

The Massachusetts Caver



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Morrie Gasser maintains the Boston Grotto website. Please e-mail submissions and suggestions for the website to Morrie at his e-mail address above. Check the website for current information about upcoming trips and other Grotto events.

E-mail list: Rich Lester administers an e-mail (re-mailer) list at members@bostongrotto.org. You can use this mailing list to send messages to all Boston Grotto members. To add, remove, or change your e-mail address on the list, please e-mail your wishes to the Grotto Secretary. Please remember to keep your e-mail and postal address current with us.



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Submissions of original material for the Massachusetts Caver are welcomed. Please submit articles, photos, or artwork digitally, as email attachment or on disk; or on paper, either hand-delivered at the Grotto meeting, or mailed to: *Chris Taylor, 64 Meeting House Path, Ashland, MA 01721.*

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About The Cover

The photo show Nafisa, visiting from Israel, in Knox Cave (NY) during a September 2016 Boston Grotto trip. Tom Kinsky probably took the photo.

More photos from the trip appear in this issue.

The Massachusetts Caver

Subscriptions are in digital PDF format free to club members. To join the club and automatically subscribe to the digital version contact the Treasurer.

Come to the meetings at the MIT campus, held the first Wednesday of every month at 8:00 PM! We discuss recent trips, watch some interesting presentations on caving and related subjects, and plan & organize cave exploration trips.

Meetings are held at Building E51, room E51-145 (the Sloan School at MIT), located at the corner of Amherst and Wadsworth Streets. Parking is against the rear of the building up the ramp from Amherst Street. More parking is usually available off of Hayward Street.

Please send any new material or corrections to the editor (ctaylor0625[at]Comcast.net.)

July 10, 2019, MIT Tang Center, E51-145. Attendance about 20, Presiding: Tom Kinsky.

Old Business:

The was moved to July 10 to avoid conflicting with July 4 festivities.

New Business:

Rich Lester is selling extra NRO Spring 2019 T-shirts. Contact him if interested.

Mitch purchased several more books for the Boston Grotto library, spending \$118 in total:

1. A guide to Caves of Texas
2. 2016 NSS Convention Guidebook
3. 2010 NSS Convention Guidebook
4. Caves of the Big Horn and Pryor Mountains of Montana (1969)

Ender applied for a Boston Grotto grant for the next Morjca Cave Expedition, planned for August 8 to September 15, 2019. Participants will include Ender, Venkata, Connor, and Tom. Each grant provides up to \$200 total for food expenses. The club debated whether receipts would be required. It was not in the small print of the grant requirements. The motion was approved to provide the grant.

Past Trips:

Chris Taylor took a rather large group of Boys Scouts to Clarksville Cave. The Scouts ranged in age from 11 to 18, under the latest BSA guidelines, a very ram-bunctious crowd. The Gregory Entrance was completely sumped, ruling out any thought of trying to exit through it. A good time was had by all.

Rich Lester led a trip to Red Mountain Pit in VT, along with Conner, Steve Severance, and Scheef. The group had GPS coordinates, and followed an uncertain path up a very steep hike to the pit. The hike totaled 1.5

miles up to the pit. The weather did not cooperate, with intermittent sun and then downpours the whole day.

Once the group rigged and dropped the pit, they discovered the interior to be quite drippy, with not much room to avoid rocks at the bottom. Scheef was the last one on the surface, and started to get hypothermic in his T-shirt; He finally decided not to descend.

The descent itself consisted of an offset drop that required descending in a waterfall the entire way down. The cave is open in the winter, but requires special caution during hunting season. Apparently the local farmers paint a large letter "C" on their cows to discourage hunters from mistaking the cows for deer.

Mitch Berger and Ramon Armon attended the 2019 NSS Convention. Mitch went to Secret Cave, and also to Blue Springs Cave, in which he made it to the Cathedral Room.

Raymon went to Camps Gulf cave, which distinguished itself by presenting large rooms with small passages in between. Ramon also went to Blue Springs Cave, and made it to the Mega Junction.

John and Ender attended to present on their first Morjca Cave Expedition.

Just to keep the convention consistent with past conventions, the weather gods made sure it was a very rainy and windy week, with an estimated seven inches of rain.

On the way back to Boston, Mitch visited Roppel cave (Kentucky). He saw a huge home-made ladder in one part of the cave.

Future Trips:

West Virginia 5-Day trip starting July 25, 2019, will be led by Morrie Gasser. Morrie will lead trips to McLung Cave and Scott Hollow (assuming he can arrange permission).

TAG Fall Cave-In (Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia

caving), **October 10-13, 2019.** Contact Kris Fausnight if interested.

Windy River Cave, August 17. Contact Ramon Armon if interested.

Program:

Meeting attendees watched a video on an expedition to Thanksgiving Cave, a 12-day trip exploring and mapping this very wet, cold, and difficult cave located on Vancouver Island. You can find the video on the Nushkey channel on youtube.com.

August 7, 2019, MIT Tang Center, E51-145. Attendance about 20, Presiding: John Fioroni.

Old Business:

Update on Cuba Caving Trip:

- CES, Euro-Speleo, and Italian Speleological Society may sponsor the Cuba Trip. This will help get additional coverage, financing, and people from around the world.
- Several people, Lee-Gray, John Fioroni, Adam Weaver, and others created a non-profit group to support international trips to Cuba. Organization may help with taxes.
- CES is creating a gear cache to assist with volunteers.
- Northern Rocky Mountain Grotto donated money to the Cuba Expedition.
- TRA grant approval TBD.

New Business:

Morrie Gasser brought some books from the Grotto Library.

- Reminder: the library is a good resource for finding caves that have not been visited in years or fully explored.
- Morrie brought an old book about caves of Scho-

harie County that caught everyone's attention.

Bob Matusik donated some caving gear to the grotto and donations were accepted for what looked good, including helmets, headlamps, water bottles.

Chris Taylor will present on beginner caving techniques and safety at the next meeting. Expecting many beginners at the next meeting due to classes starting back up.

Future Trips:

NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue, September 7—8 2019., with the NJ IRT (New Jersey Initial Response Team). Steve Severance, Riley, John Fioroni, and Scheef did SPAR class (small party assisted rescue) two weeks ago. Contact Steve Severance.

Trip to **Windy River Cave**, August 18, to be led by Ramon Armon.

Merlins Cave, NY, mid-late September. Contact John Fioroni.

Fall NRO meeting and caving, September 13-15, Schoharie NY.

Trip Reports:

Morrie Gasser presented on the recent quasi-annual West-Virginia (Lewisburg) area trip. The trip included Morrie, Mitch, Chris Taylor, and Tom McDonald. The cavers got off course in McLung's Cave, but still had an interesting trip in some areas new to them. On exiting, Tom, Chris and Morrie experienced various minor malfunctions of their vertical gear, but with teamwork, got out in one piece.

The group also did the Scott Hollow "Tourist Route," having managed to get a now seldom-granted permit to enter the cave. The entrance is inside a house, very cool!

On the last day, the cavers did a short Friar's Hole round trip into the saltpeter stream entrance where they decided not to risk negotiating an unfamiliar pitch, and then back out and into the walk-in entrance, where they reached and examined the pitch from the

bottom.

Program:

John Fioroni presented a slide-show on bolts and bolting techniques. The group also viewed several excellent videos by Derek Bristol on bolting procedures and best practices. <END>

Fellowship of the Knox: Part B, The Lost Photos

Tom Kinsky



Way back on Saturday, September 10, 2016, Tom Kinsky and Glen Becker led a trip to Knox Cave, in NY.

The Obligatory CLEAN pre-entry GROUP SHOT at the parking lot used for Knox Cave.



The story appeared with a few photos in the first issue of the Mass Caver in 2017 (Mass Caver 2017_01). Somehow, the following photos did not make it into the issue on time and got lost in this editor's Outlook Archive.

For the original story (Part A), please dig up the 2017 issue on our website or in your inbox, or contact me or Morrie Gasser.





Gen Becker, above, Tom Kinsky, left.



**Newsletter of the Boston Grotto
Chapter of the National
Speleological Society**

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