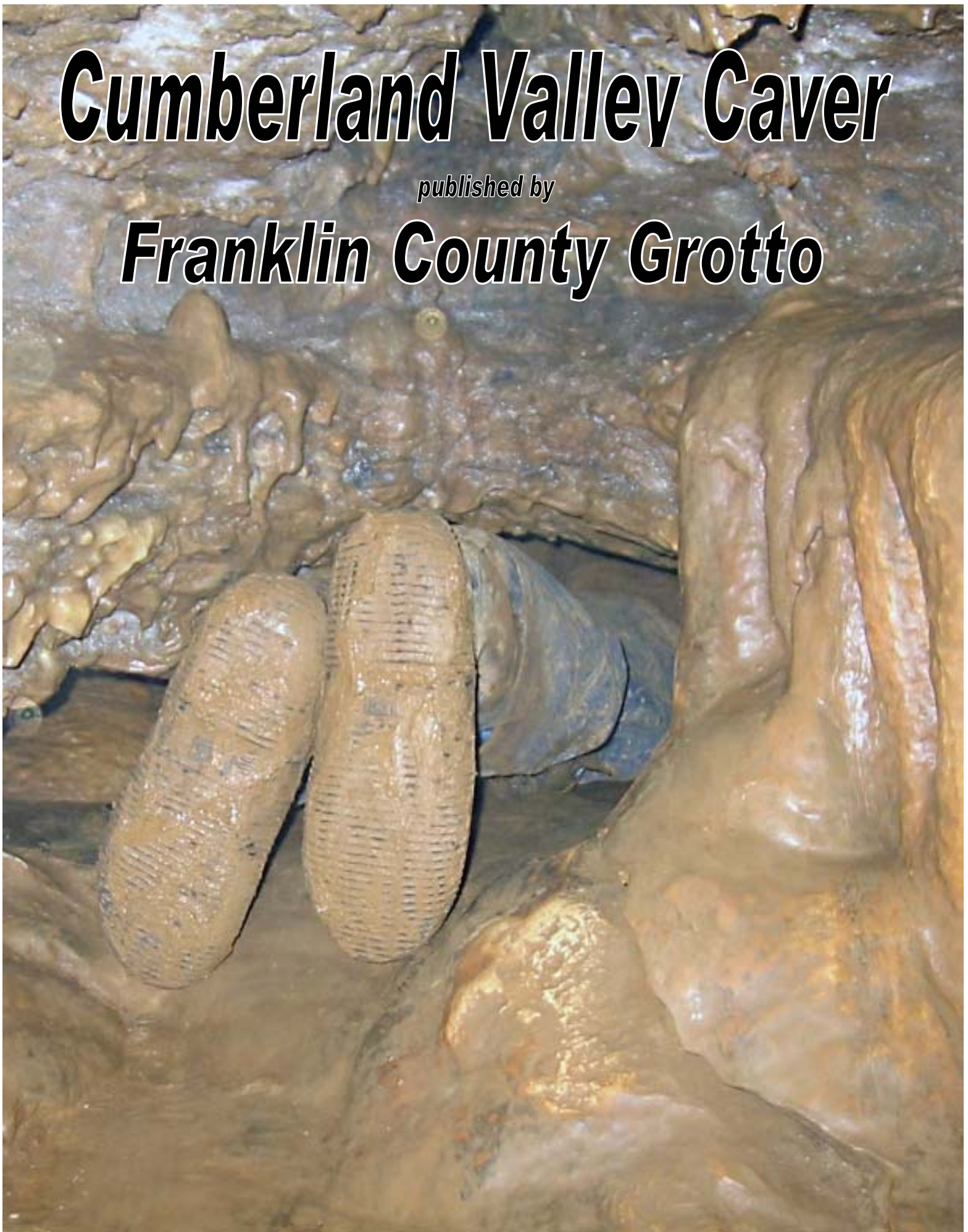


Cumberland Valley Caver

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Franklin County Grotto



CUMBERLAND VALLEY CAVER

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Franklin County Grotto meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the month in New Franklin Fire Department, New Franklin, PA. The fire department is located on PA Route 316, 3 miles east of I-81 (exit #14). The meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Both grotto caving trips and smaller individual trips are planned at these meetings. All members are invited depending on their ability to safely participate. You must attend at least one vertical training session in order to participate in vertical trips. Contact any of the above individuals for more information.

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Cover: Nick Stoner pushing thru Hidden Passage, Peipers Cave Photo: by Ish Urcuyo

Back Cover: Brian Hornberger in Hidden Passage, Peipers Cave Photo: by Ish Urcuyo

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From the Editor.....

I have been getting some feedback regarding the last couple issues of the Cumberland Valley Caver. Almost all of it has been very positive. However, I did recently receive a comment from a friend that described it as a “personal chronicle of my caving activities.” I can see where he is coming from if I am writing 90% of the articles. It is hard to write about trips that I didn't participate in, and the articles I write regarding my trips will be from my perspective. There are a lot of grotto trips happening that I don't go on, and even small, short articles, from these other trips, would contribute greatly to the variety of stories and scope of the newsletter. So far the participation has been getting better with each issue. I'd like to thank, Gordy, Ken Jones and Jim Hart for their contributions for this issue.

In my previous life as editor of this newsletter, I used to spread the exposure of grotto members via the covers of the newsletter, the cover of the hardcopy Speleo-Schedule we used to mail out every month, and by doing a Speleo-Spotlight on some. Most of the active cavers in the grotto (except for recent new members) have been featured somewhere on at least one of these venues, some multiple times. The cover photos I select depend mostly on the availability of an interesting photo that prints well, and when I write the Spotlight, I usually draw on my personal caving experiences with that individual. While contemplating this issue's candidate for the Spotlight, I went back through the old issues and noticed one of the grotto's core members had never been spotlighted. I would have bet \$20 he'd been covered. He had made the covers of both the newsletter and Speleo-schedule. He is spotlighted in this issue.

Guess that's about it for this issue.

Sincerely, Ken Tayman

Speleo-Spotlight...

Howard White

NSS# 33287

I was checking through some notes I'd made at my very first Franklin County Grotto meeting, and there was a comment I made to myself to help match new faces with names:

Howard, the quiet guy in the corner, with a beard.

I didn't realize it at the time, but he would be one of the best people I would have the pleasure to cave with. He was just starting his caving career and it didn't take long for him to get into the "vertical" swing of things.

His first vertical cave was Conley Hole, TN. It was a daytime rappel with no lights. I think he was Hooked! Some of his trips include Cass, Baines Springs, Newberry-Baines, Neversink, Fantastic Pit in Ellisons, Dorton Knob, Paradox, and many, many Tag Pits. He remembers chimneying around in top of Ellison's 500'+ Fantastic Pit as one of his more precarious spots. Actually he didn't realize the depth of the canyons until after he'd negotiated them.

I have many personal memories of trips with Howard. Like when he pushed me thru the connection squeeze in Sinnett-Thorn Mountain, after which I suffered from bruised ribs for a month. Then there was the long tight crawl in the back of Cleversburg Sink, when he made a special trip just to coach me thru. And our trip through Crabtree, where the group abandoned me in a tight sleeze crawl, and he got the chance to see the aggravated side of me. Our Friar's Hole-Croonkshank through trip, where I tried to get out of carrying an extra bag of vertical gear up the 97' climb. That night he was yelling up to see if I'd had a heart attack on rope.

Hosterman's Pit was a 3'er: He tossed the rope down to me at the 15' Clay Bank, and when I didn't immediately get up, accused me of waiting to be pulled up (he was right). Then there was the 'Head Up' he gave me at the "New Found Climb". I thanked him with face full of mud off my boot. Then I believe the single most helpful situation was when I got stuck half way up 'West Hall Falls', straddling a 12 foot pit, when he tossed me a belay line and got me the rest of the way across.

Oh Yea, actually he still owes me for hauling his pack through a long sticky clay crawl in Glade cave. I was dragging my pack along the stick clay floor behind me, and I didn't realize he'd attached his pack to mine. I thought it was unusually heavy! Howard is also our equipment maker/designer/enhancer. I am

Howard after Fantasy sleaze trip. Photo by Ken Tayman

still using the chest roller he made for my rope walker system. He designed the PVC battery holder for Pat to take on the NSS Expedition to Iceland (White Light). He designed and fabricated the cave gates for Cleversburg Sink and Fantasy Cave. He made the potato canon for the picnic, brings his black powder canon to wake up the neighbors. He's pretty good at tossing water balloons with the 3-man sling shot. He is always doing behind the scenes work, frequently not getting the credit he deserves. There is the work for MAR camps, OTR sight selection and setup, the grotto tarp, etc, etc.

It is hard to put down all the good experiences from 18 years of caving with someone like Howard on to one page, but I am not into writing books so it will have to do for now. The FCG motto is: ***If you want it done right, get Howard to do it.***

PS: It was hard to find a photo of Howard not flippin the bird.