



The TAGLine

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

Chattanooga Grotto of the NSS

February 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 February 13, 2006. The EC meeting is at 6:00, right before the Grotto meeting.

Grotto Program

This month our own fabulous Monty Keel will be presenting the program of the caves on the Island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Food will be provided so bring an appetite. Hope to see you there!

Time to Pay Your Dues!

Just a friendly reminder-dues for the grotto were due January 1. If you haven't paid yet, please pay at the next grotto meeting, or contact Glenn Segrest if you would like to pay before!



2006 Officers!

Congratulations to all the new (and old) grotto officers! Elections were held at the last grotto meeting on January 9.

Chair: Marty Abercrombie

Vice Chair: Mike Hills

Treasurer/Membership: Glenn Segrest

Secretary/Tagline Editor: Hollie Baranick

Hello from Mike Hills, new Vice Chair:

My name is Michael Hills I longed to be a member of the Chattanooga grotto through much of the 90's but lived too far away for it to be practical. Finally in 2000 after moving back to the area I was able to join the Excellent Chattanooga Grotto. Years previously I have been a member of the Dogwood city Grotto and a now defunct Grotto in New Market Va. where I attended High School. I began Spelunking in 1986 and was converted to a caver in 1989. (Happily I can honestly say, though I came from ignorant spelunking beginnings, there are no caves bearing my spray painted name or missing speleothems as a result my visitation.) As a professor at Southern Adventist University in the Outdoor Education Department, I am lucky to have many of my hobbies as my work. I live in Ooltewah Tn. with my wife Tara and soon to be born son. I look forward to serving the Chattanooga Grotto as Vice Chair and planning a variety of professional, informative and entertaining programs. Please let me know if there are any special topics that you would find useful and would like to see be part of our monthly meetings.

Hello from Glenn Segrest, new Treasurer

I would like to say thank you to all those officers who have served in the past and to all those who are currently serving. I would like to also thank the members of the Grotto who had the confidence in me to nominate and elect me. I hope to serve the Grotto in a capacity that will benefit the Grotto and follow in the footsteps of those great persons who selfless server the Grotto before me (although they will be great footsteps to fill).

Nothing connects us to Mother Earth like...rope.

Chattanooga Grotto Group Pack Rocking Experiment

By: Glenn Segrest

As five people headed south on Interstate 75 all packed into a Jeep to meet up with John Corley at the Rome exit in Georgia, I was unaware of the group of scallywag I carried. Ben Castleberry, Jonny Prouty, Laura Durkin, and Marty Abercrombie were if not all, at least partially plotting to rock my pack. We arrived to meet John and after a quick meal at the IHOP, we headed south to Tom Moltz's house to spend the night in his yard and porch. Arriving around ten o'clock we meet John Weitzel, and Alexander Stinson, all were still a bit to wound up to sleep. We told a few cave lies and finally dozed off a few hours later. Tom, up in time to wake the roosters, woke us with a smile and a pot of coffee. We left his house near 7:30 and headed for Glory Hole Cave.

We spent a few minutes meeting the owners of the land and headed for the sink hole that contained the gate for the cave. Matt Kalch, Guy Yates, and Thom Kennedy were there already working on repairing some damage done by vandals who were trying to dig there way into the cave through a drain in the sinkhole floor. The new gate if you haven't seen it is incredible. Made of concrete and rebar it stands about a meter and a half high and looks like a bunker. A large steel door is built on top but was in the process of being replaced by a beefier door by Matt, Guy, and Thom. A rebar ladder is built into the wall of the entrance gate and seems to work well.

Our group was asked to do some labor and everyone went to work with no protest. The group was split into three work parties, one working the burn pile, another working to repair the drain damage, and the final group, working to remove the wooden form from the new gate. After an hour or so, many of the tasks were completed satisfactorily, and we suited up and went caving.

In the cave we saw the group from Chattanooga saw beautiful formations. Stopped for a few minutes to take a few photos and have a snack. We carefully attempted to navigate the cave and have as little impact as possible. On the way out of the cave we toured a side

passage the let those interested in doing so, navigate the mind bender passage and see the Granny Star.

Due to leaving my pack unattended to see the Granny Star, my pack was rocked. Judging by the amount of rocks in my pack, the entire group must have each one placed on in my pack while I was gone. Since John W. was with me, someone must have rock twice in his honor.

After exiting the cave and once again visiting with the land owners, we stopped for a bite to eat and some Guacamole. The group then caravanned to Tim Lewis's in Havana, Fl. To camp and spent the night. The weather couldn't have been better as it was cool enough for some to wear a jacket and other to not. A few people retired to their vehicle, a few to their tents, and others just slept out on the ground. The night was great.

The next day after a meal of Biscuits And Gravy we stopped to look at a karst feature and headed home. The trip home was uneventful, and I am sure my dreams will be filled with the memories of this weekend pretties for a while. Thanks to all who could make it, and made ti the trip it was.

New Members

by Jack McCormick

The following persons joined the Grotto within the past month. Please make them welcome and include them in our future caving adventures.

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Trip Report: Gourdneck Cave

By Sarah Kreitzer

The morning of January 16th 2006, began with our crew of five chowing down at the Cracker Barrel in South Pittsburg. As we were inhaling our biscuits, sausage, and eggs, we speculated what the day would bring. After eating, the crew (consisting of Sarah Kreitzer, Cliff Nelson, Brian "Conk" McConky, Dustin Everett, and Marc from France) proceeded to Gourdneck Cave. We all become distinctly aware of the chilly weather as we changed into our layers of polypro.

On our way to the registry, we encountered some "spelunkers" wearing sandals, t-shirts, and cotton clothes. They obviously were not prepared for the cave, so we told them the cave did not go any further. When we came to the waterfall with the deep pool, we examined the large rugose corals. Marc was intrigued by the coral, proclaiming he, "had never seen anything like this before!" After trying to get anyone to jump into the deep pool, Dustin was the only one crazy enough to gleefully leap into the frigid water. Thankfully, Conk had remembered to bring his digital camera! After Dustin was out of the water, Sarah signaled for the group to follow her up the chimney. With much reluctance at first, everyone slowly worked up enough courage to climb up to and through the toilet bowl to the upper section of the cave. The entire way up, Marc kept shouting how us Americans were "crazy," and how "in France we don't cave like this!"

Once we crawled and wound our way up through the stream, we came across the beautiful formations and calcite. We stopped and admired the formations, and contemplated the time it took for them to form – which was quite mind-boggling. We didn't see any endangered cave salamanders, but we found a rather large crawfish that was about six or seven inches from head to tail. We saw numerous bats, one of which nearly collided with Cliff's face. Towards the back waterfall with the rope, Dustin encountered an albino spider.

Conk took lots of great pictures and we all had a great time. Overall, we spent four hours inside of Gourdneck. When we got out, we had a hearty Mexican meal and reviewed all of our

pictures. Marc will certainly tell all of his friends in France of the crazy cavers in America!



Calendar of Events

February 18: Sera Winter Business Meeting, Sewanee, TN

February 19: SERA Cave Clean-up. See Jim Wilbanks for details.

June 1-4: SERA at Bucks Pocket State Park

October: TAG Fall Cave-In!

Grotto Trips!

Trip Schedule for This Year:

February 25: Byer's Cave, led by Johnny Prouty. Meet at Sue's Market at 8am. Some vertical gear may be required. See Johnny for details. (571) 251-6160

February: Grindstone Cave-led by Mike Hills. Please contact Mike at (423) 987-3993 for more information.

February: TBA cave trip led by Jerry Wallace. Please contact Jerry at (706) 657-3857 for more information.

March: Wheeler's Raid Pit, led by Glenn Segrest. Meet at Panera Bread downtown at 8am. Easy vertical cave. Please contact Glenn for more information. (423) 838-4377

April: Gourdneck Cave, led by Wm Shrewsbury.

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

June: Limrock Blowing Cave, led by Monty Keel

July: Whiteside Cave, led by Beth Elliott.

August: Sinking Cove Cave-Summer Splash!

September: Cedar Ridge Cave, led by Carolina Shrewsbury

October: TAG Fall Cave-In!

November: Levi Cave.

December: Cumberland Caverns Christmas Party

The SKTF Needs You!

By: Jim Wilbanks

The SKTF is looking for a few dedicated cavers who care passionately about cave conservation and want to help.

The SERA Karst Task Force is a standing committee of SERA, the southeastern region of the NSS. The SKTF is a non profit corporation run by a board of directors. Board members are appointed after the SERA Winter Business Meeting by the new SERA Chairman to serve two year terms. Last year's vice-chairman, Brian Roebuck automatically becomes SERA Chair after this year's meeting, where a new vice-chair and secretary/ treasurer will be elected.

So how can you become involved? If you have a couple of years to devote to supporting the task force, you can offer yourself as a candidate for a SERA officer. The vice-chair and secretary/ treasurer are elected each year. The vice chair serves two years, first as vice chair, then as chairman. During each year all elected officers of SERA are voting members of the SKTF. If you are elected vice-chair, you get to choose who sits on the SKTF board your second year.

Or, you could offer yourself as a member of the committee. Membership is for two years. What's involved in membership? We are looking for educators. While we have a strong science background, many of our long term goals are in education. There are the management details of running a corporation to vote on. You will be asked to check out cleanup sites or work on karst groundwater demonstrations. You will find yourself collecting signatures at cleanups, helping plan cleanups and interacting with other cavers. The best part is getting to know our volunteers. What a fine group of people. They are the engine that makes our goals a reality. If you are interested, please contact us:
Brian Roebuck, chairman-elect and committee member at solow@charter.net
Jim Wilbanks, current sec/treas and committee chair
at jimgail69@earthlink.net
Peter Michaud, current SERA chairman and committee member at bhmmudpup@AOL.com

Quote of the month:

"This is a very big grotto. It's only a small grotto when there's work to be done." Jack McCormick

New Website!

www.chattanooga.org

Log in, create a user name, and let the interactive fun begin! Special thanks to Mike Harrison and Jonny Prouty for putting this together.

Joke of the Month

submitted by Glenn Segrest

spelunkadunk-that muddy but in front of you in a cave!

Wetsuits for Sale!

Hello, our family runs a whitewater rafting business called Crab Apple Whitewater, Inc. We have run trips in Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont since 1983. For the past few seasons we have sold used wetsuits to cavers and caving clubs. Our inventory includes 3mm and 5mm suits. We have been selling to caving clubs since November, so our stock is getting low in some sizes. Suits are priced according to wear, with \$20 being the cheapest and \$45 in "like new" condition. Manufacturers include Northwest River Supplies, Atlan, Henderson and Deep Sea. We can meet individual and group orders. To determine sizing, we need height, weight, shoe size and we are good at getting the sizes correct. For more information, please contact:

Frank and Jennifer Mooney
Crab Apple Whitewater, Inc
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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 28th 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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