



# The River City Grotto Cover

Newsletter of the *River City Grotto* – Jacksonville, FL  
An [NSS](#) Affiliated Grotto

February, 2015

[www.rivercitygrotto.com/](http://www.rivercitygrotto.com/)

Updates from the latest Grotto Meeting and Events – NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY March 17th, 2015

## UPCOMING TRIPS

Field Prep at Jerry's Farm, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 9AM meet time. Last one before the 2015 Cave Cavort, we are heading down to finalize the site. More work on the bonfire, bandshell, showers, and food locales. Come on down and give a hand! How [do I get there??](#)

## 2015 CAVE CAVORT



**Cavort Site** – Jerry's Farm, February 27 through March 1. We have The Band, The Dinner, The Caves, The Raffles, The Movies, and a bunch of other stuff lined up.

**Cavort Web Site** – Registration is still alive!!  
<http://www.cavort.rivercitygrotto.com/>  
Check it out, sign on up, tell your friends!

**Next!** We need "All hands on deck" to help run things during the event. So sign up and get prepared for a good time caving!

**The T-Shirts** - are being silk-screened as we speak, and remember "Staff" get red shirts, and the rest get blue shirts. If you have yet to register or buy your "Staff" shirt, we printed a few extras.

## PAYPAL

Remember we have PayPal up and running on the grotto website, where we can renew membership, order T-shirts, and even make a donation! Check it out!

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We have two new Members, so welcome Courtney and Scott! Now paid Membership is at 35. Also, renewal and elections are just around the corner, so be ready!

## THINGS ON THE HORIZON

**2015 Cave Cavort:** February 27-March 1, WOOHOO!  
**After Party:** Post-Cavort debrief and wind down, TBD  
**Bill Oldacre Day:** Sunday, March 29, at Warren's Cave  
**SERA Cave Carnival:** [May 8-10, 2015](#)  
**Kentucky Speleofest:** [May 22-25, 2015](#)  
**Karst-O-Rama:** [June 25-28, 2015](#)  
**2015 NSS Convention:** [July 13-17, 2015](#), Missouri

## TRIP REPORTS

**Cavort Cleanup Day:** The Work Day at Jerry's Farm on February 7th went very well. We have showers, electricity, a "Friday Fire" ring, and some bonfire wood!



On last Work Day is scheduled for February 21st, then the following weekend is SHOWTIME!!

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

We are solid, and some donations have been made to ensure the solvency of the Cavort. But all indications are that it is running in the black anyway! The Form DR-14 (Consumer's Certificate of Exemption) is available for anyone making any Grotto related purchases, so ask if you need one. One thing we have noted after a couple years of operation is that the membership fees do not cover the cost of the grotto (incorporation fees, tax reporting, etc.) so let's be thankful to those that have "pitched in a little extra".

## DRY CAVING SITE SAFETY PLAN

We have developed a "Site Safety Plan" for caving, and it will list cave requirements, contacts, and nearest emergency responders. They will be drafted for each of our often visited caves, and the idea is to store them somewhere accessible, and take a copy on each caving trip. We will soon start fleshing out per-cave versions.

## BAT CAVE AND WNS

All users of the Newberry Bat Cave owned by Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) will need to make provisions for White Nose Syndrome (WNS) among bats when



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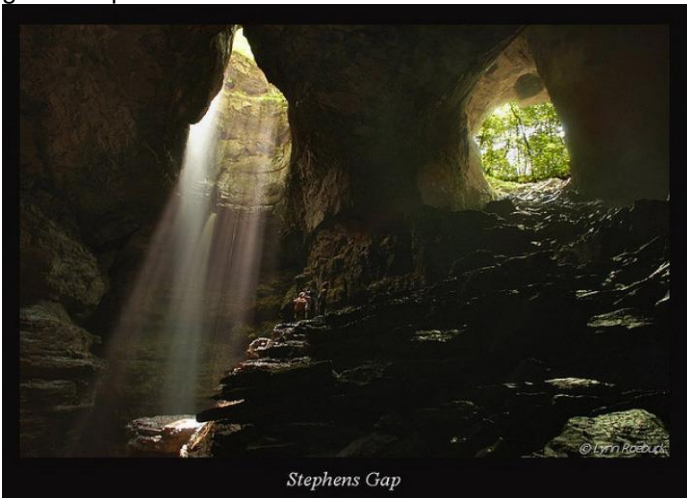
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visiting Bat Cave. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission wants to prevent the spread of White Nose Syndrome among bats in our area, so the SFCC now asks any who have been in caves in areas affected by White Nose Syndrome to either not bring gear from those areas, or to thoroughly clean your gear with antiseptics before visiting our cave. A list of decontamination protocols that may be useful is [posted](#).

## SCCI OPENS STEPHENS GAP CAVE

Stephens Gap, one of the most beloved caves in the southeast, with a beautiful pit and a huge walk-in entrance, is [finally open for visitation](#). The SCCI purchased the property, but had to work out access across a neighboring property. You can also [purchase a piece of the cave](#) to help ensure it stays accessible and in good shape.



Stephens Gap

To visit Stephens Gap, there is an access agreement with the owner of the adjacent property for the hiking trail crosses on the way to the preserve. The SCCi [issues permits to visit](#) this unique place, which can be completed electronically.

## HOLLOW RIDGE CAVE GETS NEW GATES!



The [Gating of Hollow Ridge Cave](#) on the SCCi Preserve occurred on December 5-7, 2014, by a group of cavers mostly from the Flint River Grotto. This was necessary because the county was in the

process of building hiking trails just downhill of the bluff line where the lower cave entrances are located. Details and pictures are on the SCCI website. ROADTRIP!!

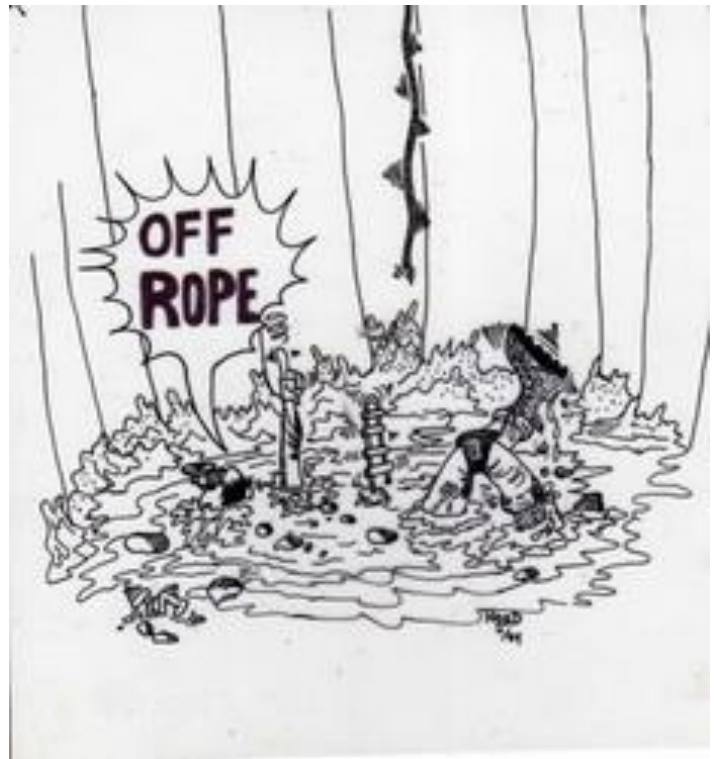
## MEETING VIDEO

After the Close of Business at the February Grotto meeting, we watched the 38-minute documentary “Cave Digger”, about an artist that hand hews cave retreats in New Mexico. It was well received, and details are online at <http://cavediggerdocumentary.com/index.html>

## CAVING IN THE NEWS

Beer? Caves? [What's not to love??](#)  
Ice caving isn't big here, [but it looks cool!](#)  
February? [Valentine's Day 6,000 years ago...](#)  
Canadian [Urban Caving](#), eh?  
Missouri Speleological Society [leads exploration](#).

Have anything to submit? [Send it on!!](#)



## NSS CORNER

*We are adding a new feature, where we'll include something from the NSS website that is hopefully useful.*

Have you read the “[Guide to Responsible Caving](#)”? It is an introduction to caves and caving, but one that will help you become a safe and responsible caver. It can help reduce the detrimental effect on caves and relations with cave owners.