



# MIAMI VALLEY OUTDOOR CLUB

April 2007

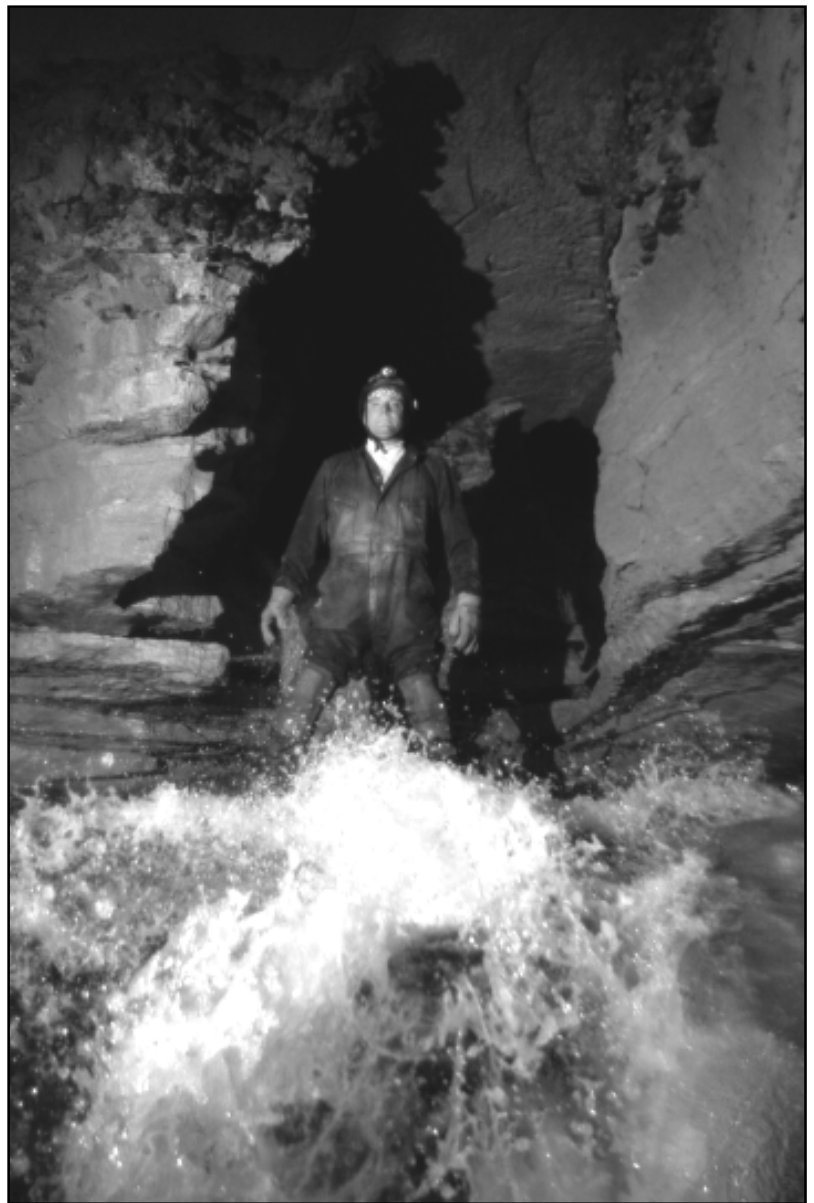
## *Caves & Caving – Exploring Kentucky’s Wild Caverns*

### **Membership Meeting, Tuesday, April 3**

Learn about Kentucky’s wild limestone caves and how to safely enjoy them from seasoned caver and MVOC member Andy Niekamp. Information about cavern formation, cave exploration, cave critters, speleothems, proper equipment and safe caving techniques will be presented. Andy’s talk will also highlight the historical importance of The Great Saltpetre Cave during the War of 1812 for the manufacturer of gunpowder and the role the cave played in events of the region up to the present. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m., preceded by the business meeting at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6:00 p.m. for socializing and trip planning. The meeting will be at Wegerzyn Garden Center, 1301 E. Siebenthaler Ave., Dayton.

### **The Fort Hill Weekend, Saturday & Sunday, March 30 - April 1**

Hike, camp, picnic, canoe or kayak at this popular MVOC outing. Just spend the day or stay overnight. Katie and Geoff Frank have offered their back yard next to Rocky Fork Lake State Park (lakeside) to campers. They also have a canoe to use. Dwight and Donna Gehring are bringing their 2-person kayak to share. They will also bring the MVOC paper and plastic picnic supplies, charcoal and the usual tube and disk shaped meat products. Everyone else can bring a covered dish. The meeting time for the drive to Fort Hill is 8:30 to 8:45 in Beavercreek. We can consolidate passengers at that point and carpool if you like. Hiking will begin at 11:00 a.m. The picnic will be at about 1:00 p.m. So, if you’d rather skip the hike  
*(continued on pg.2)*



*Caver Andy Niekamp (above) has planned an exciting MVOC Kentucky caving weekend April 27-29. See details page 2.*

*Ft. Hill weekend continued...*

and do the picnic, or do the hike and skip the rest, or skip Fort Hill altogether and camp-out with us please notify us, so that we can expect you. To sign up for the picnic or the hike, contact Dale Bockhorst at [dalebockhorst@yahoo.com](mailto:dalebockhorst@yahoo.com) or 432-5533. If you plan to attend the backyard campout contact Geoff or Katie Frank at 937-224-1016 or [Geoffrey.Frank@udri.udayton.edu](mailto:Geoffrey.Frank@udri.udayton.edu).

## April Activities

### **Board Meeting, Thursday, April 12**

This month's board meeting will be at Marion's Pizza Restaurant, 3443 N. Dixie Dr., 6:00 p.m. All club members are welcome.

### **Trail Maintenance at Wildcat Hollow Saturday, April 21**

Help us spruce up Wildcat Hollow Trail and do a little mushroom hunting if you like. All those interested in helping should meet at 9:00 a.m. Saturday at the Burr Oak National Forest Service campground. Workers can camp for free on Fri. and Sat. night at the Burr Oak NFS campground or at one of the sites along the Wildcat Hollow Trail. For more information contact Ralph Weiss at 937-698-3232 or [weisspainting@aol.com](mailto:weisspainting@aol.com).

### **Five Rivers Cleanup, 9:00 - Noon, Saturday, April 21.**

Celebrate Earth Day by participating in the Five Rivers Cleanup, then head over to Island MetroPark for a free lunch and an afternoon of earth-friendly activities at the expo. In order to join other MVOCers and help with the clean-up around Wegerzyn Garden Center, you need to contact MVOC member Shari Christy at 879-7241 or [mac.secretary@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mac.secretary@sbcglobal.net) by March 30. The MetroParks deadline is April 5 to get a free T-shirt. Registration is limited. For more information check "Upcoming Events Planner" at the MVOC website [www.miamivalleyoutdoorclub.org](http://www.miamivalleyoutdoorclub.org).

### **Camping, Hiking and Caving at the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve in Kentucky, April 27-29**

Enjoy the spring wildflower season with some car camping, hiking and possibly wild caving. Join Andy Niekamp on a trip to the 305 acre Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve in the rugged foothills of the Appalachian Mountains near Mount Vernon, Kentucky in Rockcastle County, an area riddled with hundreds of caves.

The Great Saltpetre Cave is within walking distance of the camping area and is accessible to all ages. The cave is approximately one mile long and Andy will be leading several tours through it. No special equipment is required.

Andy will also be leading a beginners trip to the Sinks of the Roundstone Cave on Saturday for both seasoned and new cavers. The 3-4 hour trip is mainly walking through passages but some crawling, climbing and stooping is required. Plan on getting a bit wet and muddy. The cave contains the largest known cave passage in the region and has a very scenic entrance. Andy will help outfit those without the required gear.

There are also several hiking trails in the Preserve, if you prefer, or you can visit some of the many nearby tourist attractions.

The Preserve has primitive, RV, electrified and level campsites with city water, a picnic shelter, shower house, a pay phone, port-a-johns and outhouses. Although the Preserve and cave are closed to the public, special arrangements have been made to allow MVOC members to stay there for the weekend. Camping is \$4/person/night. The Preserve is located nine miles east of I-75 exit #59 on SR-1004.

Contact Andy Niekamp at [andyniekamp@gmail.com](mailto:andyniekamp@gmail.com) or call 937-296-0245. For detailed information check the April Calendar at the MVOC website [www.miamivalleyoutdoorclub.org](http://www.miamivalleyoutdoorclub.org).

## Activity Reports

### **Sugarcreek Cross Country Skiing February 18**

*by Connie Steele*

This outing was supposed to be a weekend of winter car camping at Sugarcreek MetroPark, but some of the heaviest snowfall and coldest temperatures of the year occurred just a few days before. Coupled with the fact that the road to the group camp site was not plowed, we decided to turn the trip into a "play in the snow day" something you don't get to do much in Ohio. So, on Sunday afternoon, seven hearty souls met at the park entrance, four with cross country skis, two with snow shoes, and another with a warm pair of boots. The day was sunny and the snow conditions provided a pleasant day of enjoying the woods in winter, including a stop at the Three Sisters and a glide through the Osage Tunnel. The day ended with a group stopping off at a local pub to warm up and enjoy pleasant conversation.

*To receive email newsletter only, contact the editor at [lindymcd46@aol.com](mailto:lindymcd46@aol.com).*

## **Glen Helen Skunk Cabbage Hike, February 24**

*by Donna Gehring*

My husband Dwight and I and one other stubborn soul, Gary Smith, showed up for this event. To get to the Skunk Cabbage, we had to go down the intimidating, ice-covered steps behind the nature center. We found safe footing on the edge of the steps where the snow wasn't compacted. After picking our way very carefully down the hill to the boardwalk, our efforts were rewarded by evidence of the harbinger of spring, the Skunk Cabbage. The 2-3 inch plant was growing up through the ice water and snow. After the worst of the trek was over we enjoyed a short walk around the glen before attempting to ascend the dangerous steps. We walked the winter wonderland upstream towards a bridge. We crossed the bridge and ascended a less dangerous trail to the ridge top and followed it back to the nature center parking lot. We made a short stop at the bird blind where we were treated to a visit from a pair of woodpeckers. Our little hike ended quickly, safely, and successfully.

## **Brokner Skunk Cabbage Hike March 11**

*by Connie Steele*

Hiking at Brokner in March always renews one's hope that spring is indeed on the way, and this hike was no exception. The day was actually quite warm—in the 50s—and despite the heavy rainfall of the week before, the trails were in relatively good shape, except for a few muddy sections or a few spots where the snow and ice had not yet melted. Ten MVOCers met in the parking lot, including three new members. The hike began down the Trillium Valley trail for the express purpose of seeing how our previous trail work was holding up (still looks good!). But our quest for the real harbinger of spring, the Skunk Cabbage, was realized once we arrived at the Swamp Boardwalk, where the aptly named trail provides the perfect habitat for this strange plant. Indeed, the Skunk Cabbage was everywhere we looked and in all phases of development: from shoots just poking through the ground to plants in full bloom. After hiking for about two hours, we ended up back at the nature center. And in keeping with the club tradition of ending every outing with food, several of us went into Troy for a light dinner.

### **Other Items of Interest**

#### **Urban Krag**

The Urban Krag visits have not been well attended lately, so it was decided to suspend the downtown activity. Maybe we will try again in the fall if there is interest.

## **SunWatch Indian Village Sleepover Sat. & Sun., May 5 & 6**

Despite a mere one-line mention in the March newsletter and the \$25 cost, this event filled up in a little over an hour at the March meeting. Twenty-two adults and nine children are signed up to spend the night in the reconstructed prehistoric dwellings of earthen walls and floors and thatched roofs.

After visiting the buildings where we will spend the night, Donna Gehring quickly determined that it is going to be a snug fit. Accommodations will probably not support the original maximum number of 35 people, so it has been limited to 31. There is a waiting list and if we get 20 people signed up we could schedule a second sleepover. To be added to the waiting list or for more information contact Donna Gehring at 836-8515 or [dgehring@worldnet.att.net](mailto:dgehring@worldnet.att.net).

## **Our Thanks to Old and New Board Members**

Many thanks go to Connie Steele for fearlessly leading MVOC as president for the past couple of years. She is stepping down to make way for our new president Sandy Todd, who had been keeping track of our money and members. Thanks to new secretary/treasurer Dale Bockhorst and webmaster Shari Christy for stepping up to fill these important positions. Thanks also go to Dwight and Donna Gehring, Gary Mount, and Lindy McDonough who will be serving another term.

### **Coming Up**

- April 15..... May Newsletter deadline
- May 1..... Monthly Meeting at Gander Mountain -  
Larry Budd - 7,000 miles on the Pacific Crest,  
Continental Divide and Appalachian Trails
- May 5..... SunWatch Sleepover \$25
- May 19..... Rock Climbing at Paint Creek
- June 5..... Amy and Brent Anslinger on their thru hike of  
the Pacific Crest Trail.
- July 3..... Annual Summer Picnic
- Sept. 4..... Allen Johnson on Biking to the Arctic Circle or  
Canoeing the Wabash or Walking Hadrian's  
Wall or Kayaking Around Iceland.
- Oct. 2..... Ruben Battino on Tramping and Touring in  
New Zealand.
- Dec. 4..... Annual Holiday Feast and Auction

### **Please, Always Sign-Up in Advance for MVOC Outings.**

Times and places may change - weather or lack of  
interest may cause cancellations.

## Membership Response Form

Annual dues are \$16 for singles or \$24 for families. New members joining after July 1 may pay half a year's dues.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like to join \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like to renew \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like more information \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle one: (Include) (Do not include) my name and information on the annual roster sent to all MVOC members.

I hereby declare that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Miami Valley Outdoor Club. I do hereby relieve the Miami Valley Outdoor Club and/or its officers and members from all responsibility and liability regarding any loss, injury, or accidents incurred at, or related to, any club activity or function.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### *MVOC Officers*

President:	Sandy Todd	698-5046	saza3@hotmail.com
Vice President:	Gary Mount	367-6702	glmount@yahoo.com
Secretary/Treasurer:	Dale Bockhorst	432-5533	dalebockhorst@yahoo.com
Programs Director:	Dwight Gehring	836-8515	dgehring@worldnet.att.net
Newsletter/Publicity:	Lindy McDonough	278-1493	lindymcd46@aol.com
Activities:	Donna Gehring	836-8515	dgehring@worldnet.att.net
Webmaster:	Shari Christy	879-7241	mac.secretary@sbcglobal.net

### **Miami Valley Outdoor Club**

**P.O. Box 292571**

**Dayton, OH 45429**

*www.miamivalleyoutdoorclub.org*

