

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy

July 2025

Summer in Full Swing

Imagine That! It's currently raining as I sit here and think about the first half of this year and how to put the many wonderful events into words. It's been one of the wettest springs on record in Kentucky but that has not kept the many loyal volunteers from showing up and showing off our preserves!

As with the seasons of change, so do the officers' responsibilities on the board. I want to thank long-time treasurer Werner Jud for many, many years of faithful service to RKC. He's transitioned his duties to Janice Gott. RKC is in good hands with Janice's experience serving as treasurer for other organizations.

The Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve hosted annual events again this year. Open House in May and just three weeks later, Karst-o-Rama, were supported by all four managing Grotto's. Volunteers turned out in force for both of these events. Attendance at Open House was lighter this year and that could have been a result of a devastating long-track tornado that started near Somerset and continued through London, just some tens of miles to the south of the Preserve. Our thoughts are with that community as they recover and rebuild from the storm.

The second half of the year will see the second annual Central Ohio Grotto led cleanup of our Misty Cave property in Jackson County Kentucky. Jennie Hawkey has been instrumental in organizing this event for the betterment of that preserve. There will be many volunteer opportunities this fall with school field trips, Scout and Youth group cave trips, and more! If you are interested in helping out and furthering the goal of educating the next generation about cave conservation, please let us know!

Yours in caving,
Patrick Gibson, Chair



Check out the
RKC website for
meeting
information, cave
resources,
preserve photos
and descriptions
and upcoming
events!

SCAN ME



Rockcastle

Karst

Conservancy

Protecting Kentucky's Interior

Board of Directors

Patrick Gibson, Chair

Mary Gratsch, Secretary

Email: rkcboard@rkci.org

Werner Jud, Vice-Chair

Gary O'Dell, Director

Website: rkci.org

Janice Gott, Treasurer

Summer Event Recap

KOR 2025 is in the books!

We had 356 total attendees, representing 26 (yup, Twenty-Six) grottos this year! On the topic of grotto representation, this was the first time KOR was run by a multi-grotto committee. Representatives from not only GCG, but also BGG, COG, and DUG shouldered the responsibility of running KOR. The new perspectives and skill sets, and fresh enthusiasm for making the best event possible, really had the committee running like a well-oiled machine.

The non-committee volunteers made up an excellent group, as well. They tore through the pre-KOR work weekend "to-do" list in one day! Post-KOR cleanup was also a breeze, with Hippy Mike and Trash Talkin' organizing folks to make sure the Preserve was squeaky clean before we left. We can't thank the volunteers enough. Everyone knows the event wouldn't happen without them.

With this year's event being a multi-grotto effort, the Committee voted to apportion a small amount to each grotto and donate the remaining proceeds to the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve. Expenses were high, but we were able to donate \$2,742.00 to GSP, on top of the \$8,240.00 in camping and electric fees paid to them for being our venue. We sincerely hope GSP sees KOR as a mutually beneficial event!

Planning for KOR 2026 has already started to take shape. If you love the event and would like to help out next year, keep it in mind! As soon as there's a date set, we'll spread the word.

Megan Gaskin



Great Saltpetre Preserve News

Summer Fun at GSP – Debi Pavey

Hello everyone!

We are in the heart of summer and right in the middle of the busiest season at the Preserve!

As spring arrived, so did the return of scouts, outreach groups and school field trips. Our calendar quickly began filling up with exciting caver-related events, setting the tone for a busy and fun season – and we've loved every minute of it!

In May, we hosted our annual Open House. Unfortunately, severe weather and tornadoes in the area impacted attendance. We're incredibly grateful to those who braved the conditions to visit, tour the cave, and support the event. We're hopeful for clearer skies and a bigger turnout next year.

June kicked off with Karst-O-Rama, and while we're still awaiting the final report from the KOR committee, the first-ever multi-Grotto-hosted event appears to have been a great success!

Most recently, COG wrapped up their Second Annual *Everything but the Squeal* weekend. This event brought together members from Central Indiana Grotto and Pittsburgh Grotto for a weekend of local caving, a tour of GSP, delicious food, and quality time around the campfire.

We've truly enjoyed reconnecting with our caving family and welcoming new faces to the Preserve. We hope to see you again soon!

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendar



(Visit the GSP website for the most up-to-date calendar)

- **September 19-21 | Caver Appreciation Weekend**
- **September 27-28 | KSS Annual Meeting**
- **October 4 | Wolfe-Thornton Wedding**
- **October 11 | Mason Ceremony**
- **November 1 | Halloween Party**

Warmly,

Debi Pavey

GSP Chair



Volunteer Opportunities

Donate to the RKC Cave Acquisition Fund!
Your Dollars Will Last for Years!
Our Thanks will, too!

Where you can help the RKC and GSP

RKC, like most non-profits, only runs successfully on the volunteer hours of its members and friends. The old saying is that in most similar organizations, “80% of the work is done by 20% of the members”. That sounds trite, but, unfortunately, it’s not far from the truth. The sad part is that it really doesn’t have to be that way. If each of us does a little, the sum of our efforts adds up to a vibrant and dynamic organization ... and a happier membership. No one feels put-upon, all the work gets done faster ,, and probably better ... and we all get the satisfaction of helping our organization thrive. So, each of us should be looking for ways to help RKC get the work done.

Currently, the Board has asked us to provide additional people to help in two specific areas:

- 1. Helpers with the Local School Trips at GSP.** This one is a bit tough, because the school outings at GSP happen during school hours ... that means on weekdays. Neena Jud now heads up the scheduling of these trips. If you can help, either with the slide presentations at the shelter or as a guide or tailgunner for the GSP tours, please let Neena know. She usually keeps the trip schedules on the calendar on the GSP website. The password to access the Calendar is “niter1798” (all lowercase letters). I can attest that these outings are fun and fulfilling.
- 2. More members for the Grants Committee.** We need volunteers to help research and write applications for grants to obtain funds for the many projects that are not getting done, due to a lack of sufficient money to pay for them. These efforts consist of mostly internet searching, making telephone calls, and writing grant applications. Our Green Latrine at GSP is a prime example of a project that wouldn't have happened without the grant that funded it. The money is out there; we just have to go get it.



These jobs might not sound exotic, but they are extremely necessary, if we are to continue to fulfill our mission.

Remember to renew your RKC Membership!

RKC’s membership year runs from April 1st to March 31st. To continue making a difference in maintaining open access to Kentucky caves and to preserve the significant cave and karst resources in Kentucky, we need your help.

With five Preserves to maintain, we need your support, more than ever. Please use the form on the other side of this page to renew your membership —or— go to <https://rkci.org> and use the button on the page to renew online. It’s too easy to let it slide, so do it now.

Because our needs are so much greater, please consider moving up to a Sustaining Membership. For \$5, \$10, or more per month, you can forget about annual renewals. I can assure you, that small amount on your credit card won’t be noticed and you’ll know you’re helping RKC move further and faster to becoming the premier conservancy.

Follow the QR Code to the right for more information or to register online! Mail-in forms on next page.



The Cave Preserves of RKC



Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve



Misty Cave Preserve



Cornhole Cave Preserve



Skylight Preserve



Sloan's Valley Preserve



The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy

Membership Application Form

Apply online at: www.rkci.org

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, & Zip +4: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Membership Categories and Dues (Circle Membership Type)

Memberships for Individuals — Voting

Individual Member \$15 / year (Apr. 1—Mar. 31)

Lifetime Member \$300 / one time

— OR —

Sustaining Member * \$5 - \$50 / month*
(Credit Card Charge via PayPal)

* Sustaining Memberships can only be done online
(Go to www.rkci.org)

Institutional Memberships — Non-Voting

Institutional memberships for groups that would like to support RKC

are also available:

Supporting - Non-profit, grottos, and youth organizations—\$25/year

Supporting - All other organizations — \$50/year

Make all checks payable to: Rockcastle Karst Conservancy

**Mail Completed Form to:
Rockcastle Karst Conservancy**

c/o Werner Jud
1044 Vacationland Dr.
Cincinnati, OH
45231-4749

RKC is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization.

Please Join or Renew Now !!!