

A synopsis of what is going on in the world of the Near Normal...

Past and Future Events

Our annual Christmas party is coming up. Details soon!

We've had a couple of events since the last newsletter. We had our annual Near Normal Grotto picnic in September. The picnic was held on the banks of Evergreen Lake in Comlara Park. We had several families with kids on a beautiful sunny day. The squeeze boxes were put to good use. If I'm not mistaken, I believe a guest was able to squeeze through a 5" opening! Bill Roth, Todd McCartney, Nick Morrow, and Bill Morrow explored the bike paths around Comlara Park after the picnic. A very nice time indeed.

The 34th annual TAG Fall Cave-In was well attended by Near Normal Grotto members. LJ and Andrea brought Julius Tognetti down for his first Cave-In. He was accompanied by Marc Tiritilli, Ralph Sawyer, Todd and Laura McCartney, Bill Morrow, Jason Kern, George Mattson, and Bill Roth (Edmund Tucker also attended, NNG member on double-secret probation). Caves that made the list were Signal Light Pit, Sinking Cove Cave (scene of the Memorial Day Rescue), Drag Fold Cave, and Mystery Falls. For a couple of people, these were their first TAG pits, and first pits in general. The festival culminated in the lighting of the huge bonfire, as can be seen here at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5K5TbL7vD8>

On the trip home we stopped at Foster Falls in Tennessee and several people were able to try outdoor climbing for the first time on nice sandstone in beautiful weather. Something to remember as the winter days roll in...

Sept 11 Minutes at Comlara Park

This meeting was our annual picnic, held this year at Comlara Park near Hudson

Present: Ralph Sawyer, Becky Rhodes, Ben Duncker, Jim Duncker, Patrick Duncker, Todd McCartney, L. J. Tognetti, Andrea Tognetti, Julius Tognetti, Bill Morrow, Nick Morrow, George Mattson, Laura McCartney, Lauren Pierce, David Pierce, Bill Roth, Ellen Roth, Chris Haydel, Brian Clague.

President L. J. Tognetti called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the previous meeting were examined and approved.

Treasurer Bill Roth reported a balance of \$772.82. He will pay the fee of \$40.00 for the shelter for the picnic. Bill summarized the 501(c)(3) situation. The \$400.00 application fee for 501(c)(3) status is a gamble. Bill will continue to educate himself about 501(c)(3) but no further action is anticipated. The treasurer's report was approved.



Bill Roth in Signal Light Pit, TN. Photo – Ralph Sawyer

September 11 Minutes - continued

Old Business

Most of the TAG Fall Cave-In cavers will depart Bill Morrow's house 4:00 am Thursday.

Introductions: If I were a candy bar I would be...

New Business

Bill Morrow has two boxes of old newsletters from various grottoes. He will examine, share, and eventually send to grottoes.

Todd and Laura agreed to have the Christmas party at their house. Gift exchange as in previous years.

Trip Reports

Ralph Sawyer gave a caving presentation to Powderhorn, a training session for adult leaders of Explorer Posts, Sea Scout Ships, and Venture Crews. These units are coed groups affiliated with Boy Scouts of America.

George Mattson led a trip in Sullivan Cave. They had fun finding the Popcorn Crawl, Rectangle Crawl, and the drop to the Sorry Room. Also trekked to the Quarry Room.

L. J. described Over the Edge, a fundraiser for the Boy Scouts. Those making donations to the Boy Scouts rappelled off the Methodist Atrium building in Peoria, supervised by Over the Edge volunteers.

Meeting adjourned.

October 14 Minutes

Present: Ralph Sawyer, Todd McCartney, Jason Kern, Bill Roth, Laura A. McCartney, Bill Morrow

Vice President Todd McCartney called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the previous meeting were examined and approved.

Treasurer Bill Roth reported a balance of 698.00. Not included in that total are \$30.00 dues received but not yet deposited, and an upcoming payment for membership in Southeastern Cave Conservancy Inc. The treasurer's report was approved.

Trip Reports

Everyone at this meeting had gone to TAG Fall Cave-In, so no trip reports were given.

Meeting adjourned, followed by slides of TAG Fall Cave-In presented by Laura McCartney.

Near Normal Grotto

P.O. Box 813
Normal, IL 61761-0813

Meeting at Bromenn
Medical Center, Normal,
Illinois. Second Friday of
the month.

E-MAIL:
nngwebmaster@yahoo.com



We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.caves.org/grotto/nng/>

About Our Organization...

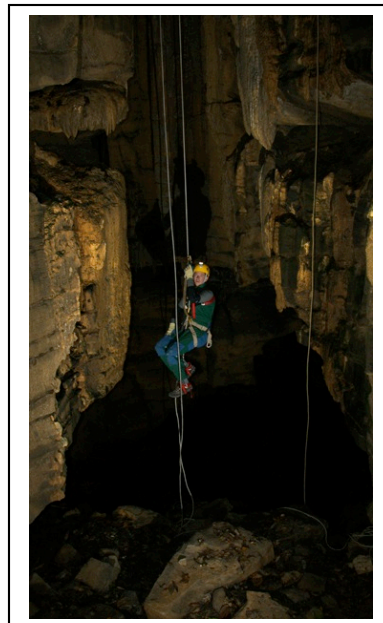
The Near Normal Grotto is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study, exploration and conservation of caves and cave life. Our members come from all walks of life – landscapers, camp counselors, engineers, geologists, mechanics, nurses, teachers, insurance professionals, and students, to name a few. In other words, people like you. Our interests may vary from exploration to conservation to photography, but we all share a passion for caving. If this interests you and you would like to know more, feel free to attend one of our monthly meetings!



Chris Haydel testing out the squeeze box at the fall picnic. Photo – Ralph Sawyer



Todd McCartney through the box at the fall picnic. Photo – Ralph Sawyer



Todd McCartney in Signal Light Pit, TN. Photo – Ralph Sawyer