

Coot & Holler Gazette

Vol. 23, No. 1, Thursday, August 29, 2024

Submit material to cootnholler@otr.org by 4 p.m. daily.
Or drop a written blurb in the box at Cooters.



Message From the Chair, Ben Mirabile

Welcome to the 73rd Old Timers Reunion! I would like to extend a special welcome to our first-time attendees, our OTR Virgins! This evening, we have a special welcome ceremony and guidebook we will distribute after we light the bonfire. The activities in the Virgin Guidebook are designed to help you make the most out of your first OTR and have fun while doing it. Bring your completed guidebook to the Sunday evening awards ceremony for a special prize. I especially want to thank our members who invited and sponsored new OTR guests. By bringing in the new blood, you are helping sustain this great event. We have a lot of great events scheduled for this weekend, and we think you will have a great time. Once again, welcome to OTR!

On the serious side...

OTR should be a safe place for you to be yourself. That being said, OTR is NOT the place to force yourself, your desires, or your behavior on anyone. Harassment of any sort will not be tolerated. At all.

If you, someone you know, or another OTR attendee is being harassed—sexually or otherwise—PLEASE tell a member of our Security staff. If it's happening to you, focus on getting to safety and getting help. If you're seeing it happen, do not get involved in the situation! Observe, try to obtain a badge number, and report to a member of the Security team.

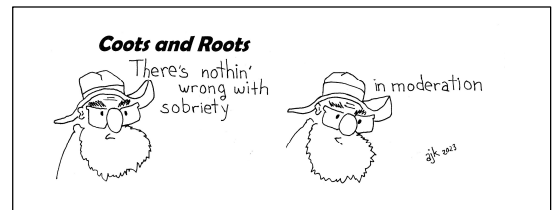
Security staff can be found throughout the event in their red t-shirts and hats, as well as at the Security Office! First Aid volunteers are also available to provide support and shelter. Both the Security Office and the First Aid station are staffed around the clock and staff are prepared to provide a safe space. There are a lot of resources available on site at all hours. You are never alone or unprotected.

Let us be very clear: If you are reporting a problem concerning yourself or another, we do not care if you are drunk or altered in any other way. You will not be punished for coming to us with your concerns at any time.

We want OTR to be a safe and fun place for all, but we cannot do anything about bad actors if we don't know about them. It is our sincere goal and everyone's responsibility to make OTR a safe and fun place for ALL!

Today's Schedule (Typically, the C&H schedule is most accurate.)

12 noon	OTR opens: Woohoo!
12 noon–11 p.m.	Registration Office open
12 noon	Cooters Pub opens
12 noon	Sauna opens
12 noon	OTR Scavenger Hunt Contest begins (Pavilion)
12 noon–4 p.m.	OTR Museum open
12 noon–4 p.m.	OTR Merchandise Sales open (Merch Tent)
6-7:30 p.m.	Opening Ceremony/Memorial Tribute (Memorial Garden)
7–9 p.m.	Decontamination Station open
8 p.m.	Welcoming of OTR Virgins (Bonfire)
8:30pm	Lighting of the Bonfire
Dusk (±8:30)	Movie (Crawl-In Theater)
9 p.m.–12am	Live music: ♪ Grateful Gary (Pavilion)
9–11 p.m.	OTR Virgin & Sponsor Reception (Event Tent)
2 a.m.	Last Call at Cooters Pub (may close earlier)
4 a.m.	Sauna closes



The full daily schedule can be found at <https://otr.org/event-info/otr-2019-entertainment-event-schedule/>.

OTR can be found on **Facebook** (OTR 2024) and **Instagram** (oldtimersreunion). Find us and follow us to stay up to date on the latest OTR news year round!

Event Text Schedule for Today (See full schedule at <https://otr.org/event-info/otr-2019-entertainment-event-schedule/event-tent-schedule/>.) The Event Tent is located at the end of Vendor's Row. \$\$\$=Fee or donation!

Thursday evening 9 p.m. (shortly after the Bonfire ceremony)

Please join us for a **Special Welcome Reception for OTR Virgins and their Sponsors**, also known as the Virgin Reception. Things will start rolling right after the Bonfire Ceremony (don't forget to pick up your Virgin Booklet there). For more info, go to the full description at the URL above.

Preregistration Merch Packets. If you purchased merch online during preregistration, you should have picked it up at Registration when you arrived. If you forgot to pick up your pre-purchased merch, please go to Registration to collect your goodies. Even if you've already got your merch, stop by the Merch Tent to vote for cave gods & jesters! Plus, get a corsage for your honey or yourself with a donation!

Merch Tent. OTR merch is available at the Merch Tent. This year's featured merch includes unisex and women's t-shirts, stickers, collectible pins, and customized caver Nalgene bottles. Quantities are limited and we expect to sell out of everything, so don't delay! Hours of operation: Thursday 12 noon–4 p.m.; Friday 3–5 p.m.; Saturday 3–5 p.m.; Sunday 9–11 a.m. in the Pavilion at the Yard Sale.

The Contest Connection by Sharon Brinkman-Windle

Each Speleo-Olympic contest relies on the expertise and commitment of experienced cavers. Here are some of our volunteers willing to be interviewed. Each was asked five questions: How long have you been caving? What is your primary grotto? How many OTRs have you attended? What is your favorite contest memory? Why do you volunteer?

Tom Griffin started his caving career in Trout Cave in 1969. He is a member of Seven Valleys Grotto and this will be his ROOT year, or 40th OTR. His favorite contest memories were competing as a family with his five kids, doing the obstacle

Coot & Holler Gazette

course, and getting a certificate for a family group of competitors. "Volunteering is something I enjoy doing. I volunteered a lot when we first bought the property, but in recent years, it has been mainly the vertical contests." This year, Tom will be judging the cable ladder contest with his wife, Red Schock.

Clayton Lilly judges the Carbide Lamp Assembly contest. He has been caving for over 40 years and has attended 42 OTRs. He belongs to a caving group that is an offshoot of the original WVU Outing Club started by his parents in the 1970s. His favorite contest memory was watching his son get so excited about running the obstacle course. "Without volunteers keeping things afloat, we would lose important traditions. We need to preserve them. Where else would you assemble a carbide lamp blindfolded?"

Continued tomorrow!

What's Up? (8/29/24) by Joel Jacobs

There will be a new moon on Labor Day, which means that only starlight will be the illumination in the night sky during our OTR weekend. If it's clear, it will be great for star gazing. The Milky Way should be quite distinct. For safety, carry an extra light source with you so you can spot those evil tent stakes and lines and point out trippy spots. Mark danger zones in your campsite with dusk to dawn solar lights or chemical light sticks. The full Sturgeon Moon was at 2:26 p.m. on August 19th. The Harvest Moon is the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox. It occurs this year on September 17th at 10:34 p.m.

Announcements and Personals

- **Happy 30th Birthday to the BATS Grotto!**
- We at **On Rope 1** need a **big truck (diesel) mechanic** to look at our bus if anyone can help. Call (256) 656-2963 or come on by the big white bus to discuss. ~Thanks, Jeff Burns
- Hey guys! Looking for a cave trip, or a hiking partner? Need a ride to the store? Or want to organize an OTR stroll to meet friends? Post a notice on the **Caver Communication Board** located just to the North (across from the porta potties) of the Event Tent.
- Please **take all camp trash to the dumpsters**. Do not fill the OTR cans with your camp trash. Please. ~Dirty Deeds
- Don't forget to **use the decon station!**
- The **Homebrewer Gathering** has been **canceled** due to lack of attendance last year, sadly. Bill Ridgely reports that "the much larger group of OTR home winemakers has welcomed us to their informal tasting the last several years, so our plan is to just bring a selection of our homebrewed beers, ciders, and meads to their gathering." [Noon, Sunday]
- **Golf at OTR:** Joel Jacobs reports the 9-hole, par 36, Elks Golf Course is located on Country Club Drive on the way back to Elkins on 219. Find golfers at the York Grotto hootch or call the venue at (304) 636-9704.
- **Thanks** to everyone who contributed to this issue and the issues to follow!
- I am Steve Luke and I run the **OTR Museum** with Patty Jördan, daughter of our museum founder and first chair at our current site, Dale Ibberson. We'll be open from noon to 4 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Come by and see the past of this great event! Got any questions about OTR? After attending for 60 years, if I don't know the answer, I will find out for you. Got past pictures not posted on social media (and even if they are, that's OK too)? I'd love to add them to the database! I have a huge request from each of you. **I need your stories.** Come on by and give us your tale of how you started at OTR. My plan is to have a searchable database of the Who's Who of OTR! Thank you, have a great OTR!
- **Porta-Potty Advisory:** Porta-potties are designed with a venting system that minimizes odors within the booth. However, it only works if you please **CLOSE THE LID** of the commode after you are done "doing your business." The next porta-potty user thanks you!
- **Brady Weekley**, have you bought your merch yet?!
- Info on the **2025 NSS Convention** is at Speleobooks.
- Please use the **Caver Alert Information Sheet (CAIS)**. See page 9 of the guidebook. It could really help in the case of a rescue!

Lutz Rock 2024

A ceremony honoring these friends is TONIGHT at 6 p.m. at Lutz Rock in the Memorial Garden. All are welcome to say a few words on behalf of their friends.

- Don Conover
- Carol Sue Deaton
- Bruce Devore
- Kathleen L. Dickson
- Mike Dyas
- Peri Frantz
- Dr. William B. Good
- Eric Gould
- Fred Grady
- Lee Hartwick
- Tom Hay
- Roger June
- Bill Keith
- Jeff Martin
- George "Buck" Marunich
- Gregory "Jay" McCoy
- Andy Reeder
- Michael Reep
- Rick Scudiere
- Matt Settle
- Joel B. Stevenson

SPELEO-OLYMPICS EVENT SCHEDULE					
Contest	Contest Start		Contest End		Location
	Date	Time	Date	Time	
Scavenger Hunt	Thursday	12:00 PM		4:00 PM	Pavilion
Obstacle Course	Friday	11:00 AM		4:00 PM	Behind Pavilion
5K		8:00 AM		9:00 AM	Registration
Cable Ladder		9:00 AM		4:00 PM	Behind Pavilion
Vertical Contest		9:00 AM		4:00 PM	Pavilion
Batman The Magician		11:00 AM	Saturday	12:00 PM	Pavilion
Cave Pack	Saturday				Behind Pavilion
Chugging					Pavilion
Lamp Assembly					Pavilion
Maggot Races					Behind Pavilion
OTR Trivia		11:00 AM		4:00 PM	Pavilion
Cave Quiz					Pavilion
Poster Contest					Pavilion
Sleeping Bag Contest					Behind Pavilion