



# The TAGLine

PO Box 11506 Chattanooga, TN 37401-2506  
<http://www.caves.org/grotto/chattanooga>

Chattanooga Grotto of the NSS

April 2006



## Meeting Notice

The regular meeting of the Chattanooga Grotto is held the second Monday of every month at 7:00p.m at the downtown CARTA Conference Center in Chattanooga, the next meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2006. The EC meeting is at 6:00, right before the Grotto meeting.

## Executive Committee

The executive committee will be meeting on Monday, April 10. The main purpose of this meeting will be to decide if the Chattanooga Grotto will host the 2007 SERA Cave Carnival, as well as what to do with our munchie stand equipment. All are welcome to attend.

## New Members

by Glenn Segrest

The Chattanooga Grotto currently has 69 active members. Please everyone in the grotto give a warm welcome to our newest member:

Kathryn Miller  
Thatcher South #634  
Collegedale, TN 37415  
H-423.236.6634  
C-817.648.4433



Now lets all go caving.

## Grotto Program

The Grotto presentation this month will be presented by Dr. Habte Giorgis Churnet head of the Department of Physics, Geology, and Astronomy at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. His topic "The Geology of Lookout Mountain" promises to be of great interest to those cavers who would like a better understanding of how our area caves that we love so much came to be. Dr. Churnet also authored a book about the The Geology of Lookout Mountain and will have them available at no charge at the meeting. If you are still not convinced consider this. Churnet's expertise lies in petrogenesis and the application of geologic principles to the understanding of the geology of southeastern USA. His contributions include studies of sedimentary rocks and carbonate-hosted metallic deposits of East Tennessee, paleoclimate of southeastern USA as deduced from chert, and tectonism in that same region. He is active in guiding students to field examinations of the geology of the desert southwest, Costa Rica in the beginning of summers of alternate years, and southeastern USA during regular semesters. Since 1980 his work includes administration, teaching, and research at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. His previous work experience includes summer employment by Anaconda Copper Company stationed in Charlottesville, Virginia, Gulf Oil Company of Ethiopia stationed at Asmara, and by the Ethiopian Geological survey mapping in the vicinity of Adigrat.

## Mark Your Stuff!

For April's meeting, Marty is bringing two electric engravers! For a mere donation, you can electronically etch your name in all of you paraphernalia!

## **Grotto Trip to Hermit Cave**

By Jerry Wallace

On Wednesday, March 22, fourteen people showed up for a Grotto trip to Hermit Cave, on Charlie Smith's property in Fiery Gizzard Cove. Not a bad turnout for a weeknight trip! We had a great mix of members old and new, and a couple of guests, including one first-timer, Haley, (13). After a brief visit with Charlie (he was coming down with the flu) we suited up and headed to the entrance, a short walk from the cars and right off the road. No lie!

Hermit is a moderately easy horizontal cave, but does have a couple of places where a hand line is convenient. Fortunately most of them are pre-rigged. The first of these is a step around some slippery flowstone with an eight-foot drop-off on one side, which everyone negotiated fairly easily. After this came a short but cold wade through a pool which was over waist high on some of the folks. I've never seen the water so deep in this pool; it's usually only just above your boot tops, and was a bit of a shock to the system. Clem Akins somehow managed to traverse a wall for part of the way and only got in to his knees, but most just plunged in and got it over with.

After the pool comes a climb up a nearly vertical ten-foot sand wall. This too is rigged with a hand-line. Shortly after this we were joined by Monty Keel, who arrived late and caught up with us.

Most of the rest of the passage to the termination room is a twisting upper level canyon with the floor ten or fifteen feet below you some of the way. A few of the newer folks were a bit nervous with this, and required some reassurance, but every one eventually got through fine while several of us went ahead to find the climb-down into the big room. Monty and I were the only ones who'd been to the cave before, and it had been quite a while for both of us, but the way down was soon found. The climb-down is a steep, loose,

sand slope and a hand-line is highly recommended here. This is the only place that's not pre-rigged, so if you go, you may want to take a twenty or thirty foot piece of rope with you. After twenty minutes or so of poking around the big room, extracting our chairman from a crawlway, and checking out the very cool anastomosis pendants on the ceiling, we headed back out, stopping to admire the chert boxwork on the ceiling near the top of the sand-wall climb. It's worth a trip just to see this stuff, which is quite unusual. There's also a nice formation area with some tall stalagmite totems and broomsticks, which is worth a picture or two.

We exited into a cool, starry night after three and a half hours of caving and all but a few of us reconvened at the Waffle House in Kimball for a late supper. All in all, a great mid-week caving fix. Thanks to Chairman Abercrombie for arranging it and to all who showed up!

Note: Hermit Cave is on private property. Please obtain permission from landowner Charlie Smith before visiting. All caves on Charlie's property are closed during hunting season!

Hermit Cave participants:

Jonathan Burishkin, Jonny Prouty, Tara Underwood, Dusty Rumley, Juliette ?, Jen ?, Haley ?, Kevin ? (sorry, didn't catch these folks' last names), Marty Abercrombie, Ben Castleberry, Clem Akins, MontyKeel, Ginger Bankston, J. Wallace

### **\*Correction\***

The 2005 financial report in the March edition of the Tagline was in error. Copies of the correct report will be available for viewing at the next grotto meeting. If you are unable to come to the meeting, and would like to review the report, please contact either Hollie Baranick, Jack McCormick, or Glenn Segrest (contact info on back page), and we will be glad to send you a copy. Sorry.

## 35th Annual Kentucky Speleofest 2006

May 26-29

Hart County Fairgrounds  
Munfordville, KY

Hosted by Louisville Grotto

It's that time of year again to start planning a trip to Kentucky for Speleofest 2006. This year's Speleofest will be held at Hart County Fairgrounds in Munfordville, KY, a site located in the heart of cave country.

For those who want to visit Mammoth Cave, Crystal Onyx Cave, Kentucky Down Under or Diamond Caverns, we are just minutes away from Kentucky's greatest show caves. We have many new caves this year as well as some old favorites to make you feel at home. We have some easy walking caves for those with small children or you can get on rope and get real dirty! We have long trips and short trips, the choice will be yours as we hold this year's family oriented event.

### Schedule of Events

**Thursday:** The gates will open at noon for early arrivals. There will be a \$2.00 per person fee for those who arrive on Thursday to camp. Gates close at Midnight.

**Friday:** Gates open at 6am. Walk, talk, and get together. Cave trips will be posted so you can plan your Saturday and Sunday out. There will be Karaoke from 7-10pm for those who want to be a super star.

**Saturday:** The cave trips will start at 8am. The last cave trip will go out at 1pm. Don't forget to look up Dr. William Pearson's Field Trip. Look on the cave sign up sheets for more info. There will be a Garden Party at The American Cave Conservation Association's Hidden River Cave at 7pm (includes free trip and museum tour for Speleofest guests only). The Sun Kings Band will be at the campground at 9pm until Midnight.

**Sunday:** Cave trips start at 8am. The last cave trip will go out at 1pm. The banquet dinner will be at 7pm. This year's guest speaker will be Dave Foster and the Ameri-

can Cave Conservation Association which will start at 8:30pm-DOOR PRIZES will follow.

**Monday morning:** Time to return to that other person we are and put our boots and helmets away.

Sorry, pets are not allowed.

Registration forms and directions are available on the website at:

<http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto>

### SKTF Cleanup on Orme Mtn Road

By: Jim Wilbanks

Everyone is welcome to the next SKTF cleanup on Orme Mtn Road on April 30th after the TAG survey meetings. The cleanup will begin at 10 AM Central for volunteers. Persons helping with rigging please arrive at 9 Central. This cleanup was originally conceived by the Sewanee Mountain Grotto and is in their back yard. They handled all the arrangements with the county, local land owners, and the press. With help from the SKTF and you, we can make it happen. With new rig points for improved lifting, a brand new rescue rack and a shiny new pulley together with better arrangements for trash removal, we hope to make a large dent in the pile at mile marker one. Other opportunities for help abound all up and down the road. Our first effort has been written up in papers and was a real hit with the local cave/landowners. Monday after the last cleanup a local landowner walked into the Russell Cave office and gave the SKTF a generous donation. How's that for landowner relations? Speaking of Russell Cave, several of their employees and two of their pickup trucks were used. Russell Cave management is really happy about this effort and so are the local landowners. Please help us with this win/win for caves and cavers.

Jim Wilbanks Chair

SERA Karst Task Force

## Joint Meeting of TCS, ACS, and GCS

The joint meeting of the TCS, ACS, and GCS will be held on Saturday, April 29 at University of the South, Sewanee, TN. If you have a presentation that you would like to present for TCS, please let me know. Because of the joint nature of the meeting, we are asking folks to try to keep presentations down to 15 minutes.

Thanks! -Mary Wilson Crist TCS Secretary/  
Treasurer

### Gourdneck Cave Trip

A trip to Gourdneck cave will be led by Wm Shrewsbury on April 29th. We will leave from the McDonalds parking lot just off I-24 on the Browns Ferry exit. This cave is a leased by the SCCi as part of their conservation efforts. The trip will be to Hans Falls (where the ropes hang) and back. You will experience ankle to knee deep water through most of the cave, with an occasional small pool that will get you wet up to your waist. While poly-pro is recommended, you will not require a wetsuit. There are also a couple of exposed climbs, however they are negotiated by novice cavers quite easily. This cave is highly decorated so bring along your water-protected camera! Contact Wm for more information.

([william2006@hawaiiiflow.com](mailto:william2006@hawaiiiflow.com), 423-315-0840)

### Happy Anniversary!

This year marks our 50th year as a grotto! It is time for a celebration! Buddy Lane is holding a series of planning meetings for the occasion. We're looking forward to hearing your ideas!



## Calendar of Events

**April 29:** TCS, ACS, GCS meeting.

**April 30:** SKTF Cleanup-Orme Mtn. Rd.

**May 26-29:** 35th Kentucky Speleofest

**June 1-4:** SERA at Bucks Pocket State Park

**October:** Annual Auction!

**October:** TAG Fall Cave-In!

**November:** 50th Anniversary Celebration

### Grotto Trips!

#### **Trip Schedule for This Year:**

**April:** Gourdneck Cave, led by Wm Shrewsbury. See Wm for more information. 423.238.9334

**May13-14:** Tentative Backpacking trip to Virgin Falls, led by Marty Abercrombie. This is a moderately strenuous trip. Contact Marty for more information.

**May:** Camps Gulf/Natural Bridge Sinks, led by Beth Elliott.

**June:** Limrock Blowing Cave, led by Monty Keel

**July16:** Karst-O-Rama

**July 29-30:** Summer Splash! (unofficial 50th "blow-out" celebration)

**July:** Whiteside Cave, led by Beth Elliott.

**September:** Cedar Ridge Cave, led by Carolina Shrewsbury

**October:** TAG Fall Cave-In!

**November:** Levi Cave.

**November:** Grotto's 50th Birthday!

**December:** Cumberland Caverns Christmas Party

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This contact list may also be found at the Grotto web site "Contact Us" page, at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/chattanooga/contactus.html>



In order to get the Tagline out earlier we would like articles for all editions of the Tagline to be submitted by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month before publication. Send in pictures, articles, announcements, or what you want posted. See contact page for info. All drawings are copyright protected and the editor has received special permission from the artist to use in the TAGLine. The gifted Rick Spears provided the drawing on the envelope. Thank you very much! The Chattanooga Grotto TAGLine is the monthly notice of The Chattanooga Grotto of the National Speleological Society, Inc. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity and space requirements. Exchanges are welcome and encouraged. Please submit trip report and other longer material to the TAGLine PO Box 11506, Chattanooga, TN 37401-2506 or the Grotto TAGLine Editor.

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