The

River City Caver

Newsletter of the ***River City Grotto*** – Jacksonville, FL
An NSS Affiliated Grotto

October, 2026

www.rivercitygrotto.com/

Updates from the latest Grotto Meeting and Events –
NEXT Meeting: November, 5th

IN MEMORIAM

It is with heavy heart that we announce the passing of Jerry 'Moose' Johnson (NSS 5739). Jerry primarily worked as a pharmacist but flew as a weapons Officer during the Vietnam War. We all know Jerry from visiting the beloved property known as 'Jerry's Farm'. Jerry has done so much for Florida Caving and Caving in general. Here are a few items:

Jerry started caving in the late 1950s while attending the University of Florida but officially joined the Florida Speleological Society (FSS) and National Speleological Society (NSS) in 1961.

Jerry and Sheril Johnson have hosted every River City Grotto (RCG) Cave Cavort since 2015, in addition to hosting every FSS Cave Cavort since 2005. Jerry has been an FSS board member almost continually since 1989: with 2 terms as president, 7 terms as secretary and serving as the FSS treasurer since 1999 (that's 27 years). We could all strive to be as dedicated as Jerry Johnson. Jerry was part of the initial mapping of several caves including Warrens, Glory Hole, and Waterfall. Moose's Echo was discovered by Jerry and named after him. Jerry was instrumental with the donation of Warren Cave to the Nature Conservancy and later to the NSS in1991. Jerry was the Chairperson of the Congress of Grottos from 1989-1990 and hosted dinner for the NSS Board of directors at his home in 1990. Jerry was a key player for the 2008 NSS Convention when it was hosted in Lake City Florida by organizing the banquet, logistics, and even grabbing beer.

The NSS nominated Jerry as a Fellow of the NSS for all his hard work and dedication. Jerry was known throughout Florida for his generosity, great stories, and cooking. Anytime we gathered at the Johnson household, Jerry could always be found in the kitchen or out by the grill/smoker preparing food for everyone. Even with over 100 people at a Cave Cavort, Jerry was insistent on feeding everyone. Of course, we won't mention the time when Buddy (the dog) got into the beef stew and ate it during a brief moment of inattention during a Halloween party.

Whatever the occurrence, every single caver past or present has a memory with Jerry and owes thanks to a great man. Jerry will be missed by all.



Thank you to Phil Walker for the memorial to Jerry and Jerry's daughter, Sabrina for the photograph.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Karstmas Party: This year's Karstmas Party will be on December 12th at Meina and Zarek's home. As usual, it will be a potluck, so start thinking of a holiday treat to bring. Check your email and our Facebook page for updates.

Spring RCG TAG Trip: We are discussing taking a RCG trip to the TAG area in the spring; we are planning to go April, 1st 2027-April, 5th 2027.

PAST TRIPS AND EVENTS

White Cliff Cave: A few RCG and FSS members went to White Cliff Cave to do some cave surveying. The group spent a lot of time in the cave and explored some new passage.





TAG Fall Cave-In: Phil, Nicole G., Scott W., Monica, and the Hart family made it to this year's TAG Fall Cave-In. Phil reported that it was pretty rainy, but they had a great time. Some of the caves they visited were Howard's Waterfall and Hurricane.



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MEMBERSHIP

We still have some unpaid memberships; please pay your dues if you have not already done so. Dues are $15.00 for one membership and $5.00 for each additional family member. You can pay here.

NSS CORNER

NSS Opens Search for Its Next Executive Director: The National Speleological Society is looking for its next Executive Director to help lead the organization into its next chapter. The Executive Director will lead the Society's day-to-day operations and work closely with the Board of Governors, staff, division heads, volunteers, and members to strengthen the organization and advance its mission. If you would like to read more about the Executive Director Duties and/or apply, you can go here.