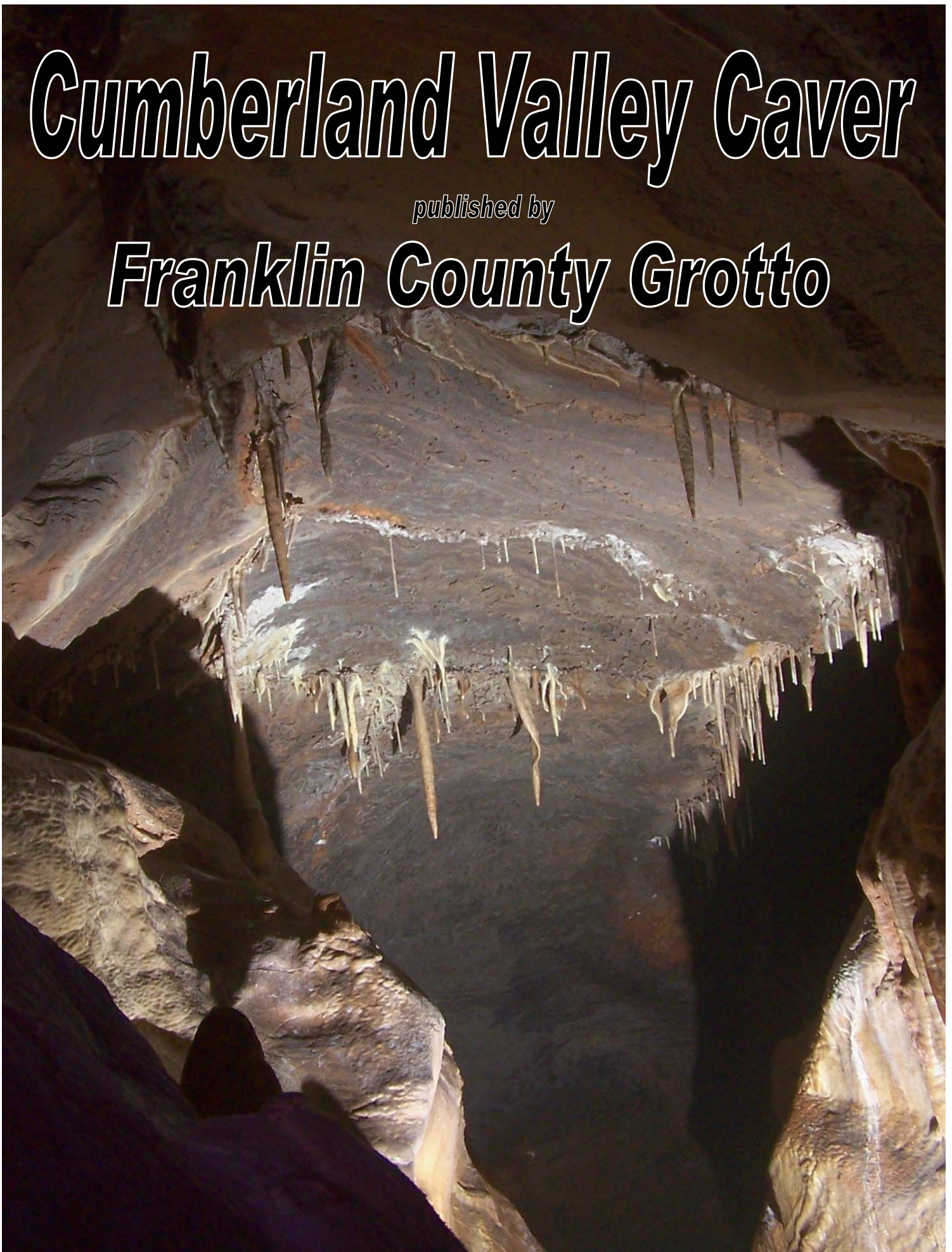


Cumberland Valley Caver

published by

Franklin County Grotto



CUMBERLAND VALLEY CAVER

Published by
FRANKLIN COUNTY GROTTO
An affiliate of the National Speleological Society

Vol. 9, No 3

September 2008

2008 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



SECRETARY

Pat Minnick
14220 Blue Mountain Rd
Waynesboro, PA 17268
(717) 765-0521

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Christopher Edenbo
1421 Trindle Road
Carlisle, PA 17015
(717) 423-2019

CHAIR-PERSON

Kenneth C. Jones
4446 Duffield Rd.
Chambersburg, PA 17201
(717)267-2669

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Kenneth B. Tayman
13373 Sunrise Drive
Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214
(717)794-2069

EDITOR

Kenneth B. Tayman
13373 Sunrise Drive
Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214
(717)794-2069

MEMBERSHIP DUES

REGULAR (NSS MEMBER)	\$7
NON-NSS MEMBERS	\$9
FAMILY MEMBERS	\$3
LIFE (NSS ONLY) 20 x Reg	

TREASURER

Diane White
1160 Three Square Hollow
Newburg, PA 17240
(717) 423-6005

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Todd Roberts
231 West Street
Winchester, VA 22601
(703)599-3860

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.

The Cumberland Valley Caver is published a couple of times per year by the Franklin County Grotto PA. All cave related articles should be submitted to the editor for publication. The contents of this publication are not copyrighted unless previously copyrighted by the author. Material from this publication may be reprinted by other official organizations of the National Speleological Society without prior permission provided credit is given to the original author and this publication, and the article is not changed in anyway. Other interested parties must request permission in advance. Franklin County Grotto actively participates in a newsletter exchange program. All exchanges should be mailed to: Ken Jones, 4446 Duffield Rd, Chambersburg, PA 17201. Information regarding exchanges should be coordinated with editor so the exchange list can be updated.

Cover: Ceiling in Frustration Pit

Photo by Gordy Ley

Table of Contents

From the Editor.....	3
Speleo-Spotlight: Helen Tayman	4
Corker Hill-Frustration Pit by <i>Ken Tayman</i>	5
Karstorama 2008 by <i>Dane Wagle</i>	9
Surveying in the Gap by <i>Terry McClanathan</i>	11
Kookan by <i>Ken Tayman</i>	13
“Quotes” of the Quarter / Cleversburg Sink Update / Bat Suicide	16
Vertical Practice Sessions / Tourist Dies of Ebola Like Fever.....	18
Carnegie Cave User Contact (<i>update</i>)	19

From the Editor.....

We are rapidly approaching the end of summer and still have lots of caving to squeeze into our schedules before the fall hunting season starts competing for our weekends. As we publish this issue we are making final coordination for the Fall VAR and our SSS – Fuller through trip, trying to coordinate a second trip with WASHCO, this time to Corker Hill, about to start a small survey project in Locke Valley in October (while hoping to squeeze in a McFadden trip), and a Cleversburg Sink Kiosk Party to upgrade the kiosk with current info and a new map.

While doing vertical practice at Shaeffer Rocks on the Saturday of the picnic, we struck up a conversation with ATC Ridge Walker, Dick Marzolf. It turns out he’s a caver who has spent a lot of time in Greenbrier County, WV, and knows a lot of the same cavers we know. He mentioned several caves he was familiar with that would definitely be worth our effort to seek out. He is interested in going down with us to cave and point out some cave locations and introduce us to the land owners. This is another trip we need to squeeze into our calendar this fall. Additionally in mentioned he had a 250’ Blue Water Static rope (still new in the box, never been used) that he didn’t need and would donate to FCG. I stopped buy his house a few weekends ago and picked it up. A very appreciative “Thanks” goes out to Dick, and, I am looking forward to our trip to West Virginia.

Also would like to thank Dane and Terry for their submissions and to Gordy who did most of the photography for this issue.

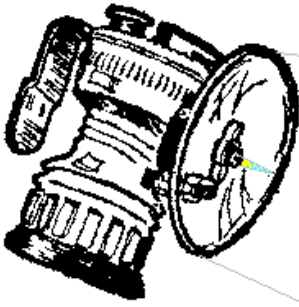
Sincerely,

Ken Tayman

Speleo-Spotlight...

Helen Tayman

FCG# 119



Helen's first wild cave was John Browns Cave in Harper's Ferry, WV, when she was six years old. She did it without hesitation and enjoyed all the climbing.

She started doing vertical practice with the grotto at around ten. Her first completely vertical trip was Cabbie Pit (92') in Greenbrier County. I remember it as an extremely smooth rappel and climb with Gibbs rope walker. Soon afterwards she did Crookshank (97') – Snedager's through trip which included an "ear dip" in Snedegar's sump.

I don't think she has ever been "tight" in a cave. As of a few years ago, she was still able to do 6" in the squeeze box at OTR. She enjoys watching us larger cavers struggle in small passages that she can almost *duck-walk* through.

She has been very busy at college the last several years working on her BA in Psychology, and it has been very hard to schedule in much caving. She did manage to get in 10 days hiking in Yosemite, NP with her dad (me) and did participate in a couple of trips to Culverson Creek, Higginbotham's, and a survey trip into Fantasy. Also made it to a few OTR's

She doesn't mind getting wet, but when completely soaked, has been known to speak up and get people moving if they are talking too much and not moving along enough to keep warm. Other interests include:



First cave trip at 6 years old



Helen ready to hike back to Culverson Creek (Wildcat entrance) on a hot day. Photo by Ken Tayman

Hiking on Appalachian Trail with her dad (me again), and camping. She played Varsity Softball and Field Hockey at Waynesboro High School. She was a member of the first woman's ice hockey team at Indiana University of PA. Currently, she is working on a master's program at IUP.

Last year she did a week of volunteer work south of New Orleans helping cleanup some of the still prevalent Hurricane Katrina damage.

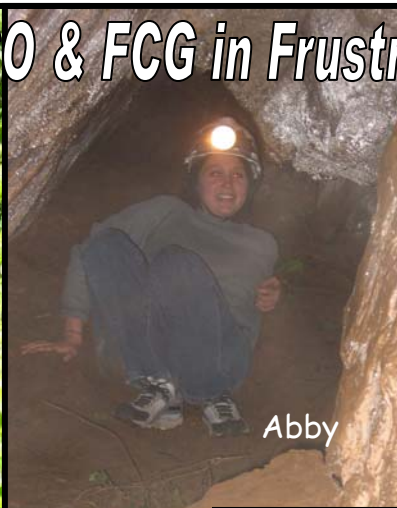
Some of the other caves she's done include: Crossroads, Buckeye Creek, Higginbotham's, Cleversburg Sink, Carnegie, Whiting's Neck, Jones Quarry, Goods, Long's Quarry, Alexander's, and several of the "P" caves in Williamson, PA.

Hopefully we can squeeze in a few trips together this year. □

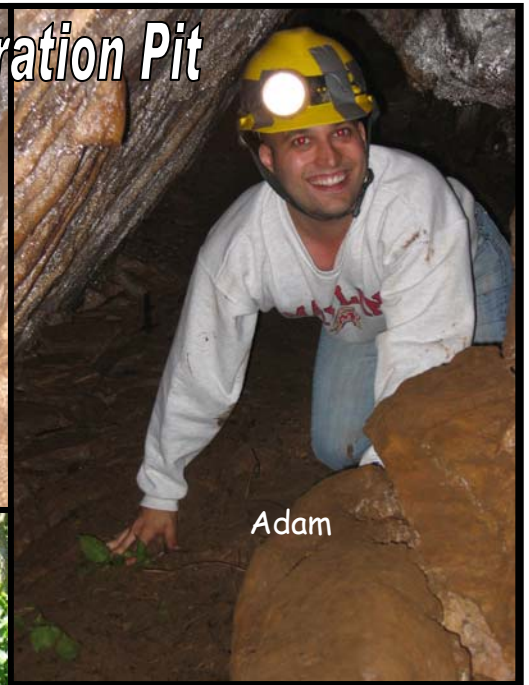
WASHCO & FCG in Frustration Pit



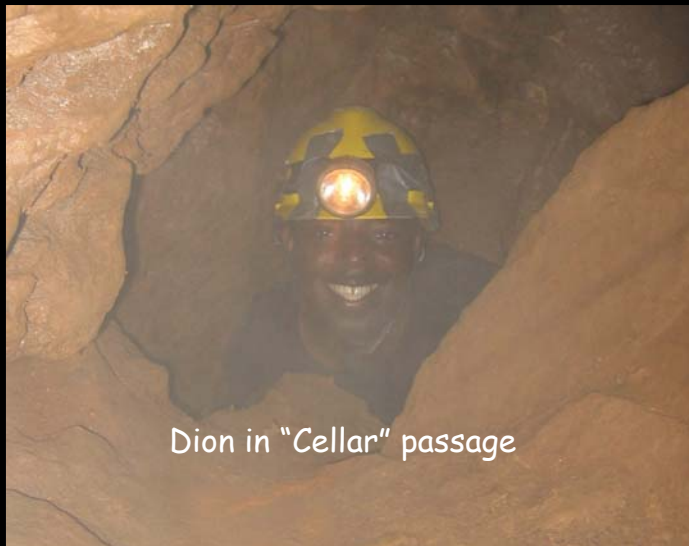
Gene



Abby



Adam



Dion in "Cellar" passage



Jon

Dion

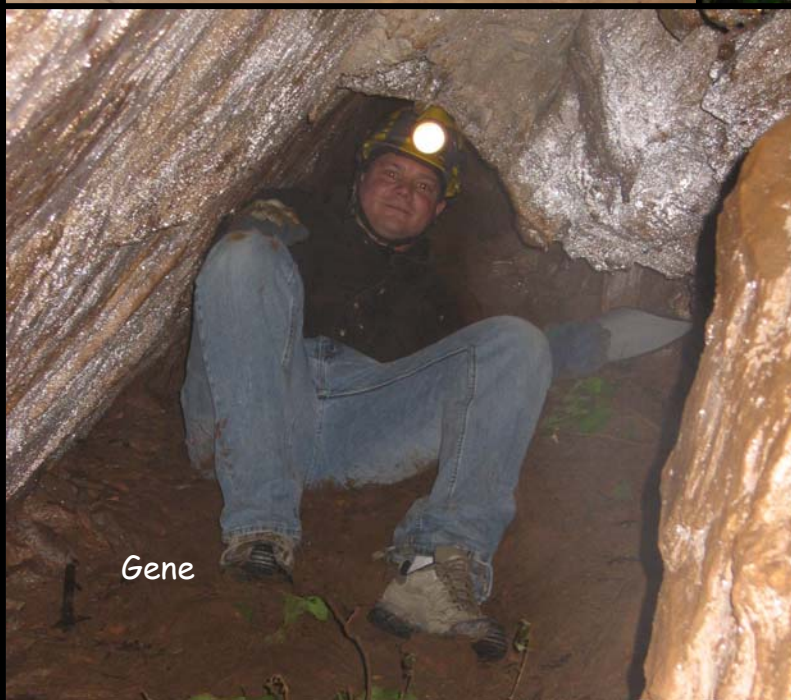
Gene

Sassan

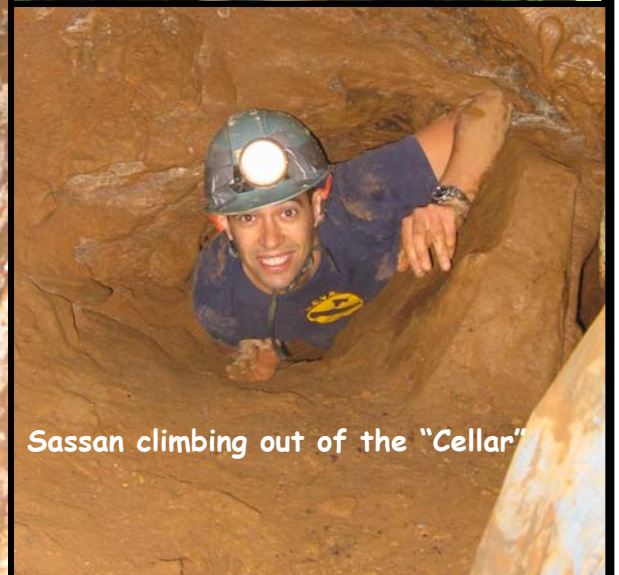
Ken

Abby

Adam



Gene



Sassan climbing out of the "Cellar"



Corker Hill



Clearing Brush



Troglydye



Frustration Pit



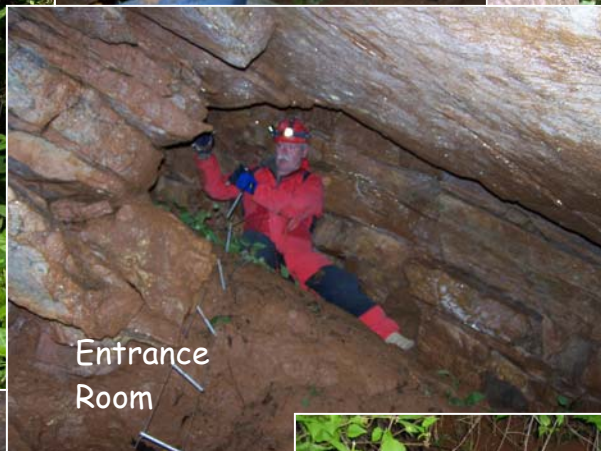
Frustration Pit



Tight Spot



Corker Hill



Entrance Room



Jonathan still clean



Long tight crawl



Gordy exiting Corker Hill



Pat's feet

Corker Hill – Frustration Pit

June 14 & 21, 2008

These two caves, located not far from the Chambersburg Mall, were recently purchased by WASHCO, a development company located in Washington County, MD. Since the change in ownership these caves have been posted as CLOSED.

The Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC) has listed these caves as a potential project. Since the current President of the PCC is Franklin County Grotto Secretary, Pat Minnick, and also since the caves are located in Franklin County, we agreed to make contact with WASHCO, and try to negotiate an arrangement that would protect the caves and also allow for caver access.

FCG members Ken Jones and Jonathan Peterson arranged for a couple of meetings with WASHCO officers to discuss various options. They were received very well. One of the results of these meetings was a decision to take WASHCO representatives into the caves so they could get a first hand look at what they had. We had not been to the caves for several years, so we received permission to relocate the entrances, which were heavily overgrown with brush. After which we would set up a trip for WASCO.

Saturday June 14: Pat Minnick, Gordy Ley, Jonathan Peterson and I (Ken Tayman) met at the McDonalds near the mall and then moved up to the cave. The orchard was extremely overgrown and it was difficult just following the road back to near where we thought the caves were located. Two foot high poison ivy was calling our names as we carefully tried to pick our way through the field. It was a 95 degree day. HOT!!

The four of us searched the hillside for probably two hours, bush-whacking our trails through 5 feet high brush, all up and down and along the hillside. I had never been in either cave before and all I was looking for was a hole in the ground with cool air.

Finally Gordy found the pit entrance to Frustration Pit. That sort of gave us a sense of direction to the other entrances. We soon found and

cleared brush away from three frustration Pit entrances and the Corker Hill entrance.

We headed back to the cars, pulled out some soap and water and tried to wash off exposed skin in order to avoid a serious case of poison ivy. After drinking some cool refreshments we suited up and got ready to re-familiarize ourselves with the caves. We would do Corker Hill first.

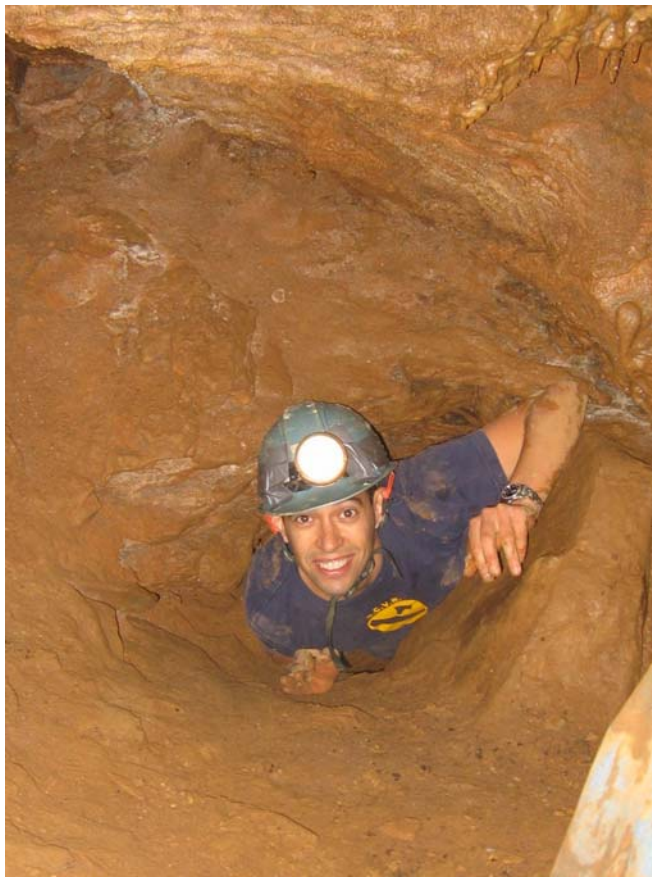


Specter room in Frustration Pit

Photo by Gordy Ley

Gordy rigged a double section of cable ladder to assist with the approximately 10' entrance drop and also second drop of about 6 feet. The second drop was an "easy-in, difficult-out" small hole at the top of a six foot drop. We explored around, looking for the formation room. We found several crawls, but no room with pretties. On the way out we discovered we had missed the crawl to the formation area. It's a very nice room, basically located under the entrance drop. Getting up the 6 foot climb through the small hole was challenging. We spent an hour and half in Corker Hill.

Then the 5 minute walk to Frustration Pit's horizontal entrance. This is a very nice small cave. None of the mud associated with Corker Hill, a couple of short friendly crawls, a pretty room here and there, we took our time to enjoy the cave. Didn't find our way all the back near the vertical entrance shaft. We did find the smaller central shaft and Pat struggled his way up and out. The rest of us departed via the same



Sassan exiting "The Cellar"

Photo by Ken T.

hole we came in. We probably spent an hour or so in the cave. We decided that Frustration Pit was the cave we would take the WASHCO reps to first. It was easy in, no place to fall and easy out. After they did this then we would decide if they were up to doing Corker Hill with its couple of vertical areas that would require either rope or ladders.

Saturday June21: Jonathan, Gordy, Ken Jones and I met the WASHCO reps at the entrance to the orchard. After introductions we headed up to the cave. They seemed to be quite enthused about the trip. They were Sassan, Adam, Dion, Gene and Abby. Dion and Gene had been underground before. We slid down into the horizontal entrance, met up and took a slow tour of the cave. We described various cave formations and structures. Gave a few route finding hints, did the standard all lights out demonstration and frequently checked with them to see if they knew which way was out. It was fun to see their route finding skills improve in just this short trip.

Gordy took Dion and Sasson down the small, semi-vertical passage to the "cellar". Later we all made it to the back of the cave to the bottom of the 20' vertical entrance shaft. Then we let them explore their way back out of the cave. I am guessing we spent almost 2 hours in the cave.

They all appeared to really enjoy the trip, and want to set up another trip to see Corker Hill. I think they will do fine. We also discussed some of the issues we would be dealing with such as, depth of the caves under the surface, how the cave's location related to the sub-division plans, liability, and the vertical nature of some of the entrance shafts. Basically the same things most owners are concerned with, plus how it will interact with the sub-division plans.

Another meeting is being arranged to discuss comparing cave maps to sub-division plans, gates, set up date to get into Corker Hill and possible agreements on access. Lots of work to be done here. □

Karstorama 2008

By Dane Wagle



Ally, ready for rappel at Sinks of the Roundstone Pit

If you've never attended a Karstorama, consider putting it on your schedule for next year. Each of the six years I've attended, I've considered it well worth the 8 ½ -hour trip to Kentucky's Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve – even this year with the exorbitant price of gasoline!

We started our trip on Wednesday morning with the idea of arriving at a decent time, setting up camp, and relaxing until Thursday morning. On arrival, however, my daughter, Allyson, found it hard to sit still and convinced me that we needed to do a cave 'that night'. So we did. At 9:00 pm, we approached the entrance to Sinks of the Roundstone Cave. Once you make it through the belly-crawl

connection, this is mostly a “wandering around” cave with big rooms. Unlike my previous experience in this cave, this time we negotiated the route for the through trip, and we exited around midnight. On the drive back to the preserve, we encountered a nocturnal herd of horses and had to weave our way through them on the gravel road.

The next morning, after a leisurely brunch, Ally and I drove just a couple of miles to Artesian Well cave. It has a large, beautiful entrance with a

cascading stream emerging from its depths. This cave is notable for having areas in the cave in which the water is very blue. The day we went, the water level was low and the color very dark - more like ink.

That evening we were joined by my brother-in-law, John, who flew into Lexington from Newark, NJ, and arrived in his rental car around 9:00 p.m. Allyson would have liked to start another cave that evening, but we waited until the next morning to take John to his first real vertical trip at Sinks of the Roundstone pit, which he handled quite well. There's not much to this cave, but the 120' pit makes a great rappel and a tiring climb for those of us over 50!

After the climb, we switched from vertical gear and walked across the road to, where else but, Across The Road Cave where we fooled around for a couple hours. This is a fairly small cave, but enjoyable. We didn't cave any more that day, and during the Friday night festivities we checked out vendors, watched noodle wrestling and signed up for a "led" trip to Misty Cave.

Saturday morning we set out for Misty, and we should have been 'on alert' when our guide told us that he was taking us to the cave entrance but wouldn't be accompanying us. John, Ally, & I joined five other people, none of whom had been in the cave and one who would be experiencing her second cave. From start to finish our trip lasted 3 ½ hours, most of it doing belly crawls in seemingly endless passages, with a lot of the passages in water. We were looking for a connection in order to make a loop-through, but we never found it and had to turn around and renegotiate two belly crawls – one dry and one wet – in order to exit. Our "newbie" was having a pretty hard time handling the tightness, the cold, the wet and the unknown, but she pulled it together. By the time we got out, we were all suffering from hypothermia to some degree, and we were glad to see the sunshine.

Even though we were spent from the frustration of our experience in Misty, we knew we were

heading home in the morning, and we didn't want to leave without another positive cave experience, so we headed for Mullins Spring Cave. This is a truly spectacular cave, heavily decorated, with chest-deep pools of water. In one area is a long subway passage with a 30-40' ceiling leading to the bottom of an impressive dome pit, probably 75' high, with water coming through the ceiling settling into a pool at the bottom. Mullins Springs was the perfect culminating cave.

That night after gathering together most of our gear, we enjoyed a meal and the music of the talented caver rock band, Terminal Siphons, in the atmosphere of a huge bonfire and cavers all around. When John headed for the airport on Sunday morning, his final words were:

"Can we come back next year?"

I say, "Yes!" □



Dane, Ally, Jay, & John - after Misty Cave

Surveying in the Gap

by Terry McClanathan

Gap Cave is a large historically significant cave located in the Cumberland Gap where the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee join. It is presently being mapped by CRF. Eastern Kentucky caver Mike Crockett is coordinator for the project. It's a long drive to The Gap. Go down 81 to Bristol, then 2 hours west to the far corner of Virginia, about eight hours total.

To sweeten the arrangement Mike has been taking me to some of the pits on nearby Pine Mountain, which runs for about 100 miles along the Va. /Ky. border. That's another story in itself, which I'll save for a later date. Gap Cave is the culmination of exploration efforts spanning several decades which have resulted in the connecting of several large caves in the area. The cave has the distinction of passing under three states. Douglas mentions Cudjos Cave and Soldiers Cave. Cumberland Gap Saltpeter is described in Holtzinger. The present Gap Cave System exceeds twelve miles, and most survey efforts yield an additional thousand feet or so each trip. Regular surveys are scheduled for the last weekend of each month.

The trips are arduous. It generally takes about four hours of caving just to reach the work areas. An awful lot of breakdown climbing is involved. Trip lengths are generally in the 12-16 hour range. My first two trips were from the horizontal entrances. Our objectives were survey in and around a large stream passage located beyond two huge breakdown chambers about two miles into the cave. There are bat restrictions, and both of my earlier trips (in Sept. 07 and Dec. 07) were at times when only the horizontal entrances can be used. There is also a vertical entrance which supposedly cuts travel time to the survey areas in half. This is only accessible beginning Memorial Day weekend, so I had made arrangements for this May 24-25th to be my third trip. Bob Alderson

(Roanoke) had informed me that on a recent trip his group had surveyed a small infeasder stream to the top of a deep pit. Thinking I'd be interested in this, they ended their trip at the top of this pit. Now why would anyone think I'd care about a deep pit found in a great cave? Just more "icing on the cake".

For this trip our team consisted of Cheryl Pratt, Bob Alderson, Marion O. Smith, and me. Cheryl had lead on my second trip and Bob had lead on the first one. They're both major players in the Gap survey project, having been on many trips and being very knowledgeable of the caves complexities. By that I mean they always seem to know where they are, where they're going, and how to get us all back, as opposed to my being perpetually lost most of the time. Anticipating a good showing for the Memorial Day weekend (but in fact the four of us were the only ones who would actually be caving), Bob had packed scaling poles for a climbing lead near the small infeasder stream leading to the "new" pit. We were also toting ropes of 150 and 65' lengths for the drops, plus full packs of vertical and survey gear. Translation... our packs were stuffed. Add in Bob's scaling poles, and I thought this a rather ambitious undertaking for just the four of us. Did I mention that our collective ages totaled 231 years, with Marion taking "oldest geezer" honors at 65, and Cheryl being the "baby" at only 53.

The vertical entrance was formerly the Cumberland Gap Saltpeter Cave. As described in Holtzinger, it entails two canyon drops a short way inside the entrance. Marion pointed out some authentic civil war era signatures in the upper part of the cave. Following the drops there is a low sand crawl of around 200' (we stashed the scaling poles here), lots of scrambling, some nice easy walking sections (but not nearly enough), and of course lots of breakdown. I found myself wondering why

anyone would consider this the “easy” entrance. We certainly didn’t set any speed records. Once in the Little Big Breakdown Room, which I recognized from my previous trips, the real fun commenced. Bob lead us up a series of steep slippery climbs to a thirty foot drop into the small infeaser they had followed to the pit a few months before. It was here that Cheryl had some sort of revelation, suddenly remembering the ugliness of the 500 feet of survey that had taken them to the edge of the pit. If she remembered doing this, she must have forgotten about it up to that point, because her remarks were something like “You mean we have to go through that (horror) again!??”. Somehow, in my own mind, I had envisioned that once in the area, it would be pretty routine to get to the pit. What was I thinking? There doesn’t seem to be a whole lot of “easy” associated with this cave.

The route started as a scramble in a mucky stream passage cut into a shaley limestone. The shale was kind of slimy and of the consistency that just sticks to everything. Soon the passage deteriorated to a crawl followed by more low scramble. The muck never improved. I had the 65 foot rope and Cheryl was trying to keep the 150 from getting totally slimed. I think she was doing a better job than I. When we reached the last survey station from Bob and Cheryl’s last effort we found ourselves looking down a long slope which ended in a gaping black void. Bob said he had thought the drop was about 80 feet so we figured the 150 would probably rig the main pit. From survey notes, Bob also theorized we’d probably encounter another shorter drop before connecting into the lower level main stream borehole, hence the need for the second 65’ rope we had with us. Our hope was to complete the survey loop by tying into the main stream once we dropped the big pit. But what is it they say about the best laid plans????

Our first obstacle was finding a way to rig the pit safely. The breakdown slope looked heinous. There were no obvious rig points. The apparent lip was about 50 feet downslope over considerable unstable looking breakdown

blocks. We rigged the 65’ rope to a large block and I went down for a closer inspection. The end of the rope put me at a wall where the limestone didn’t look too bad. Some testing with a hammer revealed that a good portion of the wall was the same rotten shaley limestone we’d encountered enroute in the stream infeaser, and thus no good for setting bolts. A little higher on the wall I found some rock which was close to the desired tone. Placing bolts here would put us about ten feet above the breakover, but out of line from any of the larger death rocks. A lot of “gardening” would be needed to clear the way, but it seemed our safest bet. The slope was too steep to stand on safely, so I clipped into the very end of the 65’ rope, and by turning at an awkward angle, laboriously set two anchors for our rig point.

Thinking there still might be a second drop to the main stream level, we wanted to conserve our shorter rope, so we re-rigged the 150 from the breakdown blocks at the top of the slope to the bolts I set. I then used the main rope to clear all the loose rubble from the slope as I made my way to the edge of the main pit. Rocks falling into the pit were taking a good three seconds to hit, indicating the drop was probably over 100’ deep.

We set our first new survey station at the edge of the pit at 49’ from the tie-in. That meant only a hundred feet of rope was going to be in the pit. I didn’t think it would reach, but I rappelled down to see if it might be just a foot or two short. It wasn’t. The knot appeared to be dangling perhaps 15-20 feet from the floor. I changed over and climbed back up. We would have to use the 65’ rope after all. Still, it did not reach all the way to the bolts, so we used a long piece of webbing to wrap the breakdown and then rigged into that. That freed up the 150 to reach from the bolts all the way to the pit floor.

After a while longer, Bob and I completed the re-rigging and placed some pads at the breakover.

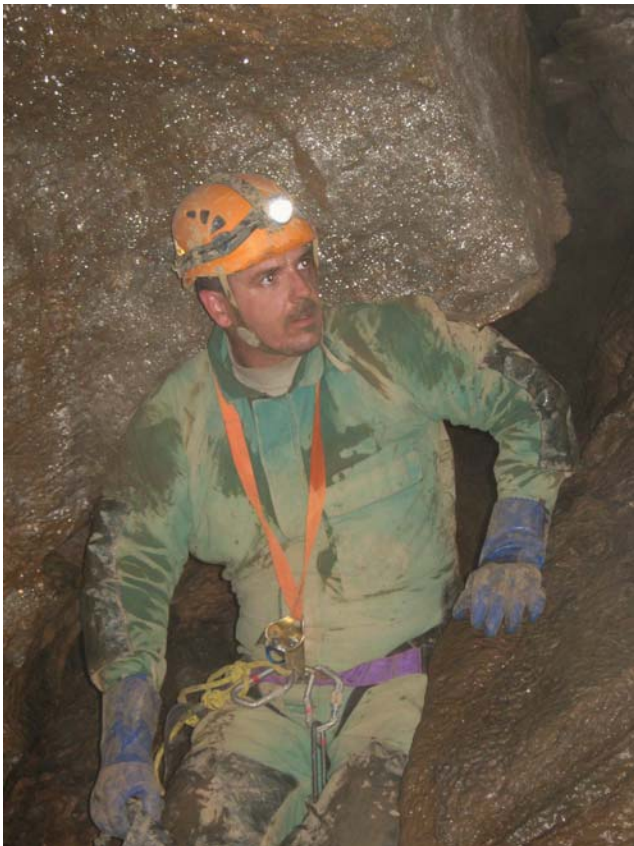
Continued on page 17...

Kooken

July 19 & August 2, 2008

Sometimes, no matter how much someone tries to describe the features and characteristics of a particular cave; they just don't seem to get it sufficiently clear. That's the way it was with Kooken. I was told there would be high clay banks with steps shoveled into the walls, and that there were pre-rigged traverse lines, to keep you from slipping down 30-40 feet into the mud canyon, but I never pictured we'd be climbing these clay walls hour after hour through almost the entire cave.

I'd been working with Tim Long for over a year trying to get a Kooken trip set up, but when we had the date, we couldn't get the cavers, or the cave would be flooded with 30 feet of water. Finally, everything came together on July 19th. We had a great FCG turnout.



Tim Long led these trips, and dug the steps in the clay banks. *Photo by Gordy*



Danny just stepped off platform at the top of 64 ft entrance shaft (August 2) *Photo by Gordy*

Cavers on this trip were; Gordy Ley, Terry McClanathan, Todd Roberts, Pat Minnick, Jonathan Peterson, Tim Long and his son Jake, and me-Ken Tayman.

We all met up with Tim and key holder Dave Bookhammer, signed releases then worked our way out into the wheat field to the small sink where the 64' vertical entrance was located. In a few minutes, Dave had rigged the drop, and we all inside on the new steel grate platform. In the corner it was easy on rope and straight down. Terry brought his tape (as usual) to verify the drop at 64 feet. It was a nice clean, fairly compact drop, with a slight corkscrew to it and then another fifty foot, 45 degree slot down which emerged high on the wall of the big room.

This is a very big room which sometimes floods to the ceiling. It was impressive. We continued around to the backside and arrived at the first clay bank traverse. It was really different. Tim was cutting steps in the wall as he went down. He was clipped into the permanent traverse lines and was using an ascender as a self belay. There was an old wooden bridge and/or ladder about fifteen or 20 feet down that had been in the cave for at least 50 years. When he got down to the bottom of the clay funnel, with another 20' hole in the center, he turned the ascender around and dug steps and worked his way back up out of the hole on the other side.

Repeat the above process, 6 or 7 times, throw in a few hairy, muddy, canyon step acrosses, digging steps all the way, traversing up and down the side of slippery clay banks, with deep pools of water and breakdown, and that is how

the next couple hours were passed. It is not comparable to any other cave I have been in. Some of the crevices took awhile to sum up the courage to step across. Slippery footing and significant drops were cause for concern. Being connected to the traverse lines with cow tails and ascender was reassuring. At one of these spots Pat tossed out his concept of:

“The dumber you are, the easier it is”

Meaning, the more you tried to think your way across, the more difficult it would be.

Eventually we made it to a mid-cave drop of about 15 feet that had a hanging chain ladder. It was pre-rigged and we rappelled down. The difficult part was keeping our legs from getting tangled in the chain ladder.



Ken T. doing 2nd traverse around the top of clay covered banks.

Photo by Gordy



Old chain ship ladder at mid cave drop Photo by Gordy

Then a butt-scoot down across deep lake on a 45 degree aluminum extension ladder, then we headed mostly upward for awhile through clay covered passages. Somewhere along here, Gordy took a stroll through one of the lakes when he slipped off the trail. It could have happened at a worse place.

After a short snack break in the Dining Room, we continued back down lower into the cave still using steps freshly dug by Tim. Here the clay banks turn mostly into sand banks and the steps quickly crumbled away, and we were mostly slogging through mud and water for a short while.

The last 30 or 40 minutes was spent climbing up a 45 degree shaft that just continued going up and up and up. According to the map this shaft gains about 150' elevation. By the time we reached the surface, the diameter had slowly narrowed down from 6'x 6' to about a three foot tube. It was pre-rigged with three ropes which helped a lot, especially in the slippery areas.

We emerged inside a green house frame about $\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the cars. The trip was about 4 hours and a very decent pace. Pat said a speed trip through by experienced cavers would be 2 hours.

Nice trip, unique cave, well worth the effort. Thanks Tim, for the steps!

Follow Up Trip (August 2, 2008)

Since we had several members who were unable to make the July 19 trip due to other commitments, Tim pulled together another trip on August 2nd. This trip included a few repeats; Tim Long, Pat Minnick and Gordy Leh. Also participating were FCG members Danny Cumbo, Dane Wagle, and Howard White. Also caving were Todd Hancock, and Mark Moore and his son.



Ladder climb up and out of cave at green house (Aug2)



Not much different in condition of cave. Water level was still very low. Along the way, on one of the traverses, Dane lost control of his pack and it slipped 30 feet or so down the clay bank into the crevice. Pat said it took 15 or 20 minutes to scout a route down and recover the pack.

Later in the trip, after the mid-cave drop, and after crossing the lake on the “horizontal” aluminum, extension ladder, Pat was attempting to pass thru the “crevice” without actually climbing all the way up into it and bracing across it with legs and backside. He attempted to crawl thru just using arms, chest and body as a brace. Partially through, he lost grip on a muddy area and slipped down in the lower part of the crevice where there was just mud, water and slippery limestone. I’m not sure just how long it took to get up and out of that, but I think Gordy tossed piece of webbing down and helped pull him out.

All in all we got 10 different FCG cavers into Kookan. It was new cave for 8 of the 10.

Ken Tayman

“Quotes” of the Quarter

“My phone got run over at VAR, so I've lost everyone's numbers!” TR after VAR

“The dumber you are, the easier it is”
PM in Kookon

✠ ✠

Cleversburg Sink Update

As of August 17, 2008, the water level in Cleversburg has dropped to 14 ft. That puts it at the 5th rung from the top of the new 19 foot ladder. That is down over 10 ft. from the June 1 level. The ladder has floated out of position and is twisted at a 90 degree angle to the wall. That's impressive considering the ladder weighs in at over 100 lbs. It was too awkward to twist it back into position. All of the info for the Kiosk has been updated and we hope to have current information on the Kiosk in September. A call will go out when we are ready to do it.

[illegible]

Surveying in the Gap continued from page 12...Cheryl came next and we continued the survey down the drop. The pit was totally free for 116'. Our rig was at the lowest possible point on the slope, so higher figures could be obtained by rigging where the lip was higher on the slope, but these did not look appealing to us. The pit was much larger than I'd anticipated, measuring about fifty feet long by 20 wide and being somewhat kidney bean shaped. The top twenty feet was shaley limestone, but the rest was nice looking rock with about a 20 degree dip. All in all a very nice dome pit. A small waterfall from the infeder stream landed in a small pool at the far end of the dome.

Once all four of us were on bottom, we continued the survey. It was soon determined that we faced two problems. As expected we were still higher than the main stream passage, but had no ropes for another drop. The infeder stream from the pool trickled into a small canyon. This lead to the top of an eight foot drop into a pool at a lower level, then drained off into another drop which we presumed connected to the main stream passage somewhere beneath us. The second problem was that none of us could fit into the tight slot at the top of the eight foot drop. Also the small stream canyon was extremely muddy. The CRF has a standard that the same person doing foresights must also do the backsights, and with the same instruments. This may sound awkward but it's really not much trouble when the passage being surveyed is normal. However, when the passage is mucky, it can be a real pain. Reading the fore and back sights of the five stations we set in the 40 or so feet from the bottom of the dome to the eight foot drop got me completely slimed.

We finished up the little bit of survey and held a pow-wow. We had gained only about 200' of survey, certainly not a very impressive figure for all of our effort. We had sure consumed a lot of time in getting to the drop and rigging it. We, and all of our gear, had picked up quite a few extra pounds of mud. Bob thought it unlikely that this route would be used

again, so it was decided (though not unanimously) that we should de-rig and take the ropes out with us. It was nearly midnight. This was looking like it was going to be a long tired exit. And so the decision was made to rout, although I don't think the pace we set could really be termed a "rout". Moving mud covered packs and ropes through the 500 foot long infeder above the 116' pit was like rolling a couple of heavy mud snowballs. Everything just kept getting bulkier and heavier.

Suffice to say that it was indeed a slow, tiring exit. Bob and Cheryl didn't seem as wasted as Marion and I, or else they carried their weariness more stoically. At least once we got to the breezier parts of the cave; some of the mud dried and started to fall off our persons and gear, lightening the load a bit. We finally emerged to a starry, chilly night (morning) a little past 4AM, but with a long hike back to the vehicles. We'd only been underground 16 hours, but it seemed much longer. I'm still waiting for that "easy" trip in the GAP. By the time we finally arrived back to the field house, dawn was breaking.

And so, my third trip ended much like the other two, feeling pretty tired, but with a pleasing sense of accomplishment. The Gap is a great cave. For me personally, the 116' pit was especially nice. It's a beautiful drop. If it were closer to the 200' range it would be a classic. Bob was probably correct, though; I doubt if there will be many (any?) other trips back to it. The Gap project is always on the lookout for "new blood". If a small group were to carpool, the drive wouldn't be so bad. Many people drive down on Friday and spend the night. Accommodations are excellent and free. The personnel are first rate. Just contact Mike Crockett and express an interest if you'd like to be a part of the survey of one of the finest overall caves to be found anywhere. I guarantee you'll be gratifyingly exhausted afterwards, but you will also leave the next day thinking "what a great trip" you had. And after all, isn't that the way we all want to feel when the caving trip is over. □

Vertical Practices

June 12

Pat had practice at his house @6:30 pm. The main purpose was to run a few long climbs, so he rigged his 300' rope with a pulley approximately 30' up in his oak tree. Pat, Jonathan and I (Ken T) participated.

Pat climbed first while I manned the rack controlling the speed of the rope. About 100' feet into the climb I noticed a severely worn spot on the rope go through the rack. I brought it to Pat's attention and he eventually observed it as he climbed past it. He climbed about 150'. While recovering the rope for my climb, a closer inspection identified a serious structural defect at the worn spot. It had an obvious kink and was declared "unsafe" to use. The rest of the evening the three of us climbed the other end of the rope, thus limiting us to about 100' per climb. Jonathan and I each got in 200' while Pat got in about 400' if you count the two climbs to rig and de-rig the pulley. Now instead of the 300' rope, Pat will be converting it into two ropes at 165' and 134' respectively.

June 30

Another practice at Pat's. Potential rain showers dampened our enthusiasm. Pat and Todd each climbed rope. Ken T and Ken J gave moral support. After a few climbs, the four of us broke out the nearly finish Fantasy map and worked out issues in the multi-level areas and filled in some of the missing surveys and sketches.

August 9

8 AM morning of the picnic, Pat is at the rocks and reserves our spot by rigging rope. Jonathan, Ken T, Mark, Guy and Jim S. are all on hand for practice. Guy gets in his first "On Rope" experience and does well. Climbing back up did have him sweating pretty hard. Pat worked out a makeshift frog rig for Jim and he got in some practice as well. While picking up some trash at the bottom, I found a nice size Copperhead coiled up near a rock soaking up some rays. Wrapped things up around 2 PM and moved on to the picnic. □

Tourist Dies of Ebola-Like Fever Probably Caught From Bats

By ANRICA DEB, AP

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP) - A Dutch woman has died from Marburg fever, a rare Ebola-like virus she is thought to have caught from bats while touring caves in Uganda, hospital officials said Friday. To avoid an outbreak of the highly contagious disease, health authorities said they have been in touch with everyone known to have had contact with the 40-year-old woman since she returned to the Netherlands at the end of June.

So far, no one else has reported symptoms, said the National Institute for Public Health and Environment. It is the first known case of a tourist catching Marburg virus. Previous outbreaks of the disease have largely struck African miners and hunters. The World Health Organization said no effort was made to notify passengers on the plane who flew with her from Uganda. The virus has an incubation period of five to 10 days.

The woman, whose name has not been released, died Thursday night, said Marlene van Toever, a spokeswoman at the Leiden University Medical Center. She began having symptoms a few days after returning to the Netherlands and was admitted to a regional hospital July 5. Two days later she was transferred to Leiden with liver failure and severe hemorrhaging.

WHO said the woman had traveled in the African country for three weeks last month. She is likely to have contracted the disease from contact with at least one fruit bat when she visited the "python cave" in the Maramagambo Forest on June 19. WHO said in a statement the bats living in the cave may be the same species known to carry Ebola and Marburg in other regions of sub-Saharan Africa.

Last year, there was a small outbreak of Marburg virus in the same region of Uganda. Van Toever said the woman was kept isolated after her arrival in the hospital, and medical personnel had worn protective suits. Roel Coutinho, director of the Netherlands Center for Disease Control, said people who had contact with the woman before July 2 when she first showed symptoms were not in danger. "Patients with Marburg are not infectious as long as they are not ill," he told The Associated Press.

The woman had contact with about 50 people before she was transferred to Leiden, and they all have been asked to take their temperature twice daily and isolate themselves if they have symptoms, Coutinho said. Marburg virus can cause massive bleeding in multiple parts of the body and is thought to be spread by body fluids. There is no treatment or vaccine. The fever was first identified during an outbreak in Europe in 1967, with a virus that arrived in monkeys imported from Uganda.

As of last year, about 450 cases had been reported. The worst outbreak was in Angola in 2004-2005 when 90 percent of the 252 people known to be afflicted died, said the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Another major outbreak of 154 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998-2000 had a fatality rate of 83 percent. □

Carnegie Cave User Contact

Update by Ken Tayman

As members who have been attending meetings, or reading the updates know, the Southampton Township Supervisors requested the Franklin County Grotto assist them with caver access to Carnegie Cave. Their main concern being the use of the park restrooms by Carnegie cavers to clean up after their cave trips.

Originally the request was to gate the cave and control access in a similar manner as to the way we do Cleversburg Sink, with the alternative being to close the cave to public access.

FCG had several discussions on what we felt would be a good approach and decided that rather than gate this heavily used cave, which would put a tremendous amount of additional pressure on other more significant caves in the area, we would try an "Educate the Cavers" project. We proposed this to the supervisors and they agreed to give it a try.

Notifying the local and regional grottos would be easy enough. The difficult part would be to contact and inform the many other "non-caver" organizations and individuals who use the cave.

We developed a multi-pronged strategy that will use several methods to identify and educate this group of users.

First, we will place a sign at the entrance which explains the parking, use of park restroom and email contact info so all users who go into the cave will see it. We also placed similar information on the Cleversburg Kiosk.

Second, we placed a cave register just inside the cave and requested

"All Cavers" to sign in and provide contact information.

And thirdly, we would use the information to establish a "Carnegie Cave Users Database" and use it to periodically touch base with all known users and remind them of parking and restroom policies. Also offer them maps and other current status related to the cave.

FCG members Gordy Leh and Dane Wagle placed the register in the cave on March 22, 2008. Jonathan Peterson and I removed it (temporarily) on August 24, 2008. During that 5 month period there were more 245 cavers that either signed in as individuals or groups, or notified FCG via other means that they had been in.

We knew the cave was heavily used, but we were still surprised by the volume. We also know there are lots of additional trips that didn't register.

Many of the entries were just nick names with no contact information. But a large percentage of the users were covered either by school or club names and we were able to track them down and add them to the database.

So far we have actually contacted several local college groups, private schools camps, churches, youth groups, scouts, and individuals as far away as Pottsville, Lebanon, DC and New Jersey.

The contacts already made and responses received represent 189 of the 245 cavers who have been in the cave since late March. Several other emails have been sent out to likely prospects but they have not responded yet.

FCG's intent is to maintain contact with these groups and individuals periodically throughout the year and develop a mutually beneficial communication link.

Some of the contacts already verified include:

Dickenson College, Shippensburg University, Mount St Mary's University, I-Connect Youth Groups, Montclair Kimberley Academy, Coventry Christian School, Kenbrook Bible Camp, Camp Canadensis, Lebanon Valley College, Thurmont Adventure Club, Diakon Wilderness Center and a couple of NSS cavers.

FCG continues to confirm parking areas, communicate with some of the local property owners who go in the cave, and pick up trash as we go to and from the caves.

We will try to format the register better, so that it will prompt for more specific contact information that will hopefully include a phone number and email address.

We are in the process of getting an electronic copy of the Carnegie Cave map so we can provide it to those already using the cave. We notice by some of the sign in/sign out times that they are not visiting much of the cave. According to some of the conversations I've had with the users, they are not nearly aware of the extent of the cave passage.

We hope that by offering to provide a map, this will be incentive for new users to contact us. □



**Kenneth Tayman, Editor
13373 Sunrise Drive
Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214**

FRANKLIN COUNTY GROTTOS



Corroded biner

photo by Gordy Ley