

# Central Connecticut Grotto

## Underground Movement

August 2004



Fuell's Fruit Cave  
Photo by John Schwenk

The Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) is a happy bunch of folks who enjoy the exploration, conservation and science of caves.

#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Underground Movement is published monthly by the Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Reprint permission is granted to the NSS and to other grottos, with Author or Editor permission.

**CCG Editor:** Carl Carmony  
284 Carriage Crossing  
Middletown, CT 06457  
860-995-4022  
editor@ctcavers.org

All cavers are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles, photographs, and other items for publication in the CCG. Your contribution would be very much appreciated.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Chair:</b>	Bob Simmons	860-738-1176
	chair@ctcavers.org	
<b>Vice Chair:</b>	Steve Adams	860-643-1502
(Program and activities)	vicechair@ctcavers.org	
<b>Treasurer/Membership:</b>	Norm Berg	860-621-2080
	treasurer@ctcavers.org	
<b>Secretary:</b>	Cheryl J. Kenez	860-489-2621
	secretary@ctcavers.org	
<b>Communications Chair:</b>	Jeff MacDonald	860-826-7487
	communications@ctcavers.org	
<b>Membership Chair:</b>	Laura Ritter	203-241-8153
	membership@ctcavers.org	
<b>Safety:</b>	Doug Truitt	860-298-8862
	safety@ctcavers.org	
<b>Conservation:</b>	Carl Carmony	860-995-4022
	conservation@ctcavers.org	
<b>Vertical Chair:</b>	Tom Oakes	203-888-7355
	vertical@ctcavers.org	

#### CCG Meetings:

Meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7PM. In Plainville CT., just off route 84 near the junction of route 72 at HRP Associates, 167 New Britain Ave. (rt. 372) Plainville, CT. For info call 860-793-6899 x134. Non Members welcome.

Summer month meetings (June, July and August) are held, pending approval from Norm Berg (and he has already approved! :o) ), at his home in Southington, CT. Meeting opens at 6 pm, with formal meeting at 8 pm. Members will be sent directions and non-members may call Norm Berg (860-621-2080) for directions and details. Vertical practice area (bring climbing gear), also grill setup (bring your own food/drink).

#### Meeting Directions to HRP Associates:

From Waterbury direction on I-84 traveling East:  
Take Exit 34 (Crooked Street). Turn left at the end of the ramp.  
At the next light, take a left onto Rte 372 (New Britain Ave).

Proceed straight through the first light. Immediately after the second light, turn right into the first driveway by the HRP sign.

The front door is on your left, ring the doorbell and when you hear the door buzz - go upstairs.

- From Hartford direction on I-84 traveling West (or Rte 72 traveling West):

Exit 33 puts you on Rte 72 West. Move to the right lane and take the first exit - Exit 2 (New Britain Ave Plainville).

As you approach the lights, move into the second lane from the left (labeled Cooke Street).

Turn left at the lights, then immediately turns right into the first driveway by the HRP sign.

The front door is on your left, ring the doorbell and when you hear the door buzz - go upstairs.

#### Dues:

Regular Membership Dues: \$5 per year  
NSS members can also pay \$20 for 5 year membership

#### CCG Website:

The Grotto website is: [www.ctcavers.org/](http://www.ctcavers.org/)

This is an excellent way to find out what other caving things are going on that come up on short notice as well as review some of the history.

#### NSS Information:

The National Speleological Society (NSS) is the national organization of which CCG is a part. The NSS can be contacted about other caving or national caving information at

[www.caves.org/](http://www.caves.org/)

#### National Speleological Society

2813 Cave Avenue  
Huntsville, AL 35810-4431

Voice: 256-852-1300  
Fax: 256-851-9241  
E-Mail: [nss@caves.org](mailto:nss@caves.org)

NSS News submission guidelines may be found at  
<http://www.caves.org/pub/nssnews/style.html>

#### NEWSLETTER CORRECTIONS and RELATED ITEMS:

The year for the 2005 January 4<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting years were erroneously reported as 2004. They should have stated 2005. Sorry for any confusion.

## Calendar of Events:

Trips are not limited to what is on the calendar! Contact fellow grotto members to create your own trips. Let the CCG Editor know in advance to post your trip on the calendar.

### AUGUST 2004

August 14th - NCC (Northeastern Cave Conservancy) meeting at Hay/Addis home in Cohoes.

August 16 - Tuesday: Monthly Grotto Meeting at the summer location in Southington. Meeting opens at 6 pm, with formal meeting at 8 pm. Members will be sent directions and non-members may call Norm Berg (860-621-2080) for directions and details. Vertical practice area (bring climbing gear), also grill setup (bring your own food/drink). The next CCG MEETING will be held Tuesday, June 15, 2004 at Norm Berg's house at 8:00pm.

### SEPTEMBER 2004

September 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> - OFMC III (pending) and OTR

September 7th - Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

September 12th - NCC meeting at Em's.

September 17th - 19th - NRO (Northeastern Regional Organization) at Natural Stone Bridge and Caves in Pottersville, NY (Southern Adirondacks)

### OCTOBER 2004

October 1st - 3rd - MAR (Mid-Appalachian Region)

October 9th - 11th - TAG Fall Cave in. (Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia)

### NOVEMBER 2004

November 25th - 28th - Thanksgiving in Schoharie.

### JANUARY 2005

January 4th - Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

### MAY 2005

May 3rd - Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

## Future trips:

(Not all trips have trip leaders or meeting times as of yet.)

### AUGUST 2004

August 7th or 14th - Cherry Valley with Uncle Steve.

August 21st - Mystery cleanup with Bob Simmons.

### SEPTEMBER 2004

September 11th - Knox Cave with overnight at Schoharie Cabin.

September 21st - tentative talk about the Priests Grotto by Chris Nicola.

### OCTOBER 2004

October 9th - Jug End Caves with Bob Simmons.

October 23rd - Onesquethaw and End of Gulch Caves with Carl Carmoney.

### NOVEMBER 2004

November 11th - 14th - Possible OFMC III(or IV) (Old Fat Man Caving #3) to West Virginia with Bob Simmons.

November 20th - Gages

November 25th - 28th - Thanksgiving in Schoharie.

### DECEMBER 2004

December 11th - Clarksville

### JANUARY 2005

January 4th - Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

### MAY 2005

May 3rd - Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

## July 2004 Meeting's Minutes

072004

Secretary's Report - (Cheryl J. Kenez) minutes accepted as read.

Chairman's Report - (Bob Simmons) no report.

Treasurer's Report - (Norm Berg) we have \$1311.50 in funds.

Safety - (Doug Truitt) Jansen Cardy made it to level three in the NCRC training. Now he is going for Wilderness First Responder 1st aid training with Doug Truitt.

Conservation - Absent

Vice Chair - (Steve Adams) Chris Nicola will give a talk in September about the Priest's Grotto. Talked about the June planning session.

Old Business -

1.. Bob Simmons - we had tables the concept of donating proceeds from the CCG Dinner and CCG Treasury last month. Norm Berg motioned to donate the profits from the Saturday night dinner at the NRO. Cheryl Kenez seconded.

2.. Uncle Steve will cook and has come up with a menu that he sent to Bob Simmons.

3.. Cherry Valley - any weekend is okay with Steve if he has enough notice.

Conservation - (Carl Carmoney) no new conservation news. Steve found another cave with a mapping project. The newsletter is on the website.

New Business- we talked about putting the newsletter on a CD with a 6 month format. Carl motioned and Cheryl Kenez seconded. We talked about burning 12 issues and using them as handouts at the x-mas party.

We also talked about taking the prior years newsletters off the website to purge the file of old material.

New Trips - Bob Simmons - Mystery cave, a prelude to the cleanup.

Saturday July 31st - Mcfails reschedules. Cathole vertical training instead.

August 7th. Cherry Valley with Uncle Steve.

August 14th - Mcfails and Caves of Brazil.

August 21st - The Mystery cleanup.

September 17-19th the Fall NRO.

Labor Day weekend - OTR. Sept 2nd -6th.

Sept 11th - Knox Cave with Norm.

September 12 - NCC Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned. 🐦

---

## Monhegan Island

The Simmons Family (Bob, Terry, Tom & Sean) spent a few days on Monhegan Island, about 12 miles off the coast of Maine. They were joined by CCG member Mike Kelley and his wife Pranoti Asher who were up from Georgia and by ex-CCG'er Gary Morrill and his wife Janet.

The island itself is a couple miles long and a half mile wide, with a small village (100 or so year round residents) on the south end. Most of the Island is still wild and there are numerous hiking trails through the interior and along the 100-150 foot high cliffs which drop straight into the ocean.



On one trail, Tom found a likely entrance to a boulder cave and couldn't resist checking it out. I had a headlamp in my daypack and in he went. We came through the area again the next day and Tom found an easier entrance into the complex than the one in the photo. He estimated that there was 60-75 feet of obvious passages and the potential for a lot more if pushed. We noticed a lot of areas on the Island with similar potential for boulder caves, sea caves and fissure caves. If we go back next year (as we hope to do), we'll bring some real equipment and survey gear.

The island geology consists of metamorphosed igneous rocks, cut by volcanic dikes (planar lava-like flows that form vertical sheets). No limestone or marble is mapped on the island. A great place to visit; you can grab the mail boat out of Port Clyde

which is located about a 40 minute ride south of Camden (the site of the 2002 NSS convention). 🐦

---

## Cave Explorers Discover Pit in Croatia

Thanks to Ray Keeler for bringing this story to our attention.

original story:

[http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=624&ncid=753&e=1&u=/ap/20040809/ap\\_on\\_sc/croatia\\_deep\\_cavern](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=624&ncid=753&e=1&u=/ap/20040809/ap_on_sc/croatia_deep_cavern)

Mon Aug 9, 3:18 PM Associated Press

ZAGREB, Croatia - Cave explorers discovered a pit inside a mountain range in central Croatia believed to have the world's deepest subterranean vertical drop, at nearly 1,700 feet, a scientific institute reported Monday.

The cave, in Croatia's mountainous Velebit region, has a steady, weaving descent of 203 feet before it takes a direct vertical plunge of 1,693 feet through the ground, said Ana Sutlovic Baksic, a researcher at the Velebit Speleological Society.

The cave's widest stretch is about 100 feet.

"We have even bigger caves in Croatia, but according to available data, this cave has the world's deepest vertical drop," Sutlovic Baksic said.

At the foot of the Velebit cave are small ponds and streams, including one of the largest known colonies of subterranean leeches, Sutlovic Baksic said.

It is located in the Rozanski Hip National Park reserve in the rocky Velebit mountain range in central Croatia. The pit was discovered by a team of explorers from around the country.

The Voronya Cave in Georgia's West Caucasus has the world's deepest cavern, measuring 5,610 feet. But the pit discovered in Croatia is thought to have the largest underground vertical drop.

Croatia, which is rich in natural wonders, is home to two of the world's 20 deepest caves.

The Velebit region is Croatia's largest mountain range, attracting speleologists, botanists and hikers from around the world. Much of the rugged area remains untouched, and scientific expeditions over its vast expanse covered by rare flora and fauna have been ongoing for years. 🐦



# Confessions of a Gear Junkie: the new Petzl Freino

By Jansen Cardy



Perhaps the most expensive carabiner ever produced, the Petzl Freino provides an easy way to add more control to your descender or belay device.



It is standard practice for cavers with bobbin-type descenders to add a braking carabiner for extra friction. This is particularly important when using a brand new rope or one less than 11mm in diameter, or when descending with a 2-person load. However, having a spare carabiner hanging around in your maillon has its drawbacks. It can be awkward locating the carabiner while in mid-descent, orienting it the right way up, and clipping the rope into it.

Enter the Freino. It looks like a small carabiner piggy-backing on the spine of a regular carabiner. Now the braking carabiner is always in the same position ready for use, eliminating the need for an additional carabiner. The main carabiner section of the Freino connects the seat harness or maillon to the descender, and is secured with a twist-lock gate. The braking carabiner section has a non-locking wire gate. The Freino is constructed of an alloy material, weighs 85g (normal locking carabiner weight), and initially appears to wear better (slower) than regular aluminum carabiners. It is rated at 25kN normal axis, 10kN abnormal axis, and 9kN with an open gate.

With the Freino, I now use the extra brake more than I ever did with a regular braking carabiner. This gives a better controlled descent, and allows for an easy lock-off position. Ropes up to



12mm in diameter will fit the Freino brake, and anything larger would not need the extra braking friction anyway. Very dirty ropes 10-12mm in diameter shouldn't require the extra brake, and therefore won't contribute to wearing out the Freino.

Of course, if you use a rack bar you already have the ability to vary friction while descending and probably won't need one of these. Petzl promote the Freino for use with the Stop, Simple (bobbins), Grigri, I'D (belay devices), and Huit (figure-8 descender). The retail price from the usual vendors is a staggering \$37, but I found a significantly cheaper retail source so contact me if you are thinking of purchasing one. 🐦