

Coot & Holler Gazette

Vol. 23, No. 2, Friday, August 30, 2024

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



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

8–10 a.m. Decontamination Station open
 9 a.m.–11 p.m. Registration Office open
 9 a.m. SpeleoPrintmaking Workshop (Event Tent)
 10 a.m. Cooters Pub opens
 10 a.m. Sauna opens
 11 a.m.–4 p.m. Speleo-Obstacle Course open
 11 a.m.–4 p.m. OTR Museum open
 12 noon The Raunchy River Jam (River Stage)
 12:30 p.m. Wool Needle Felting Workshop (Event Tent)
 1 p.m. The 7th Annual ROOTs & TOOTs Social (Cooters)
 3–5 p.m. OTR Merchandise Sales open (Merch Tent)
 3–4 p.m. 1950s Society Reception (Event Tent)
 5–6 p.m. Long-Range Radio Presentation (Event Tent)
 5–7 p.m. Live music: ♪ Shanty Irish (Cooters)
 7–9 p.m. Decontamination Station open
 8 p.m. Brew Crew opens (Pavilion)
 Dusk (±8:30) Movie (Crawl-In Theater)
 9 p.m.–12 a.m. Live music: ♪ Jake Dunn & the Blackbirds (Pavilion)
 2 a.m. Last Call at Cooters Pub (may close earlier)
 2 a.m. Last Call at Brew Crew
 4 a.m. Sauna closes

Coots and Roots



As I get older I remember the people I've lost along the way



Maybe I should've been a trip leader

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
SK		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

Event Tent 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!

Ongoing between presentations: Come, rest up, enjoy the shade or hide from the rain, and perhaps be entertained as we have assembled a collection of old and new, fiction and non-fiction, good and terrible **cave films** to show. We also have various slide shows/old videos of TRA work weekend projects, past OTRs that will run intermittently.

9 a.m.–12 p.m. (noon) \$\$\$

SpeleoPrintmaking Workshop with Kara Bond. In the style of printmaking, you will learn to carve and print your own interpretations of cave life. We'll provide all the printmaking supplies and pictures of various underground wonders, but if you have a favorite photo of a bat, cave salamander, or formation to use as inspiration, please bring it! This is a family-friendly activity for all ages and stages. The ink is permanent, so wear old clothes! **Donations** of any amount to offset the cost of materials is welcome.

12:30 p.m.–2:30 p.m. \$\$\$

Wool Needle Felting with Lynne Smith. Learn how to paint with wool! It is a 2D needle felting process whereby you pick a theme, copy the design onto flat wool sheets or another type of fabric, and then proceed to "paint" it with different color wools using felting needles. **\$15 instructor fee** and a limited amount of kits available for an additional \$15.

3 p.m.–4 p.m.

1950 Society Reception: Prospective and current 1950 Society members are invited to share a pleasant afternoon and learn about our mission and passion. Light refreshments to be served.

5 p.m.–6 p.m.

Meshtastic-LoRa Communication with Justin Arthur. *Meshtastic*® is a project that lets you use inexpensive LoRa radios as a long range off-grid communicator for areas without reliable cellular service. Learn all about it here!

The Event Tent with Dave Field by Joel Jacobs

C&H: Tell me about the Event Tent and who uses it.

Dave: It was a Sarah Mosberg idea, when she was OTR chair, to have a place set aside for people to make presentations. They wanted to get away from the pavilion and out of the campground. Any of the conservancies, grottos who have a project, cave photographers. We help people who need a space to organize.

C&H: How do you register or schedule?

Dave: You can go onto the OTR website and schedule online; a half hour, an hour or more. It opens up in May or June.

C&H: What do you offer?

Dave: I have a computer and a sound system. If there are audio-visual needs, I do it. People usually use a flash drive. We had a great party for the OTR virgins. The 1950 people met here. Others have access to it. We've gotten a little better each year. At the end we have to break it all down and store it.

C&H: Thanks for the information, Dave. [The Event Tent is located at the end of Vendor's Row directly across from the First Aid Station.]

PAG Celebrates its 40th!

It was March 1984 and "Nice Bob" Addis had just moved to Parkersburg, WV. He gathered as many local cavers as he could find in the *NSS Members Manual* in his living room and the Parkersburg Grotto (later renamed the Parkersburg Area Grotto) was born. What followed has been 40 years of fun, exploration, adventure, discovery, and camaraderie. On this, the 40th anniversary of the founding of the grotto, few of the original

charter members are still active in caving and still fewer attend OTR. But PAG continues to thrive on the journey we all love: caving and all that goes with it. This year raise a glass to celebrate 40 years of the Parkersburg Area Grotto.

The Contest Connection by Sharon Brinkman-Windle, *Continued from yesterday*

Each Speleo-Olympic contest relies on the expertise and commitment of experienced cavers. Here are some of our volunteers willing to be interviewed.

Gretchen “Red” Schock started caving in 1985, is a member of Seven Valleys Grotto, and has attended 33 OTRs. Her favorite contest memories were watching her niece Miranda doing the obstacle course as a toddler or watching Spider overcome physical challenges doing the vertical contest. “We should all give back. It wouldn’t happen without so many volunteers.”

Miranda Schock judges the 5k early morning run, the Scavenger Hunt, and the Poster Contest. She has been caving most of her life, about 26 years. Her primary grotto is also Seven Valleys and she has attended 25 OTRs. Her funniest contest memory was while doing the cable ladder, her belayer got distracted, and she was stuck at the top of the ladder because they didn’t release the rope. She volunteers because “It’s just what my family does.”

Ziggy Seager has supervised the Vertical Contests for years, supported by the Seven Valleys Grotto. He started after he began caving in 1968. He has attended 28 OTRs. His favorite memory is watching the kids do rope. He volunteers because as he says, “Somebody’s got to! I know about vertical, want to see it done safely, and everyone has a good time.”

Tisha Springer judges the Cave Pack Contest. She has been caving since 1989, her primary grotto is WVACS, and has attended 27 OTRs. She has two favorite memories. First, winning the cable ladder contest while 6 months pregnant with her first child. Second, failing at the vertical contest after she was paralyzed, but getting special recognition for her efforts. She volunteers because contests are an important part of OTR. “It is a great way to get kids interested in the physical aspects of caving, improves their abilities, and helps them become safer cavers.”

The Shades of Old Timers ajk 2024

Years ago, we took the kids to the Gettysburg Battlefield. It was a fine summer day but there was a chill, a breath of the spiritual power of the place, the still presence of the fallen. General Eisenhower had a farm in the middle of the battlefield, I suspect because he found solace there. At OTR one might sense a similar connection. How many of us are here? For a meaningful count, add to the registered attendance the long list of our fallen compadres. Anywhere from 40% to 60% of Americans are said to believe in ghosts, and 1 in 10 claims to have interacted with them. At OTR it might be closer to 100%. If spirits and shades of cavers tend to congregate, where would they rather be? Many of our caving friends are gone, too many to name. We explored with them. We shared adventures and misadventures as we grew up together. We relished the best moments of our lives and we loved each other. Over half of the cavers who have camped with the York Grotto are missing, or are they? For us, Labor Day weekend is sacred. When we pass from this life, why would that change? The difference between us and the ghosts is that the ghosts get in without paying.

What’s Up? (8/30/24) by Joel Jacobs

Polaris is the North Star, the alpha star in the constellation Ursa Minor, the little bear. This white star, the 47th in brightness, is about 433 light years from Earth. It is the pole star. Every other star in our skies revolves around it. Find it by imagining a line extending away from the two stars at the end of the big dipper. If you look for it every night at the same time throughout the year, and note the positions of the circumpolar constellations, you will prove to yourself that it is the one star that does not move in the vast dome of night.

Announcements and Personals

- **Congratulations** to Tom Griffin on becoming a ROOT and Grant “Patch” Adams on becoming a COOT!
~From their Seven Valleys family
- **Happy Belated Birthday, Mary Sue!**
- **Cooters still needs help!** Please sign up at Cooters for 1-hour shifts, especially from 1–4 on Saturday and 4–8 on Sunday.
- **The Second Annual OTR Bullock Distillery Free Bourbon Tasting**—Come sample the wooden barrel-aged Greenbrier County Karst Groundwater Bourbons of the Bullock Distillery. These fine West Virginia distilled bourbons are finished with Bullock Spring water, which is part of the Bone-Norman Cave System. Look for the Bourbon and Bone-Norman Cave Map posters. Friday, August 30, 7 p.m. in the OTR Party Section along the back road.
~Nick@Nite aka Nick Schaer
- I love my **Lurker**.
- I’m so glad I have a **BUG** in my tent! ~Mom
- **Little Miss:** So excited that you are my Prom Date—can’t wait for Saturday night!
- **Dear Empty Spoon:** You shall be fined \$200 or 2 Kegs for failing to camp with us. ~Charles U. Farley
- **Mikey Snyder:** I sure do love you and happy anniversary! These 2 years have been full of adventure and I am so thankful for you. ~Always, Mandie
- **Camp downsizing:** Cabela’s full-sized camp kitchen available. Any interest? 20x30 tarp also available for this OTR. We are camped behind Cooters. ~Ruth Williams
- **Autographing of Aquanaut** by Rick Stanton at OTR at Speleobooks. Date & time TBA.
- **Sterling** has the biggest prick in West Virginia! **Chris** has the deepest hole in West Virginia.
- Cooters staff wishes a **Happy OTR** to Susan Johnson! Welcome Back and Happy Retirement!
- OTR has its first **Hawaiian princess** visiting this year: Jena Lee, Pineapple Princess.
- **Glad** you could come to OTR, bebegirl! Love you!!!
- Take your **camp trash to the dumpsters** please! Also cave safely and use the CAIS & the decon station!