

The Coot & Holler Gazette

Vol. 21 #2 Friday
September 2, 2022

Progressive News of the Old Timers Reunion



WE HAVE A HOT TUB!

I am going to quote Ben Mirabile, TRA Operations VP, "We talked about the overwhelming support you gave us in 2019. You donated nearly \$50,000 to the Sauna Renewal Project at OTR in 2019. In one weekend, you donated over half of the total project cost.

That is the single largest fundraiser this organization has ever seen! That speaks a lot to what the sauna means to OTR. Clearly, the sauna is an integral part of who we are and what this event is all about. With that support, we knew we had to come together as a team, and make sure we had a hot tub for OTR in 2021.

As a team of volunteers, we have stood in the pouring rain driving drainpipes together in knee-deep mud. We've broken drill bits, shovel handles, tape measures, and dinner plans. We've argued, fussed, and fought, but parted the weekend as friends. We've complained about lumber prices and used the same 2 x 6 three times to form concrete. We've placed concrete in evening gowns and neckties (ask around on that one). We've gotten flat tires, sunburns, band-aids, bruised knees, and cold beers. We've shoveled gravel. We've shoveled concrete. We've shoveled mud. We've shoveled water. We've had forming parties, grading parties, river parties, and shower parties. We've gotten up early and stayed up late. Through it all, we've remained friends and steadfastly held to the conviction that there is nothing else left that we could have done this summer to ensure we have a hot tub at OTR. For many of us, forging our friendships in these projects is why we volunteer, and we're always eager for more friends. If that sounds good to you, seek us out and join in. The friendships we make in the hot tub and in the building of the hot tub are at the core of what we are about here at OTR. Thank you all for your support and confidence."



Friday

9am – 1 am, Registration Open

9am, Contests resume

9am – 10am, Sauna closed for cleaning

10am, Cooters Pub Open

10am, Sauna Opens

11am – 4pm, OTR Museum Open

Noon, The Raunchy River Jam!!, River Stage

1pm, 5th "Almost Annual" ROOTS & TOOTS Gathering, Cooters Pub

5pm – 7pm, Shanty Irish performs, Cooters Pub

8pm, Brew Crew opens the taps for OTR 2022, Pavilion

Dusk (around 8:30pm OTR time), Movie, Crawl-In Theater

9pm – Midnight, Jesse Milnes Band performs, Pavilion

2am, Last Call at Cooters Pub (may close earlier)

2am, Last Call at Brew Crew

4am, Sauna Closes 4am, Sauna Closes

Schedule Changes:

- **Contests:** There will be no Vertical Contests this year. They will return next year.
- **Event Tent:** Today's 1 PM NSS 2023 Convention Planning Meeting with Rich Geisler will be moved to 5 PM this evening.

Friday Night Featured Band



Come and dance the night away in the Pavilion for our featured Friday night band, **The Jesse Milnes Band**.

They describe themselves as "COUNTRY MUSIC FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY".

"The Jesse Milnes Band is a five-piece Honky Tonk band with fiddle, drums, bass and guitars. Our sound is classic Country mixed with Old-Time Appalachian music and just a hint of rock and roll. We're a bar band and proud of it."

What's up? by Joel Jacobs

There was a new moon on August 27th. The full Harvest Moon will be on September 10th. This means that the night sky will be brightening during this OTR weekend as the moon grows larger each night. Harvest Moon is the name applied to the full moon that is closest to the autumnal equinox. Farmers like it as it allows them to work their fields late into the night.

OTR History Continues...

In the 1950s the NSS was still new, and this event complemented the more serious side of caving and was initially known as SPELIX Day, in honor of SPElunker feLIX Robinson who was one of the old pioneers of the caving society. Felix had recently recovered from a long illness and was unable to cave for several years. He was awarded a Gold NSS membership pin as a show of the society's affection and esteem.

This became a gathering of "old times sake", a weekend devoted to reminiscing and socializing. It eventually became known as "The Old Timers Reunion" or **OTR**.



More to come tomorrow...

Caving at OTR

Look for the OTR Off-Site Activities Guide at Registration (insurance coverage prohibits us from 'officially' offering OTR cave trips). Also, check the Activity Board (Map #17), where you might be able to join a trip with other OTR cavers. If you go caving (or go off-site for any reason, really), please leave a 'Drop Dead Time' with a friend or at the Gate --and then please stick to it. If you don't leave a DDT or are late, a rescue will be initiated, requiring significant manpower. Cave responsibly and stick to your DDT!

We strongly recommend before leaving on a cave trip that you complete a Caver Alert Information Sheet and leave it with a designated Emergency Contact. You can find a blank CAIS at the Gate.

Elbows and more...

If you are in need of a pair of elbow pads for your cave kit, the Wildside has you covered. There will be a large trash can on the Riverstage and brand new pairs available at the Grounds/Wildside Campsite. FREE but a donation to the Wildside donation box appreciated! See Bryan Cunningham for more info.

Cooters Pub is excited to announce that we are offering, for the first time, a beverage from Big Timber Brewing that is suitable for all ages of our OTR Family. Big Timber makes an incredible non-alcoholic root beer, and it is available for purchase at Cooters Pub either via a "root beer" punch card or by single sales. The "root beer" punch card costs \$5.00 and is good for four 12-ounce servings. A single 12-ounce pour of root beer can be purchased for \$1.50. Bring the whole family to Cooters and enjoy a high quality, locally brewed craft beer or root beer. Make sure stop by during the evening hours as Cooters will once again be providing complementary popcorn for you to enjoy at OTR.

Question of the day: WWBD?

Join the National Speleological Society or pay your dues at the Speleobooks tent on vendors row.

The SJVG will be hosting a celebration of life in honor of Beth "Izzy" Acosta from 7 to 9 pm on Friday night in the dome. Please, whether you knew her or not, come lift a glass of rum punch in her honor with us.

Custom router work at the FART corral on Saturday 1:00 pm

~TRAWWG

G. Alexander Robertson ('Robbie')

Robbie was a caver in the early years of the NSS and was active in the NSS and was an NSS Director. He is credited as one of the founders of the original reunions, along with George Dare, Gwen & Bill Foster, Mary Robertson and Casey Schugt.

Robbie was the longest-term Chairman of OTR and served for the first five years. Shack came close to top this! Organizers of The Robertson Association ('TRA') chose its name to pay homage & tribute to the man who did more for the Old Timers Reunion than no other.

from the *Damon Collection*

Breathing Cave Crew, 1945. L to R, Batcheller, Robbie Robertson, Merle Stephenson, Frank Silsby, Bill Stevenson, Burton Faust, Drysdale, Mrs. (Mary) Robertson, Woods, John Robertson

TRA Elections

TRA Elections for 2 elected trustees will take place on Sunday in the Pavilion.

Do you want to help make decisions for TRA? Run for TRA Trustee! To submit your name, please see Ruth or Charlie Williams at the Coot & Holler new headquarters behind Cooters at Cooterville to have your picture taken and officially sign up

The Great Gate Raffle

The winning numbers for Thursday are:

xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx

More drawings to come!

See Roger June (aka The Gatekeeper) to collect your prize.

Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy

MAKC is having a fundraiser. Dave Field's wife makes throws and bedcovers out of old T-shirts. So, if you have a drawer full of old caving T-shirts, and want to do something with them, stop by the MAKC tent to look at a sample and place an order. MAKC gets 15% of all sales!

The Things you hear at OTR...

From a 9 yr old...It's been years since I have been here. Feels like 50 years and that's a long time because I am not even 50 yet!

Numbers, Numbers...

As of 12 noon on Thursday, there were 774 people who were Pre-registered for the 71st OTR. WELCOME to the best Family Reunion ever!

Many thanks to all the registration volunteers that prepped for the opening of OTR! ~Dr. Kat and Bobbie

Registration has "Lost & Found" from past OTRs. Come to Registration after noon on Friday.

Cici, Never take a half-smoked cigarette form a rat ~ Dave SVG
Chris...I'm sorry! ~A

Jonathon: Welcome to your the first OTR you remember. Best newsletter delivery boy ever!