-open many of its preserves that are currently closed due to WNS concerns, this has not happened yet!!! Hopefully, that will take place in May 2012.

Also, starting January of 2012, all activities on Georgia Wildlife Management Areas (like Pigeon Mountain and Zahnd) will require paying a small fee for access. This includes caving. I'm not sure how this will be enforced, but the price for the individual pass seems reasonable ($19 per person per year). More details can be found here: [http://www.georgiawildlife.com/Georgia-Outdoor-Recreational-Pass](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/Georgia-Outdoor-Recreational-Pass—Andy]

The Monongahela Grotto website, [http://www.caves.org/grotto/mongrotto/closed_cave_lists.htm](http://www.caves.org/grotto/mongrotto/closed_cave_lists.htm) lists links for other closed cave lists: WV, VA, MD and more (DC Grotto), Tucker County WV Closed Cave list (Mon. Grotto), PA (Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy), Western PA (Mid Atlantic Karst Conservancy), Kentucky (Kentucky Speleological Survey), TAG (Dogwood City Grotto).

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Because of the spread of White Nose Syndrome (WNS) to bats in this region, all caves in the Monongahela National Forest are closed until June 30, 2012. Going in those caves could result in a large fine and six months in jail.

Sharp's still open according to Monongahela Grotto links to access lists that were last updated September 16, 2011.
GSP TRIP!

Casey looking at a tall formation (above left); Curt looking at a 200-year saltpeter pipe in Mullen Springs (above right—both by Casey Dec. Below, “The TEAM” by Ron Hager. More photos on page 43.
A CALL FOR CAVING VULGARIANS

Who Can Control A Cave Entrance? - By Curt Harler

Can a bunch of self-selected egomaniacs decide they have the right to control access to a cave simply because it is in their neighborhood? Does proximity confer ownership? Grant rights to interfere with who uses a cave? Nope. The cave might be in your neighborhood - but it’s not YOUR cave. This will annoy real estate reactionaries, but even if a cave is under land you control, it’s not YOUR cave. It’s A cave.

Some misguided groups keep cave access to themselves. Happily, there are major exceptions, like the Indiana cavers and those in TAG who are most gracious about welcoming NSS members from other states to their caves and who provide keys to those caves that are gated. This article is about those self-anointed twerps who take the other route. One tactic to fight ego-driven locking of caves is to double-lock those cave gates with heavy-duty chains and locks. This would keep everyone out, including the self-anointed who hold the original set of keys to the cave. A taste of their own medicine might just open their eyes...and start an interesting discussion over which grotto or group of do-gooders has the “right” to control a cave entrance. I’ve got some more ideas to offer in a moment.

Often I’ve argued that caving is one generation behind rock climbing in its development (or decline). In many ways, I hope caving does not follow the same paths climbers have followed...for example, cavers still rescue cavers while many climbers seem to feel it is perfectly ethical and okay to walk by injured climbers and pursue their own trip as others die. However, in too many ways - access being a major one - caving is going down the same sad road as climbing.

What we need to rescue caving is Vulgarians.

What was a Vulgarian? The informal Vulgarian “movement” sprang up in climbing much as today’s Tea Party sprung up in American politics - however, the Vulgarians were liberals, not conservatives. In the 1950s-1960s, most of the climbing scene in New York and New England was controlled by The Appalachian Mountain Club, known derisively as the Appies (in the Tea Party analogy, think staid Republican Party). Appies were well meaning, I’m sure. But they regimented everything within their reach. Leaders were certified. Climbers were “allowed” to climb at certain cliffs only if they had passed Appie-approved tests at given skill levels. If IBM’s grey-suited, button-down Organization Man had climbed, he’d have been an Appie. Vulgarians opposed the Appie approach to regulation of the sport of rock climbing. In fact, we opposed any regulation of climbing. The heart of the Vulgar movement was at the Gunks. We climbed and drank or drank and climbed. We climbed nude (Belly Roll was a favorite to do nude since it was fairly easy and very obvious from the road below). High Exposure was the epitome of Vulgarian nude climbs. Anyone could “become” a Vulgarian. Other than taunting Appies, there were no rules (that was the point). For a short time a rather sizable 40-page publication called The Vulgarian Digest was printed...but even that was too mainstream. Probably the best known Vulgarian was Dick Williams, author of one of the seminal, legitimate guides to the Gunks (after Art Gran’s). Today, there are flare-ups of the Vulgarian spirit when climbers cut bolts or party hearty in the mountains.

Back to caving: Some of the NSS’s many grottoes have become the caving equivalent of the Appies. They are well organized. They feel they deserve control over caves just because of their grotto’s proximity to those caves. This is as silly as me claiming ownership and control over fox and deer in the woods (not MY woods) simply because they happen to be near my house.

Even most commercial cave owners recognize that the cave itself is something bigger than just their business. While they hold title to the cave, most commercial cave owners allow access to the wild parts of their caves under the right circumstances: ask and you shall receive. They understand that proximity is not exclusivity.

There is no reason - legal or ethical - for American cavers to concede control of caves to the first crew to show up with a gate and lock. Would Cleveland Grotto members like the late Bob Nadich or Ray Setteur have tolerated that kind of baloney? We already know the answer to that - Nadich is mentioned in books as the scourge of the over-regimented and self-important cliques in Kentucky caving. Ray delighted in tweaking the establishment.

Not every grotto is self-important or self-centered. Many gated caves in Indiana or TAG are made available to cavers simply for the asking. This is how it should be. However, too many caves - especially in our region - are not. The problem is not landowner relations (although this is often the excuse used to justify this resource-grab). The problem is caves who feel they have a god-given right to control caves and regulate access much as the government regulates access to military sites. What are the possible solutions? How do we break this down?

One way is to crusade in print and at cave events against resource-grubbing locals who feel their proximity to caves somehow makes them more deserving of access than cavers who happen to live a county or state farther away.

A more aggressive solution is simply to cut locks off of cave entrances. Is this vandalism? Maybe. Or, maybe it is no different than the philosophy behind Greenpeace or the movie Free Willy...freeing the cave from overbearing locals (continued on next page).
CAVE LOCKS

By Curt Harler

A couple of years ago, I did an article in the NEWS about electronic lock systems for caves - the idea being that access could be granted through a remote satellite or similar system that would beam a time-stamped access code to the lock. The property manager could share that code number over the phone with an approved Grotto that wanted to see the cave. No more physical handing-off of keys would be required. Access codes could change constantly but the person controlling the cave would know who was in the cave and for how long. In addition, access could be granted by providing a code that would be active only for a period of time (say Saturday, March 2 from 9 a.m. until Sunday, March 3 at midnight - allowing ample time for the cavers to get in and out without being trapped by the locks).

Well, I just discovered that real estate agents have a great system for locking caves. Think about it: their needs are similar to ours. If an agent has someone interested in a vacant property, the agent needs to be able to get in. However, the property must be secure the rest of the time. And, the homeowner has a right to know who was in the property and when...without having to be present every time an agent wants to show it.

In the past, real estate agents used lockboxes. A house key was in the lockbox. The problem was that every real estate agent used lockboxes. A house key was in the lockbox. The problem was that every real estate agent had access and nobody could tell who or when the property was entered. And, it was fairly easy for bad people to get access to a lockbox key.

Now, real estate agents have a similar, but different system. The key to the property (think cave versus house) is still locked in a lockbox. But the lockbox is electronic. And the real estate agent (think Grotto activities chair) has a special transponder with a special code that allows access to the lockbox and pops it open if the code on the Real Estate agent's beeper is authorized by the lockbox. Voila! The key pops out and the agent can go into the property...but the system knows which agent was in and for how long.

The transponders are the size of a small cell phone. The lockboxes pop open after the agent pounds in a pass code. What a beautifully simple system for cave locks. The person in charge of cave access rarely has to be at the cave. The key to the cave is locked in the electronic box. When access is required, the cave manager simply approves the Cleveland Grotto's transponder code for access. The Grotto could have a couple of these transponders (say if Vic was to go to West Virginia and I was to go to Indiana). I could even lend my transponder to Joe - but responsibility would still reside with me, since it would be in my code.

A company called SentriLock in Cincinnati has such a unit. It works with a key card similar to that given to a hotel room guest. While marketed to real estate agents, the SentriLock has some features cavers would like including a integrated and illuminated keypad, an extra large front opening key compartment, optional cardless entry, and a small, inexpensive and convenient electronic key device. SentriLock's system is Web based so all lockbox settings and visit information are accessible from any Internet connected PC. It's been out on the market for a short while.

Even simpler, a unit like the Supra 001872 Designer Key Box from GE (about $50) requires a cave manager to go to the site to change the access code - a task anyone can do - but still records the access of the last nine people to go into the cave.

Real estate agents in places as diverse as York and Adams County, Pa.; Sarasota, Fla.; Denver, Colo. and Hilton Head, S.C. all use the electronic systems. Surely there must be a caver amongst them who could verify or destroy this concept. If it works, it offers something for everyone: Better, easier control of the cave for the cave manager and easier access to caves for NSS members. What else could we want?

Note that my discussion does not include commercial or government-controlled caves. It also gives a pass to those caves that the locals make available to bona fide cavers. Also, there are logical and legal reasons to control access to commercial caves...just as one locks their home. And government loves to “do something” with its resources. That is a whole another fight that may require a group like climbing’s Access Fund - which works to keep climbing areas open -- to handle. NSS, so far, has shown itself totally unequal to the job of keeping caves open.

Caving needs Vulgarians. It needs active people who want to keep wild caves accessible...not self-anointed do-gooders who lock caves up to keep their pet “projects” or “surveys” exclusive or bats “safe.” Convents used to do the same thing: Take a beautiful 20-year old woman, lock her up for 60 years to “save” her from whatever (Vulgarians?). The end-result? A dying 80-year old enjoyed by nobody.

While the timeline in caves is longer, there is absolutely no reason to restrict well-intentioned recreational cavers from access to wild caves. This is not to say caves should not be respected and treated gently. But caves should not become private convents for the enjoyment of only a few.

Caving needs Vulgarians who will actively crusade - by word and deed - to keep cave access open. Count me as Cave Vulgarian 001. And if a second lock shows up on your private cave estate you’ll know who to call for the key. It will be interesting to see if I share it.

PS: Nominations for caves to double-lock are being accepted at curt@curtharler.com.
More photos from the GSP trip. Curt peeking out of the entrance, by Casey.

Above, by Ron Hager, Tim, Casey, Jim, Bill, and Curt.

Casey in a formation crawl >
Grotto Meeting – September 20th, 2011
By Gary Nelson

Curt opened the meeting at 8:10 pm.

**Introductions -**
Julie Coughlin-Atagi
Julie reported on her first wild cave experience in Randolph County West Virginia caverns.

**Minutes - Gary**
Gary read minutes from August. He will read them for approval at the next meeting.

**Treasurer's Report - Joe for Paul**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$1,536.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Fund</td>
<td>$12,422.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Fund</td>
<td>$292.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Membership - Mick for Kathy**
Mick reported that we have “members”
Curt mentioned a grotto by-law that the grotto will assume Andrew Linsmier's grotto dues as an active duty military member.

**Activities**
GSP/GCG cave trip - October 21st 22nd 23rd
Natural History Museum - October 1st
Pittsburgh Grotto picnic - October 1st and 2nd
Curt asked us to begin to consider the NSS convention in 2013 will held in Pennsylvania.
TAG - October 6th
Christmas Party - December 9th at Victor's.

**Web Report**
Bob reported that we had a web site.

**Equipment Report**
Mickey mentioned that we have new headlamps for our loaner equipment.

**Newsletter**
Cynthia will have a newsletter out soon. She requested trip reports.

Curt adjourned the meeting at 8:37 pm.

---

Grotto Meeting – October 18th, 2011
By Gary Nelson

George opened the meeting at 7:22 pm.

**Introductions -**
Gayle Suppa, Steve Corso

**Minutes - Gary**
Gary read minutes from August. He will read them for approval at the next meeting.

**Treasurer's Report - Mrs. Paul for Paul**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$1,472.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Fund</td>
<td>$12,422.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Fund</td>
<td>$292.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Membership - Cathy**
Cathy reported we have 57 members (38 NSS members).

**Activities - Curt for Laura**
Natural History Museum (Saturday, October, 22nd)
GSP cave trip this weekend. Curt mentioned that Bluegrass Grotto has requested our help with an area cleanup and that there will be a Halloween party later in the evening.
Curt mentioned that we still need to confirm with Victor before we settle on a date and place for the December 9th Christmas party.
Laura mentioned that “anyone can plan a trip” and she encourages anyone to plan a trip.
April Fool's - March 30th, 31st and April 1st

**Newsletter - Cynthia**
Cynthia will have a newsletter out soon. She requested trip reports.
Safety - Sanae  Sanae encourages us all to “not get hurt”.
Vertical - Alan  Alan reported he and other members of the Grotto had a “nice practice” a few weeks ago at Dundee Falls.
Science Fund - Gretchen  Gretchen reported she received confirmation that our article appeared in the October NSS news regarding publicizing grant opportunities. She suggested a web presence to promote our science funding efforts.
I/O Report - Bill  Bill reported that materials came in and went out as expected.
Equipment - Mickey  Mickey mentioned that Sanae has some equipment out. He mentioned he will look at some of the new Princeton headlamps that are reported to be malfunctioning.
New Business  We have new business cards which I have managed to lose. Everyone hates me now.
George set the date for the first Board meeting of 2012. The meeting will be at Curt’s house on Thursday, January 5th at 7:00 PM.
Beth suggested we aggressively pursue new membership strategies.
Trip Reports  Judy reported on an October 1st, 2nd and 3rd trip to Laurel Cavern. Judy mentioned that the weather was challenging, but that the trip was a lot of fun. Judy was impressed that the Pittsburgh Grotto managed to successfully complete the pig roast in spite of extremely drunken cooks. Judy also was impressed by the “anti-gravity” area and the chandelier lighting in the cavern passages. Judy said she learned to “be prepared” in regards to rain gear and foul weather equipment.
Curt reported he went caving at The Nature Conservancy near Ellenville New York.
George adjourned the meeting at 8:49 pm.

Grotto Meeting Notes - November 15th  from Cynthia—unofficial notes on the meeting. The meeting was called to order by Chair George Willard at 7:30 pm. During the introductions we met Holly Kellar. One of the places she is from is WUSS. Her last caving trip was 2 days ago in TAG, Scooping Victor who said he hadn’t caved in 60 days. Fifteen people were present. The refreshments were great, we all agreed Julie is doing a great job for us. Laura read the September and October minutes for us and they were both approved as read. The treasurer, Paul M reported 14270.15 in total, 12422.59 in the Science Fund, 292.80 in the Equipment Fund and 1554.76 in the General Fund.
The Editor passed out extra newsletters that had been printed. Activities Chair, Laura, talked about a possible Kentucky trip to be announced at a later date. The Christmas party at Vic’s on Dec. 17th starts about 6:30 pm. Vic also talked about a possible special spring trip to WV. Vertical Chair, Alan had nothing new to report, but may hold an indoor practice during the winter. AJ states no activity in the library except fellow caver Joe Brown ha been reading through the collection and is really enjoying it. He states we don’t know what we have there!
Old Business: Our members are still on the mend, Susan and Karen, we miss you! Get Well Soon!
New Business: On the topic of the grotto buying a projector versus a large screen TV, of members present the consensus was the projector. At this point there was a brief meeting of the executive board to fund the project. Alan made a motion to spend up to $550 for a grotto projector, seconded by Cynthia. Approved by board members present: George, Bill, Gretchen, Alan, Paul, and Cynthia. AJ was directed by the Chair to go in search of a good product and good deal.
Sunday AJ was in Lost Caverns. The owners have concerns about the algae growing on the lights and surrounding lit areas of the cave. And continuing to use a bleach solution. They are researching using hydrogen peroxide instead, just have to come up with the right concentration.
Next years convention will have pre convention trips led out of various areas including the OTR site, Richmond, VA and Blacksburg, VA. There'll be a sauna and a quiet side for camping. There will be a VA area meeting at Poor Farm Cave the end of April about convention. AJ will keep us posted.
At the WV Cave Conservancy meeting: all WVCC caves are open. OTR work weekends: May 4-6, June 15 -17, July 20-22.
Trip Report: Holly reports that the way to Moses Tomb took awhile due to the devastasion still present from a spring tornado. The second day of her trip included Geode, Elmo, Odyssey and Iliad. Her last day with DUG, GCG and someone from GA included a trip to Cemetery Pit.
Laura moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alan. The meeting adjourned to the second meeting about 8:50 pm.
The October 18th, 2011 meeting had 23 attendees. The date of the grotto party was agreed upon, place not firm. We reviewed social media, set a date for the April Fool’s trip, revisited some of our history, Anne Blaha, Bill Blaha, Betty Yoe and their NSS connections. Grinned about our renegade cavers, Ray Setteur, Bob Nadich and Dave Sholar (where are you now, Dave, Alaska?). And, made inaccurate comments about the ballot in trying to remember what the bylaws said about who can do what instead of looking things up..., lol. By the way, our constitution was first approved by our board in November 17, 1944 and received our charter from the NSS January 27, 1945.

The November 15th, 2011 meeting, 15 attendees.
December 20, January 17
Grotto Meetings 3rd Tues of the month, 7PM at Busch Funeral Home 7501 Ridge Rd., Parma, Ohio

Carbide Calendar
Dec 17 Grotto Christmas Party at Vic and Lorie’s, 6:30 pm.
Cave trips are in the works. Any ideas please contact activities chair Laura!
Jan 5 Board meeting at Curts, TIME TO COUNT THE BALLOTS, ETC.! 7pm....
March 30-April 1 April Fool’s trip!
OTR Work Weekends TBA.
May Hidden River Clean Up; Grotto Auction
OTR Work Weekends: May 4-6, June 15-17, July 20-22.
Greenbrier Valley, WV.
Aug 30-Sep 3 OTR.
Summer 2013 NSS Convention in Eastern PA.

It is almost time to pay your dues! They are $15 which includes a hard-copy of the Cleve-O-Grotto News, or, $10 which includes membership with electronic links to the newsletter on the clevelandgrotto.org website. Look for the ballot in the mail with this, your newsletter, or in your email.

Whether you want to run for office or railroad your caving buddies, a few basic rules must be followed, as described in the Cleveland Grotto bylaws:
1) Voting - in order to vote, you must be an active Cleveland Grotto member/associate member.
2) Candidates - to be an eligible candidate for office, you must be an active NSS member AND have been a Cleveland Grotto member for at least one year (dues paid by April 15th).
3) Term of Office - for one year, ending at the board meeting in which ballots are counted.

Items that may have slipped our minds: The ballots for the annual election of the Executive Board shall be distributed at least six weeks prior to the January Executive Board Meeting; ballots received after the conclusion of the counting of the ballots January Executive Board meeting will be invalid.

The Blue Ridge Grotto Christmas party is also on Dec. 17th.
We will raise our glasses to the setting sun and toast our Cleveland caving buddies!
Cave Softly, Mary Sue Socky