

The FLOWSTONE

Vol 25 Issue 7

August 2018



A Monthly Newsletter of the Cullman Grotto of the National Speleological Society

CULLMAN GROTTO FLOWSTONE

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Visit us: www.cullmangrotto.org or

The Flowstone is published monthly by the Cullman Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Items submitted for publication must be received by the 20th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.

The Cullman Grotto will exchange by request with any publishing grotto. Republication of items within *The Flowstone* is allowed provided credit is given to author and source.

Membership to the Cullman Grotto is fifteen dollars (\$15) per year for individual or twenty dollars (\$20) per year for family. Dues are payable at the first grotto meeting of each year (January) and includes subscription to *The Flowstone*. Subscription rate for non-members is fifteen dollars (\$15) per year.

The Cullman Grotto meets on the first Monday of each month unless the first Monday falls on a holiday or otherwise noted. In those cases the meeting will be held on the second Monday. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and are held at the old L&N train depot, Arnold St., Cullman, AL. All visitors and prospective members are welcome.

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Front Cover: *Melissa Parker paddles near the Hambrick Bat Cave*

Photo by: *Scott Murphy*

ECHO)))) CHAMBER

CaveFest 2018: Pre-registration is Now Open!

By: Kyle Lassiter (Knoxville, Tennessee)
kyle.lassiter@gmail.com



Pre-registration for CaveFest 2018 is now open! Now you don't have to worry about paying for your camping, shirts, etc. on site...you can get it done today! The pre-registration page is on the Cavefest page of our NSS website, located here:

<http://caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountaingrotto/cavefest.html>

Cave Fest is the annual auction & party hosted by the Sewanee Mountain Grotto. The event is always held over Labor Day weekend (dates this year are 8/31 - 9/3, camping Thursday night is available). The event is located at Cavers Paradise (see www.caversparadise.com for directions). Amenities onsite include a bath house, hot tub & sauna and over 1,000 caves within an hour drive! This year's theme is "CaveFest Rockin' Tour 2018", and we're planning on having a rockin' good time!

Remember, there is no registration fee to attend, but we do ask that all attendees participating in the potluck on Saturday night bring a side dish. Basic camping for the whole weekend is just \$10/person (electrical hookups additional \$25). T-shirts are offered in poly-style and cotton-feel poly style, but the latter must be pre-ordered online by August 17th. We will have some extra poly-style shirts available

during the event. See the t-shirt design on the preregistration site. And don't forget to order your drinking mug!

There will be both horizontal and vertical led cave trips, two batfloats to Nickajack Cave (Friday & Sunday), a live rock band Sunday night, a potluck dinner, and of course our main feature, the auction. The dinner and auction are Saturday night and all proceeds raised during our auction go back into the caving community!

Over the last 10 years the Sewanee Mountain Grotto has donated thousands of dollars to the NSS, the SCCi, local rescue squads, caving expeditions, SKTF cave cleanups, CaveSim, survey projects and more!

To join the Facebook group, and to see the full list of donors and auction items, go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SMGCaveFest/>

We'll be updating the auction items and led trip lists throughout the month so check back for updates.

Hope to see you there!



Tickets On Sale Now for the 3rd Annual Bats, Beer & Bluegrass



Bats, Beer & Bluegrass has something for everyone – outdoor enthusiasts, craft beer lovers, and bluegrass fans! Proceeds support the ongoing protection of caves and karst lands across the Southeast. SCCi currently protects 170+ caves on 31 preserves in six states.

*Ticket Prices:

General Admission \$50: Dinner with Tea/Water (Beer and soft drinks available for purchase)

Date Night Package \$125 (\$165 Value):

2 Dinners with Tea/Water (Beer and Soft Drinks available for purchase)

2 Souvenir Beer Mugs

1 Event Poster

1 Unforgettable Evening

Farm to Table Menu by Pigeon Mountain Grill

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS](#)

NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

*No pets, outside food or alcohol allowed on the preserve.

*All beer sales require a current, government issued ID.

*Children kept in a parent/guardian's lap – no charge. There is no other children's ticket prices.

*Fricks Cave Preserve is a nature preserve and surfaces may be uneven, rocky or slick. Use caution.

*SCCi will make every effort possible to accommodate handicapped/disabled individuals. Advance arrangements are highly suggested. Those individuals with a

handicap hang tag or license plate needing to park in the venue must arrive before 4:30 for the safety of pedestrians.

*Parking is limited. Please carpool if possible.

For information on becoming a sponsor or supporting Bats, Beer & Bluegrass, contact amber.lehmann@scci.org or call 423-771-9671.

Guffey Cave

By Harold Calvert



We have been trying to plan a trip to a wet cave all summer. Every time we do it starts raining again. (*Op-ed: Umm, isn't that what makes wet caves????*) With the boys being trapped in a wet cave overseas, many thought it a bad idea to go with decent chances of rain. So this last month the alternate cave was Guffy. It is a favorite of mine, and with the Montgomery grotto joining us for the trip with new people it was a good place to go. So, as usual, I had to contact the landowner to make arrangements for the trip, and also to get the key for the new cave gate.

He makes all groups give him a deposit for the key, "So I get it back" he says.

I called a few days ahead and there was no problem with permission. I have known the owner for many years; he never tells us no. But you have to call him before you come pick up the key. I did. The home phone went straight to message, so did the cell. So, I went to his home and knocked on the door. This was not a good idea, he got mad because I did not call first. I told him I did call. Both numbers went straight to message. He said "That's because they are off". Then how am I supposed to call?

He did give me the key, but he was not happy when I left.

The next stop was McDonalds in Guntersville to meet the rest of our group for the day. It was a good size group, maybe 14 cavers. With

everyone present and accounted for, we were on our way to the cave.

Upon arrival at the parking spot, the first thing we saw was that the whole area had been clear cut, and the brush and briars were overgrown leaving us no trail. We had to bushwhack all the way to the cave. With a little luck we went straight to it. If we were off a few yards we would have walked right past it and never knew it.

The new gate is made of massive angle iron turned at a direction with both legs down, hiding the lock. After finally finding it, I had a hard time getting it unlocked and moved. It is very awkward. That may have been the plan.

Once inside, we moved through the cave at a good pace, stopping at the pump room for pictures. Some new people were a little uncomfortable about going around the ledge past the room. Next obstacle encountered is a breakdown room. Some of the group went ahead as I helped people around the ledge. They went the wrong way. We had to corral them and head them in the right direction, through the breakdown leading up into a large room. This takes you over to the right wall and back down through a crack to the grand junction. To the right is large borehole with formations. To the left goes down through another breakdown room and up to Little Italy and spires of guffy, some nice formation areas. There is also a mud sculpture room at the end. Many creative cavers have visited this room, and left some odd art projects also.

We poked around in a few other spots, then headed out. My task was now to return the key. Not something I was looking forward to, knowing I had made the land owner mad.

When I arrived at his home, he was in the garage working on some of his

TAG Calendar

August 6
Grotto Meeting
L&N Train Depot, Arnold St 7:30PM

August ?
Grotto Trip
TBA

August 31-September 3
CaveFest
Cavers Paradise - Sponsored by
Sewanee Mountain Grotto

September 15-16
Whiteside Rappel Practice
Highlands, NC

October 4-7
TAG Fall Cave-In
Lookout Mountain, GA

October 20
Bridge Day 2018
New River Gorge, WV



projects. He was in a much better mood. I asked him about some of his cars. He was once a drag racer and went to many states racing. He was also into guns and gunsmithing. I talked to him about 90 minutes. Everything was good when I left. He is also a veteran. We discussed that some also. I will leave that discussion for another time.

We did not get to do a wet cave, but it was still a nice easy cave trip. But even a bad cave trip is better than no trip at all.



Owl was hanging out above the cave and picked off one of the bats as it was exiting the cave. I missed that. A week night would probably be better next time.



Hambrick Cave Paddle

July 27, 2018

By Scott Murphy

We met up at the put in at 6:30 for a sunset full moon paddle to the bat cave. A friend of ours, Melissa Parker, rode over with us (she's in the picture with the cave up on the cliff wall)

Anthony Woods and Sam Russel are our guides on this trip. It is a 1.2 mile paddle in open water above Guntersville Dam on the North side highway 431 side. There was a really long barge locking through the dam when we got there. When we started our paddle it was just leaving the Dock. When we got around the bend there was another barge coming at us. I was hugging the bluff line. The captain of the barge coming at us came on an intercom and was directing other paddles to move to the bank. He had to tell them several times to get out of the way.



There was approximately about 80 people out there 40+ kayaks and about 10 motor boats. The bats started coming out around 8:15. An



Minutes of the Meeting of the Cullman Grotto of the National Speleological Society

July 2, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Cullman Grotto of the National Speleological Society was called to order on Monday, July 2, 2018 at 7:30 pm by Harold Calvert, Chairman. 7 members were present, no guests.

The minutes from the June meeting were read by Evon Thompson, Secretary. A motion was made by David Drake to accept the minutes as read and was seconded by Vic Bradford. The motion was approved.

The Treasurer's report was given.

David read the lyrics of "Timothy".

Announcements:

HCRU Training – July 27-30

Old Business:

Harold is acquiring metal for the door at Rickwood Caverns.

New Business:

Grotto Picnic – Yes? No? Where?

Upcoming Grotto Trips:

Trip scheduled for July 14 to Gross Skeleton.

Trip Reports:

Harold gave trip reports for Anvil Cave and Tumbling Rock.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

AUG 1998 FLOWSTONE

¿Donde está el piloto del helicóptero?

Por Patricio O'Diam

Dispues de como ses meses de planiar, por fin pudiamos saler otro vez para ir al gran pais de Mexico. We had not even got half way to Birmingham yet on the cool and rainy June day before paw-paw was snoring to the top of his lungs. Before we even left Mexico back at New Years, Scottie, Micah, the Milk Man and I had made plans to return in June. We were now on our way again, only this time, no Scottie. In Louisiana, we stopped at the place were I lived some 13 years ago, O'Neal Lane. It brought back lots of memories. Soon, we were joined by two others, Houston Hardin from Mississippi and Matt Harris from New Orleans. We continued on through the night, arriving at the border just before daylight. It took me and my group all of 3 min. to cross, but Matt and Houston were not that lucky. Some hour and 15 min. later, they finally were permitted to re-pack their things in the 4-Runner and continue on. By the way, Vic was still asleep.

You will find the rest of this story @
cullmangrotto.org Newsletter page.