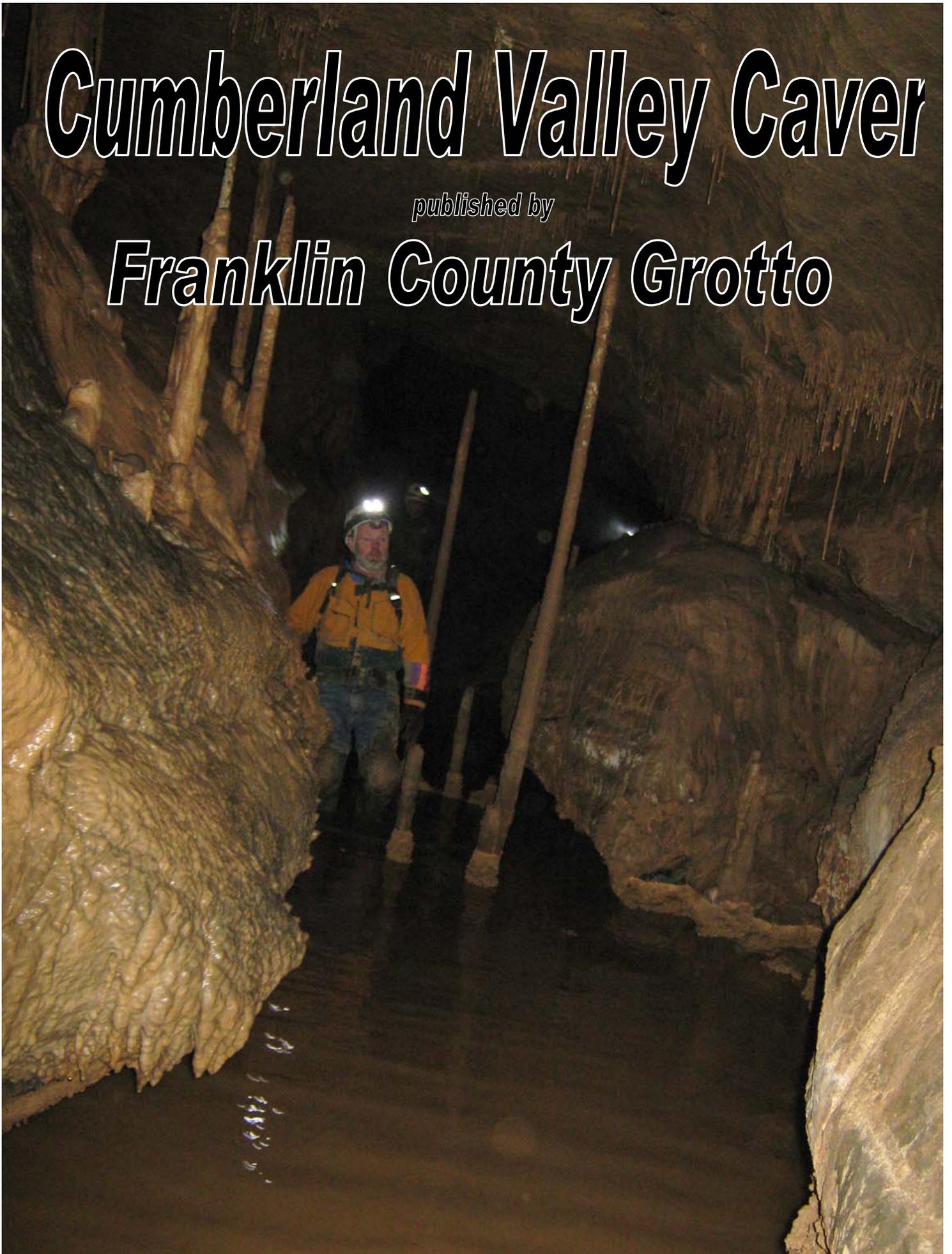


Cumberland Valley Caver

published by

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.

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: Dane Wagle in stream passage to Tufa Room in Lightner's *Photo by:* Gordy Ley

Table of Contents

From the Editor.....	3
Speleo-Spotlight: Tim Long	4
Lightner’s Trip <i>by ken Tayman</i>	5
“Quotes of the Quarter” / Cavetoon.....	9
Cleversburg/ Carnegie 2008 Activity Summary.....	10
Booty in TAG <i>by Terry McClanathan</i>	11
Dale Ibberson Memorial.....	16
MAR Business Meeting / Cleversburg Sink Depth Gauge	16
White Nose Syndrome Updates	16
SB 66 Stony Creek Wild and Scenic River Act.....	18
Franklin County Grotto Membership Roster.....	19

From the editor... On behalf of the members of Franklin County Grotto, I want to offer our sincere regrets to Dale Ibberson’s friends and family on his recent passing. He was well known and liked by those who knew him and caved with him. Twenty years ago, when I started caving, I remember seeing his name on the legends of many Pennsylvania maps. He will be missed by the caving community.

While on the subject of not so happy news, I would like to note that the White Nose Syndrome that is killing bats continues to spread. I felt a WNS update was necessary in the issue, but every time I would work in current update, I would immediately receive another of another cave being infected and closed. First the NSS John Guilday Preserve is closed due to presence of what appears to be WNS, then The Shindle Iron Mine in Mifflin Co., PA has dead bats and a 70% infected rate. As soon as I noted these, then Breathing Cave has dead bats and early signs of WNS and is closed by the owner. Then Clarke’s Cave closed. Clover Hollow Cave in VA, numerous dead bats and large numbers are staged near the entrance. A proposed moratorium on all caving in Virginia is being considered until April 15th, 2009. In some articles they are still commenting on how this might be spread by cavers (from NY), while in other articles the symptoms are showing up in places where no one has been for over two years. So Keep cleaning your gear between caves and between trips, but be careful of what you use to clean your ropes, harnesses, and other vertical gear.

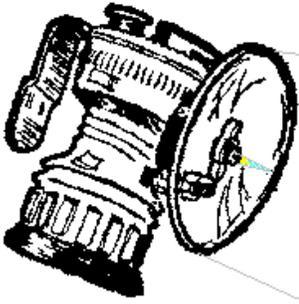
Thanks to Gordy, Tina, Terry, Todd R, Tim, Anne, Jonathan and Ken J. for contributing articles, photos and information used in this issue.

Ken Tayman, Editor

Speleo-Spotlight...

Tim Long

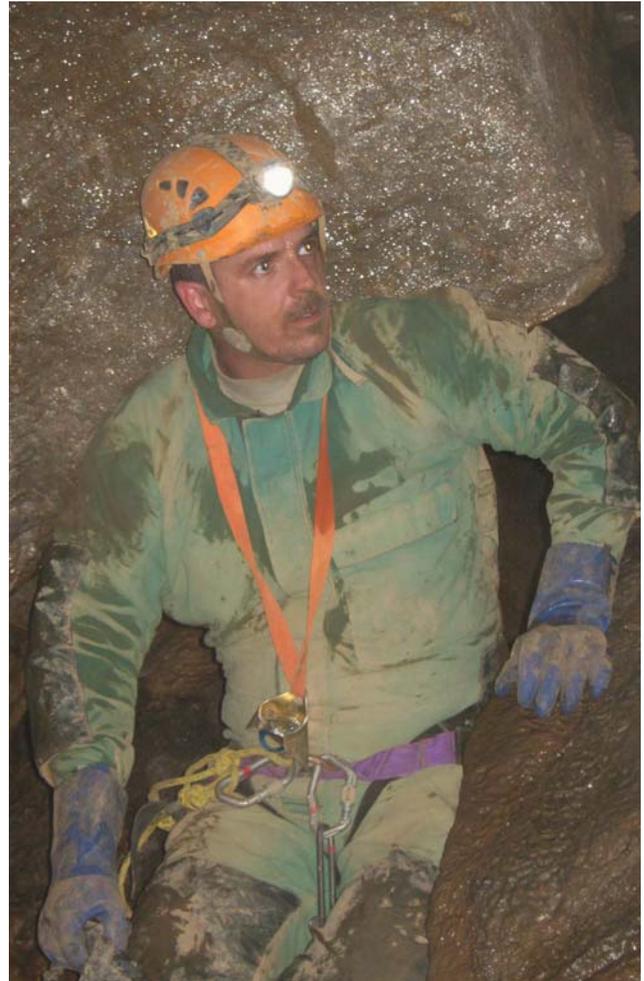
NSS # 30877



Tim Long started caving in 1986 when his friend Todd Hancock needed a partner for ridge walking and other caving activities and invited him along. His first caves were Aitkins, Rupert, Ruth and J-4, the last three of which would either scare you away from caving or hook you. Almost 25 years he's still at it, and it's all Todd's fault!

Over the years he has been involved with several team discoveries and projects. He did however, discover Blacklog Cave (AKA Longcock) and did "Pull the leaf/stick plug out of the Blacklog entrance, all by himself" He has worked on map and survey projects in Blacklog, Fantasy, Sugar, Whisper Rocks, and did one survey trip in "Shovel Eater" in 2005. The Sugar cave project spanned 18 years where he (and others) monitored a sinkhole in Mifflin County as it grew larger and larger. They kept poking into openings and finally after he and Todd dug through 28 feet of rock along a joint/bedding plane found a couple thousand feet of cave. He helped dig and survey a blowing lead in a commercial cave (Whispering Rocks) with some super decorated passage and continues today to work on a bolted vertical dig. He is always on the look for possible digs and new cave.

Some trips that stand out in his memory are two 11 hour loops in Hostermin's Pit in the 90's. Also there was the time when he and Todd did J-4, Deadcat Cave and Rupert Cave all in one day. It started out with Tim nearly killing Todd with a large rolling, bouncing rock that he dislodged on the way down the steep slope Deadcat entrance. Later that day they helped a hysterically crying and shaking woman who froze at the step-across in J-4. They ended the day with a trip back into the jewel room in Rupert. He remembers the scariest trips being coming out of J-4 to find the ledge across the quarry face covered with ice from freezing rain. And then there was the time on that same ledge when his leaking carbide light engulfed itself, helmet and his hair in flames. That ledge is dicey enough when it's dry and when you're not on fire. McFadden's was "sportiest" cave with all the tight passages and digging in the freakin super-goopy Old Port/Keyser orange clay slop in Whisper Rocks (while laying



Tim leading a trip in Kookan Cave. *Photo by Gordy*

in water), then hauling it out in 5 gallon buckets as some of the toughest caving he's done.

Tim lives near the northern block of Tuscarora State Forest and enjoys hiking, camping, fishing and hunting there. He is a Conservation Volunteer for DCNR and does trail construction and maintenance in that area. He went to Mt Union Area High School and is a graduate of Juniata College (BS in Geology) and almost completed his MS in Geology at West Virginia University. Currently he works as a geologist for PA Department of Environmental Protection, Waste Management Program. Mainly reviews permit applications and groundwater monitoring data for landfills and assists in complaint response and investigation related to illegal dumping, spills, etc by performing sampling and examining the hydrology of a given area. A good guy to cave with! □

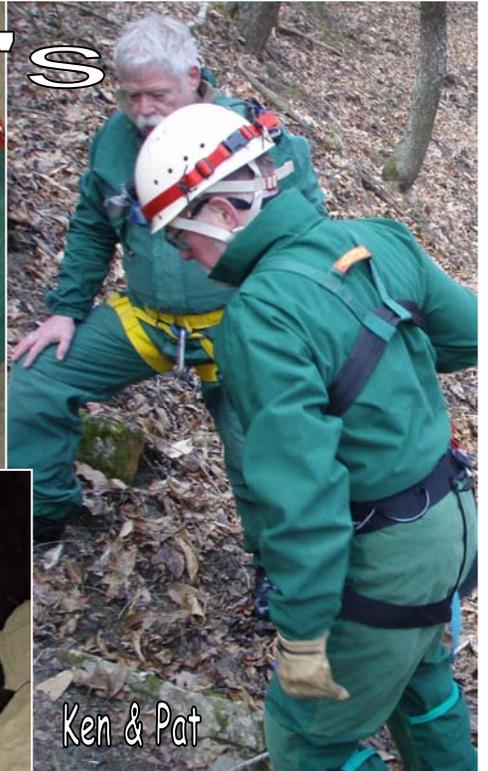
Lightner's



Jonathan dropping entrance shaft



Tina rigging for 2nd drop



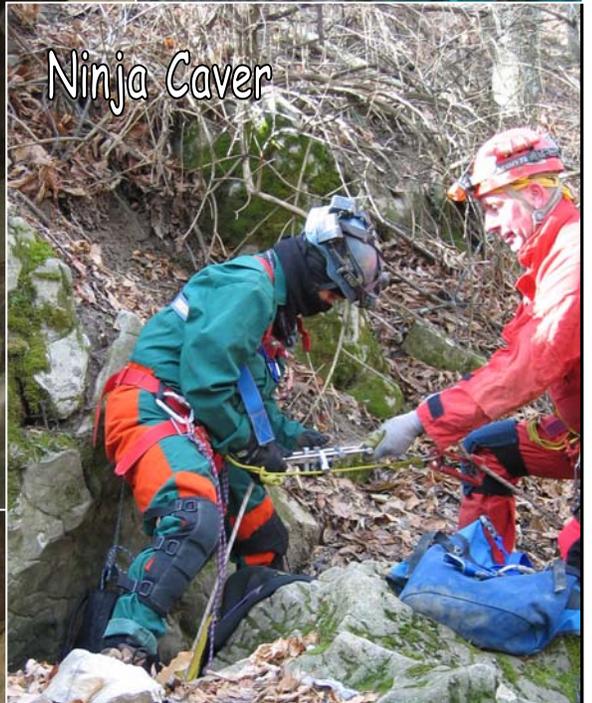
Ken & Pat



Dane



Gordy



Ninja Caver



Pat and Jonathan



Lightner's

By Ken Tayman January 24, 2009



Tina at entrance, ready to descend *Photo by Ken T*

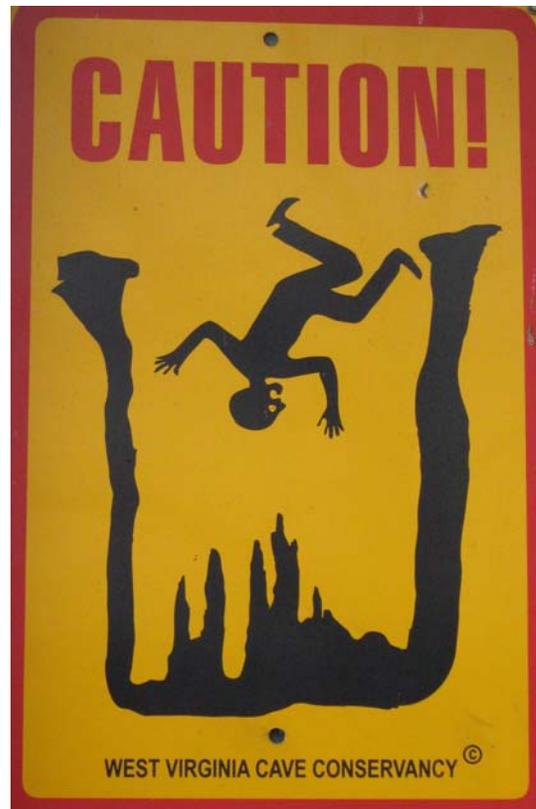
I forget who it was, but last fall, someone suggested we put a winter trip on for Greenbrier or Monroe County. After tossing it around a little we decided to do the Lightner's entrance to McClungs. We had not done a grotto vertical trip in quite awhile, at least one that required both rappelling and ascending.

It had been 14 or 15 years since Pat and I had been in this cave, and that had been a Lightner's - McClungs through trip which was just a rappel in and cave out other entrance type of trip. So we were kind of familiar with portions of the cave but were not definitely sure of the route finding that would be needed to get into the McClungs Section and then back out. Plus, this time we would be climbing out the multiple drops. Just as soon as we came up with a date, several people jumped on the trip and it appeared to be a hit.

Franklin County grotto cavers on this trip were Pat Minnick, Jonathan Peterson, Gordy Ley, Dane Wagle, Tina Blaik and me (Ken Tayman).

During the last minute email coordination efforts, John Pearson injected the idea of staying at the WVACS field house which was only 15 minutes from the cave, and had kitchen, bunks, wood stove, showers, and if we treated him nice, he would build a fire in the stove before we arrived. This was for \$5/per night plus \$1 for shower. Can't beat that!!

We all pulled out on Friday at different times, but at one time or another met up or passed each other on I-81 or I-64 along the way. John met us at the field house and gave us specific directions to the cave entrance. Even offered to show up at the cave in the AM and point us in the right direction. As far as the night went there was lots of snoring. Drove me crazy. I think Jonathan took his bag and went out into the main room and slept by the fire. I was glad he left. He was a major contributor to the ZZZZZ's. *



It was a very cold weekend, probably in the 20's. Everyone was on their own for breakfast, but Gordy did fry up some bacon for all to share. We got all our gear together (including the "Red Thingy's), loaded up and pulled out for the cave at 10 AM. In 15 minutes we were at the gate. Since John wasn't there yet a few of us walked up into the field to look for the entrance. We knew there would be a rock outcrop on the side of a large sink. We found it in the 3rd sink we checked. Of course it was much smaller than I remembered. Aren't they all? John was there when we returned to the cars.

He asked us to park up by the sink due to recently built homes near the gate and it would be more private for changing into gear. We parked about 100 yards from the entrance. We rigged from a tree with my 150' rope. This turned out to be ideal length for all three drops which includes a 12' climb-down, then maybe 10' horizontal to a bolt

and about 50' freefall pit, to another bolt, then 10' horizontal to a 8' low crawl which then goes over a 20' drop into a nicely decorated room. This last drop was an overhung lip which would give the trip several minutes of difficult caving, especially on the way out.

We found the snug crawlway out of the entrance room. Returning back out through this crawl is the part of the trip I'd had on my mind all week. It is one of those short tight body size drops that immediately does a 90 degree horizontal turn, at the knees, while you are still hugging all four sides. Going in was easy, it was the exiting that had me concerned. It seemed you would have to arch your upper body 90 degrees to the rear as you approached it. I was going to make sure I had people both in front of me and behind me when we came back out.



Gordy in giant rimstone dams on Tufa Trail

Photo by Ken T



Pat belaying Jonathan at the 10' climb-up

Photo by Tina Blaik

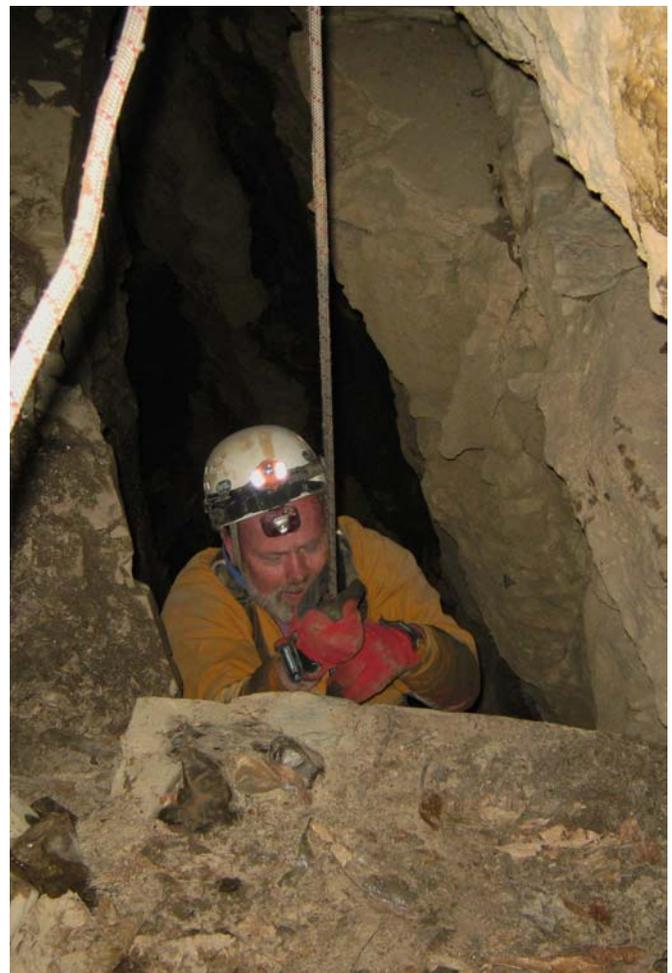
On my previous trip, we were being guided by Barry Duncan. He was exploring his way toward a McClungs - Lightner's through trip. He had made it all the way except for the last couple hundred yards and was now going to try and connect via Lightner's. Once we got through the crawlway we found ourselves at a 10' climbdown. Pat went down first and then helped me, especially that last 5 feet. I remember thinking "That would be a difficult climb if we had to go back up it". That climb-down has stuck with me for 14 years. I knew if we were going to come back out this way we would need a good hand line, so I brought my 45 foot, 3/8", PMI flex hand line. It is big enough and strong enough to use vertical gear on, yet small enough to roll up in my pack. I also brought my etrierre just in case we needed a foot up. Besides, it was new and had not been used in cave yet.

After fooling around a little, Pat found a slot in the breakdown. Five feet chimney down, then 5 feet open air drop. We used my hand line to get down. Then it was off to the breakdown crawl which would lead us to the big trunk passage. After we all were through and worked our way to the trunk we discover lots of water. It quickly got to knee and thigh deep. We did not remember this passage being flooded on our previous trip. We had planned to cave in 3 hours then turn the trip. We figured it would take at least an hour to get all six of us up the 10 foot climb, then the 20 footer, and then the 50 footer.

Since it was really cold outside, and we had already used 2 of our 3 hours we decided not to get "Waist High Wet". We decided to go up stream to the "Tufa Room"

I seemed to remember Barry taking us there as a side trip but was not clear at all. We worked our way through some pretty stuff and climbed up into a huge room with lots of pretty stuff. I am sure it is the same place Barry took us. We climbed around, took some pictures and killed our 3rd hour. Time to head out. Basically we knew we weren't that far into the cave, so we didn't rush.

were n't that far into the cave, so we didn't rush.



Dane climbing out 50' entrance shaft.

Photo by Gordy

Took some time to set up a few photo shoots. But also kept in mind we did have several equipment climbs to do before we were out. We spent a little too much time getting up the first climb, mainly because we kept looking for an easy way up. Pat used his knots and jumar and easily got up the rope. Eventually we all decided there was no easy way out so we all used the etrierre and a belay from Pat and got up. Did our crawlway back to entrance room. (Which turned out to be a non-issue) and started climbing up the 20 footer with the overhung lip. Pat led the way, then Dane, then Tina.

Tina got her Jumar rigging snagged in a protrusion on the underside of the lip, and spent a lot of time suspended, half over the lip and half hanging from the lip. The harder she tried to get over, the tighter she became entangled. Eventually, Dane hooked in, and crawled back into the low crawl and got to know Tina better than any of us others. The three of us still at the bottom could see Danes head sticking out of the crawl 20 feet above our heads, as he grabbed rigging, coveralls and an occasional hand full of Tina. We would have started to worry, but Dane kept winking at us and giving us the thumbs-up, so we knew he had it under control. Finally he worked the straps loose and we all continued to climb out. Soon Gordy and Dane were at the top the 50' shaft, and it was Tina's turn to climb. She did great, stopping now and then, urged to keep climbing by Pat. She was mostly recovered from her ordeal at the lip, but when about halfway up the shaft and feeling a little lonely she yelled up "Somebody talk to me" and "What was for dinner tonight?"

Finally we were all out. It was a 7 ½ hour trip. It was cold and snow flurries were coming down. Everyone's wet feet were almost frozen by the time we got the ropes derigged and settled into the cars. It was a short trip back to field house. Cleaned up a little, stoked the wood stove and headed to the Mexican restaurant in Lewisburg. After food and a few beers we stretched our sore muscles and headed back to the field house. As we sat around the stove and chatted someone mentioned how messed up my hair was, then we noticed I was the only man there with hair. Another nice night in the field house, a shared breakfast with Pat doing eggs and Gordy doing more bacon. We decided that we should do a winter trip every January and stay at the WVACS field house. We were all surprised that we had managed to miss this great facility all these years. □

"Quotes" of the Quarter

"Somebody talk to me!"

TB, halfway up Lightner's Pit

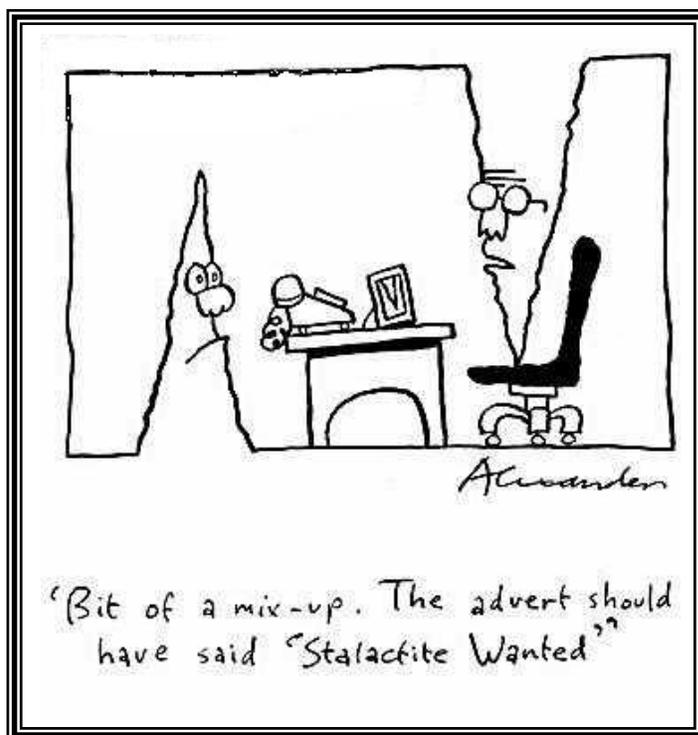
"It's all his fault"

TL re TH getting him into caving.

FCG Vertical Practice Sessions

With a couple of vertical caving trips on the schedule for this year, we plan to have several vertical practice sessions as the spring weather approaches. New members who are interested in participating in FCG vertical trips need to plan to attend a couple of sessions. If you don't have vertical gear (yet) we can outfit you at the practice. It is also a good idea to refresh yourself after months of not being on rope.

If you are interested, get in touch with Pat or Jonathan and we will try to set something up that is convenient. We do some practice on weekends at Shaeffer Rocks, north of Rouzerville and sometimes we do evening practices at Pat's house. Both sites are good and have their unique benefits □



2008

Cleversburg Sink/Carnegie Activity Summary

prepared by Ken Tayman

January 6

Cleversburg Sink:

The cave is still dry; FCG handed out keys approximately 25 times during fall and early winter

January 27

Cleversburg Sink:

FCG group installed new ladder (\$106). Water depth was about 2 feet at base of the ladder.

February 3

Cleversburg Sink:

Water depth at about 12' or a couple feet above half the ladder

March 1

Cleversburg Sink:

Checked water depth at approx 30 feet. It is way up into the entrance room, putting the top of the new 19 foot ladder under about 10 feet of water

April 22

Carnegie:

Gordy and Dane put in cave register to collect names of visitors

June 1

Cleversburg Sink:

Jonathan Peterson and Ken Tayman checked water level at approx 24 feet deep. While there we oiled the lock and picked up trash and removed small logs tossed into the cave.

August 17

Cleversburg Sink:

Jonathan Peterson and Ken Tayman checked water level at approx 14 feet deep. The top 3rd of the ladder was exposed. We noticed the ladder has shifted a little and will need to be staked down next time the cave is dry. We oiled lock and picked up trash along the trail.

Carnegie:

After checking water in Cleversburg we went over to Carnegie and retrieved the cave register and hauled out 3 garbage bags of trash from along the trail and roadside

August 22

Carnegie: Gordy placed new cave register in the cave just a few feet further into the cave where there is more room for larger groups to sign in.

September 5

Carnegie:

Howard & Diane White installed sign containing guidelines at entrance of cave.

September

Carnegie:

Ken Tayman sent out the first Carnegie update to 20 email addresses representing 250 individual or group participants. Ken Jones negotiated parking permission 1/10 mile west of trail to Carnegie cave.

October 15

Cleversburg Sink:

Jonathan Peterson checked the water level at approximately 7 feet deep.

October 26

Cleversburg Sink:

FCG team upgraded kiosk with new map, access guidance and points of contact (\$100 +/-)

December 21

Cleversburg Sink:

Jonathan Peterson and Ken Tayman checked water level at approx 28 feet deep, very high in entrance room, only tops of three large breakdown rocks, passage to top of ladder under about 8 feet of water.

KIOSK: The tape holding the documents on the board has slipped and they probably need to be tacked up.

January, 2009

Carnegie:

Even though this event took place in 2009, we are providing the information just to close out the count for visitors to Carnegie since the register was placed in April, 2008. During the 10 months from April 22, 2008 to January 15, 2009, there were 500+ individuals or groups of individuals who signed into the register. That doesn't include those who simply didn't register for one reason or another. That is a surprisingly large number of cavers even to those of us who knew Carnegie was getting a lot of traffic.

A second Carnegie update is being sent out in the first quarter 2009 that will go to all of those registered during that entire period. This should include around 40 email addresses, to individuals, schools, clubs, colleges and grottos who have had members in the cave.

Booty in TAG

By Terry McClanathan

During the mid to late 90's legendary TAG cavers Alan Cressler and Marion O. Smith enjoyed an incredible run of modern caving discoveries. First Alan transformed Alabama's Walking Fern Cave from an in-cave 80' pit to a 447 foot deep cave, discovering the spectacular 242' Wdeath hopper Well and a beautiful 229' dome in the process. He soon followed this up by digging a low blowing crawl in another Alabama cave called Frenchman's Pit, which after 500' of belly wallowing in a gravelly stream passage popped out into the top of an impressive 100' diameter pit featuring a 224' freefall rappel, later dubbed Dental Floss Well. Thousands of feet of virgin passage at the bottom of this eventually connected into a large valley cave making the total system one of the longest and deepest in the state. These efforts were eclipsed when Alan lead a small group of cavers through a near sump just inside the entrance of Guess Cave, also in Alabama, to discover a large borehole passage nearly two miles long. Soon nearly five miles of booty was surveyed in this cave.

Not to be outdone by his younger protégé Alan, TAG pitting "guru" Marion O. Smith pushed up two

previously undone waterfall climbs of fourteen feet each in Tennessee's Rumbling Falls, and was rewarded with the discovery of gaping blackness. Marion christened this the Rumble Room. Accessed by an impressive 201 foot rappel, this massive breakdown room proved to be just the terminus of an

immense river passage averaging nearly 100 feet wide and extending for miles. The Rumble Room is the largest chamber east of the Mississippi, and Marion and crew have mapped over 15 miles in the cave.

The secret to all this success is hardly a secret at all. As many cavers have demonstrated, the easiest way to find new cave is to thoroughly push old cave. This is not an exclusive TAG phenomenon.

Consider the Omega System in Va., presently the states largest; the eight to twenty eight mile jump in West Virginia's Hellhole resulting from a six year push by GVKS

cavers; or the grandmother of them all, Lechugilla. Indeed, practically any caver who has been caving long enough has experienced the thrill of being the first to set foot on untrodden ground. All we need do is enlarge that blowing crack, push that nasty low stream crawl, or maybe just move a few rocks out of the way, and we are there.



Terry setting bolts at top of 2nd virgin drop in Death Boulder Pit Cave
Note death rocks right above.
Photo by Todd Roberts

I confess to feeling a bit down this past fall as a result of losing our daughter, so just before Christmas I contacted Marion to see if he was going to be in Tennessee over the holidays. He invited me to join him on a trip to drop some undone pits in two little known caves near his home. He said the caves would most likely remain pretty insignificant, with little chance of finding a deep pit (meaning over 100'), or any going boreholes. He was working on mapping the one, which was proving more complex than he'd first thought, while the other he had just started. He told me that if I wanted to do all the small pits in the 20-60' range that the two caves had to offer, I could maybe get somewhere between 300-500 vertical feet out of them. Sounded like a nice diversion to me.

Todd Roberts expressed an interest also, so the two of us found ourselves enroute to Marion's house in the early morning hours of Dec. 20th. Figuring we would probably be nerdholing all weekend, I made a 4AM stop at Bo Allen Pit near Sparta, Tenn., which was only about half an hours drive from Marion's. Bo Allen was an old favorite of mine, featuring a short walk, a nice 153' freefall, pretty formations, and no mud. It only took us about an hour to bounce the pit, which I assured Todd would doubtless be the high point of our weekend. Then on to Marion's for about an hour's sleep before daylight.

After breakfast, four of us, Marion, Todd, I, and Sharon Jones, all piled into Marion's battered 4WD drive Toyota, "Old Blue". The target cave was called Death Boulder Pit, and was located in Long Bottom beside the Caney Fork River in White County, Tennessee. Marion had been working a number of caves in that area over the past year. He said it had rained over six inches the week before and was forecasting heavy rain for later that day. He expressed some concern that if the river should rise, it could easily flood our 4 wheel access road back into the cove, "trapping" us. But then every outing with Marion tends to be an adventure, so we all decided what the heck and went for it.

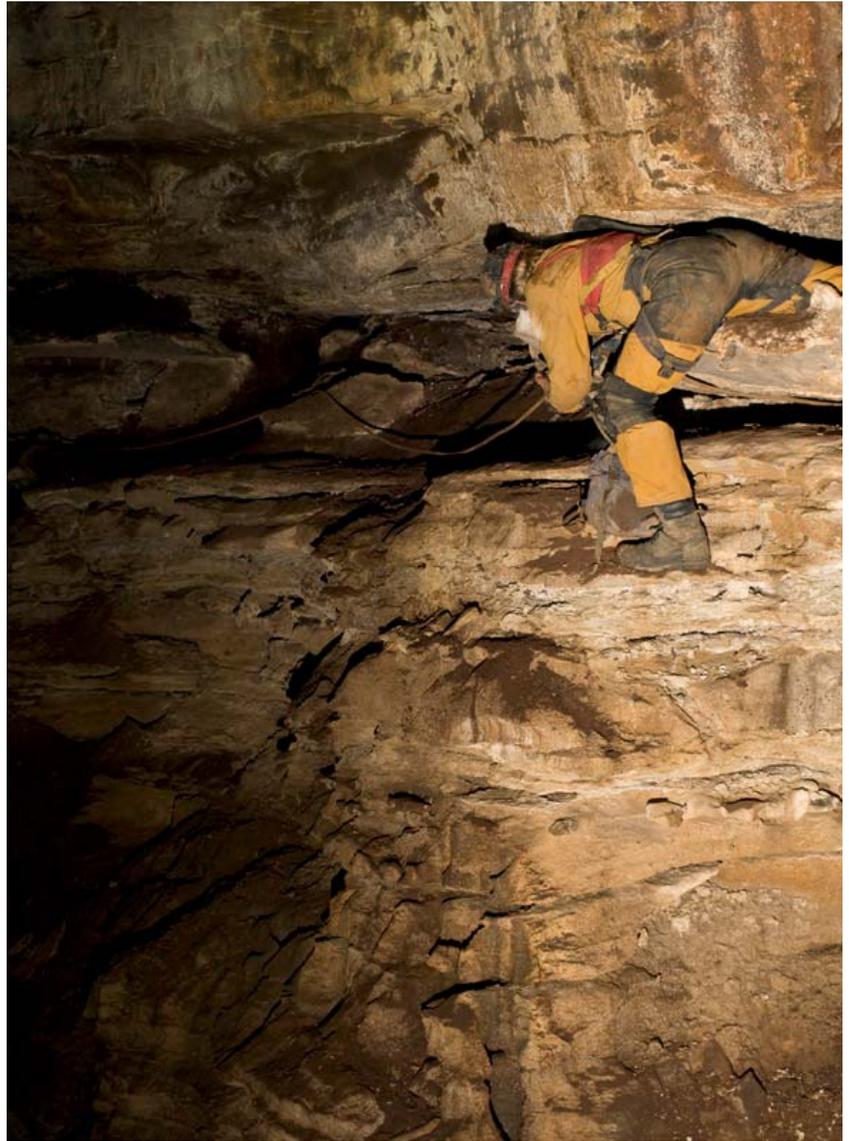
The cave was known, but Marion had traversed around the sixty foot pit (the cave's namesake) just inside the horizontal entrance on an earlier trip and gotten into uncharted territory. He was in the process of methodically checking out several additional

shallow pits he had found. He surmised that one or more of these blowing pits would soon connect into a nearby cave he had taken me to on a previous trip. Some of the pits he had not yet descended because they needed bolting for safe rigging. First we all bounced and I taped the sixty foot pit (65' actually). Then Marion used our rigging rope for the 60' pit to check an obvious lead around to the left side of the drop. While he was doing this, I crossed over the pit to the opposite side, where he instructed me to pick up a previously stashed rope and rig the next drop, beyond which I was to proceed with one of our push ropes up the next drop and set bolts for a descent of an undone pit Marion had found on his last trip. While I was doing this, Marion, Sharon, and Todd checked out two shallow pits which could only be entered by acrobatics while of rope down the pit I had just rigged. My last vision was one of a cursing Marion hanging upside down as he tried to maneuver into the tight slot leading to the two pits. I remember thinking that didn't look like a whole lot of fun, and gladly proceeded onto my bolting assignment.

There were death rocks guarding the virgin pit, so I set a bolt high in a small alcove above the drop in an effort to keep the rope well away from them. By the time I was finished bolting, Marion, Sharon, and Todd had caught up to me. We backed up the bolt to some large breakdown and I began the descent. It was awkward at the top, but then opened up into a roomy canyon, though the drop was only 35 feet. The canyon immediately dropped off into another pit. I had a second short push rope with me, and tying my rack to the end of it, my Stenlight revealed that if I set bolts right above the lip, the rope would just reach bottom. However, Death Boulder was living up to its name. Perched directly above the second pit were two precariously wedged multi-hundred pounders. You know the kind that makes you ask yourself, "What is keeping that up there"? Marion had joined me by this time and we were discussing our options as Todd rappelled. We coerced Todd to pendulum over and give them a few good kicks while he was still safely above to see if they could be dislodged. He managed to move a chock stone which shifted them a bit, but then they seemed to resist his efforts, so we decided they would probably stay put for a while longer. I started setting bolts for the second pit. There was nothing to

rig to, and the entirety of the short rope would have to go into the pit in order to reach, so we decided to tie into the first rope, thus providing a safety line for rigging into the second rope. I set one bolt high to keep the rope from touching the two death rocks, and set another right above the lip in order to put the maximum amount of rope in the pit. We dropped into a nice sized dome and taped the pit at 32 feet. At floor level there was a tight crawl blowing some air. I looked in and declared the crawl too tight, gnarly, and muddy. Todd thought otherwise. As Sharon and then Marion climbed the 32' pit, he managed to squeeze through and found a deeper pit on the other side. His two second rock drop indicated a depth of about 50 feet. The two virgin pits we had just descended were not closing down any leads; they just seemed to lead to more mysteries. Todd reported that there was no natural rigging for the new pit, and I was out of bolts. Except for Todd, none of us were too keen on going through the crawl just then anyway, so we opted to check out one of Marion's other pit leads in a different part of the cave.

Marion's next objective took us back to the initial pit traverse near the entrance. Here a second pre-rigged traverse line took us out over a canyon and then around to the right into a breakdown filled passage. This skirted around another pit and ended at the edge of a drop occupying the entire floor. Marion had left this rigged from an previous trip, so we quickly rappelled in with our remaining two push ropes and taped the drop at 46'. Marion then pointed out a small hole about ten feet up the wall which he said opened into another drop of 47' which lead to our virgin target. Getting up the ten feet into the top of the 47 footer proved awkward. There was very little space to get into rappelling position while straddling the narrow partition separating the drops. I think each of us employed our own individual technique in negotiating this nasty spot. Todd's looked to be the most graceful, or at least he managed it with the least amount of groaning or



Sharon on traverse line around first pit in Death Boulder Pit Cave

Photo by Todd Roberts

cursing. Mine could best be described as a flailathon. Once at the bottom on the other side we rigged our shallow virgin drop with a natural and once more found ourselves on untrodden turf in a short canyon. The only lead was about fifteen feet off the floor through a narrow vertical slit. I removed all my vertical gear, and with a boost from Marion, was able to chimney up and squeeze through. Beyond was another climb-down into a partitioned room with a beckoning high lead on the other side. Air was coming across the top of the room from this lead. What looked like continuing passage could be seen beyond, or was this just the top of another drop. One more lead that refused to die.

After we all climbed out of the shallow pit, Marion suggested that Sharon and I climb first and take our derigged rope to check out the pit we had passed on the way in. He thought it was about 30 feet deep, but said it hadn't been dropped yet. As we extricated ourselves from this little pit series, there was a reverberating boom. We were not really far below the surface. We were miles from any highway. The boom had to be thunder, and it must have been right on top of us. The rope Sharon and I had, was about 90 feet long. I rigged the pit to a stone column splitting the passage and started down. Once in the pit, I noticed a deeper hole in the floor just offset from where the rope landed. I tossed the rope down this and continued. The rope seemed to be swinging freely, so I kept a close eye on it as I slowly rappelled down the narrow shaft. The end was about four feet from the floor. Getting off was no problem, but I figured getting back on might be interesting with my ascending rig. A narrow crack led into a small upward trending dome with no air flow. Just as I was assessing the feasibility of chimneying up this, garbled cries from above brought me back to the rope. "Could I hurry up and climb out of the pit?" I couldn't understand the rest. Everyone sure seemed anxious though.

As I climbed I noticed cool air issuing from a body sized window about half way up the pit. I must have been too focused on the swinging end of the rope and missed seeing it on

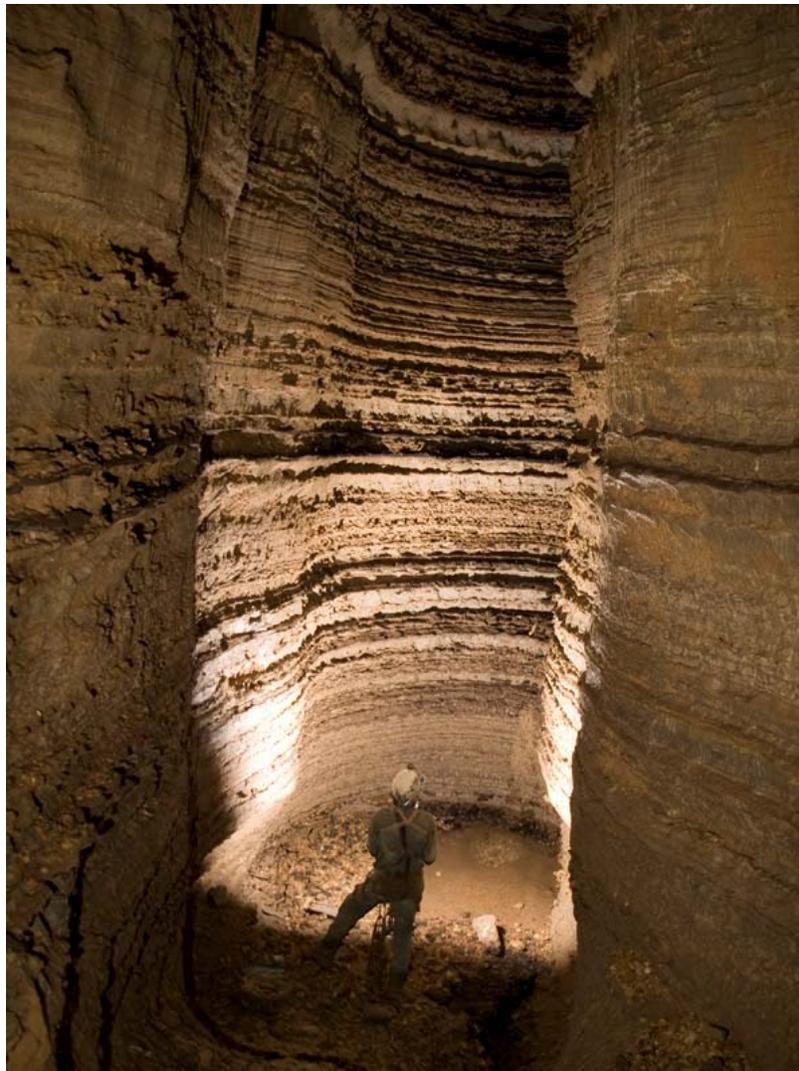
the way down. I tossed a rock through the window and it dropped down a pit which seemed to go deeper than the one I was climbing out of. There was also visible passage through the window continuing on the other side of the pit. Still more mysteries.

When I got to the top of the drop I soon saw what all the fuss was about. Water was pouring into the cave from multiple ceiling fractures. That explained the big BOOM! We had all heard earlier. We were high on side of the cliff so there was no danger of the cave actually flooding, but we all thought of the already full river outside. If it should rise and flood our "access" road that could be very bad. I told Marion what had transpired below. He said the rope I had rigged with was a 97 footer, indicating that the

pit was probably in the 70-80 foot range, making it the deepest drop in the cave found so far. We had already been in the cave about nine hours. The incoming streamlets negated the idea of taking time to tape this new drop. Marion lamented on the fact that it looked like it might take at least three more trips just to finish off the leads we had found on what was supposed to be the mop-up trip to complete exploration of the cave.

Debate over this would have to wait though, for our immediate problem was getting out as quickly as possible. A safe extrication from the cave, off

the cliffs, and out of the cove was uppermost in our collective minds. Dry traverses we had crossed on



Dome at Bottom of 94' pit in Brody Cave.

Photo by Todd Roberts

our way in were now quite slippery where additional ceiling “leaks” had sprung. Extreme care had to be taken. Once outside the cave our retreat was sloppy and ungraceful. We climbed/skidded down the steep cliff face. The bouncy drive along the rough river road through sporadic downpours was nerve-wracking. The four-wheel road had two feet of water in all the low spots. Even so, Marion and “Old Blue” got us back in time for a late Pizza Hut supper in Sparta.

Now you might think the preceding account enough adventure for one weekend, but it’s a long drive to TAG, so I like to make the most of things once I’m there. Sunday morning found us once more winding our way over curvy Tennessee back roads to another of Marion’s recent projects. Brody Cave, in De Kalb County, was previously thought to be just a pleasant walking cave culminating with a small pit near the end. Marion had traversed around this pit to another, which he dropped, only to be stopped by yet another shallow pit, which is where we come in. Sharon had picked up a sniffle from the night before and elected not to cave today, but in her place we were joined by Andy Zellner. Brody Cave also had the advantage of being only three miles from I-40, so Todd and I would have only a short hop to the interstate for the drive home once the days caving was finished.

Preparing for anything, we each carried a rope. The hike was less than half a mile, losing about 200 feet of elevation. Marion said the cave was originally reported as being only about 300’ long to a pinch. A few years back some cavers pushed through the pinch into more walking passage, ending near a 37’ pit some 800’ from the entrance. We all bounced the 37’ pit which dropped into a canyon that became too narrow to follow. Up above, an easy traverse led to a 19’ drop over breakdown into what seemed to be a continuation of the same canyon. Marion had been as far as a narrow pit apparently dropping still deeper into the canyon. While we were checking out the rigging for this, Andy did a hairy traverse further out in the higher level of the canyon. He was able to gain solid footing on a large breakdown bridge, where the passage continued for about a hundred feet before the floor completely dropped into a deeper part of the same canyon. Andy’s traverse did not appeal to either Marion or me. The rope tied at the 19 drop was long enough that Andy was able to

use it to rig a high Tyrolean along his traverse for the more fainthearted (and older) of the group. Isn’t it amazing how fearless you become when clipped into a safety line while traversing slippery, sloping ledges? We all soon joined Andy on the breakdown bridge and were excitedly peering into gaping darkness.

Andy’s drop did seem pretty deep, though the near end was narrow and jagged. This would make for an ugly rappel. Further out on the right wall of the canyon, and about 20 feet down, was a prominent flowstone bulge. From our vantage point the canyon appeared to enlarge considerably below this. It looked like a rebelay bolt set above the flowstone protrusion would make for a nice drop. Marion had warned that it might be necessary to do some bolting in the cave, and while I had used mine up the day before, Andy had some extra with him. I rappelled down to the flowstone, found some good rock just above it, and set a rebelay bolt. From here I could see that the canyon went vertical, and of good dimension to a narrowing about 30 feet down. Rocks tossed through the narrowing fell free for another second before impacting with a resounding echo. Oooh!!! I sent the rest of the rope down the drop and into the waiting void. Thinking that the rope might not reach, Marion sent our last short push rope down to me just incase I needed extra. We were determined to get to the bottom.

The narrow spot wasn’t really very tight and below that was about 40 feet of freefall to the floor. The near end of the canyon was a beautifully sculptured circular dome with a clear pool at its base. The drop taped at 94 feet. Below the landing point a too tight crevice dropped down into deep water. Outside, the valley floor was occupied by a large lake created by one of the TVA dams. The deep water most likely represented the perched water table resulting from this lake. In the opposite direction from the dome, the canyon continued as a high walking passage for about a hundred feet to a short climb-down. Just past this was a deep lake to the caves apparent terminus. Todd did some photography around the dome area. He even found an albino crayfish in the pool. Marion volunteered that Todd’s photographic efforts in Brody’s and Death Boulder from the day before might well be the only pictures ever taken in these two caves.

Granted, neither of the two caves we worked in this weekend will probably ever become popular tourist destinations, but each certainly had their merits. If nothing else, we had the adrenalin rush which virgin cave always elicits. Brody's was actually a fairly pleasant cave overall, and below the 94 foot drop might even be called impressive. We derigged all our ropes and exited after about five hours underground. Once again, many thanks to Marion and Sharon for their hospitality. Todd and I had a great time. □

MAR Business Meeting

February 28, 2009

Spring MAR this year was cancelled due to a lack of a sponsoring grotto. This topic was discussed at the MAR business meeting that was held at Jay Herbine's house in Rutherford which is a suburb of Harrisburg. It was noted that MAR events are getting difficult to find sponsoring grottoes. The suggestion was even raised to limit the event to once a year from the current two that we currently have. The party after the business meeting was held at Dale Ibberson's house at 445 Hale Avenue, and a good time was had by all.

Just four days later (after the party after the MAR business meeting) the caving community was in shock at receiving the news of Dale's passing. The caving community has again lost one of its premier movers and shakers. Dale had been active in many projects over the years and was again embroiled in his work to save Stony Valley from being torn from Pa.'s protected wild areas. He will be sorely missed.

Reported by Ken Jones □

Dale Ibberson Memorial

Email from York Grotto Chair

Dear Members & Friends,

Thank you very much for your messages in response to my updates regarding the passing of our friend and fellow caver Dale Ibberson. I have been collecting them in a file and will present a printed version of them to Judi Stack when the time is appropriate. My wife, Debbi, has asked that if anyone wishes to have their photographs included in a power point presentation that she is putting together that they send them to her at dfjaco@comcast.net

Judi has informed me that the memorial for Dale will be at the American Legion Post 272 at 505 North Mountain Road, Harrisburg, PA 17112, (717) 545-6721, on 20 March 2009 beginning at 4:00 p.m. There will be a buffet spread and a private bar. No official agenda will be followed but memory boards and photographs commemorating Dale's life will be set around the room. Guests may bring their own memorabilia to add to the display or to share with others. There will be no viewing. Dale will be cremated. The date of the internment at Fort Indiantown Gap Military Cemetery is pending. Judi has emphasized that it will be a brief ceremony for family but friends who feel the need may attend.

The obituary will appear on Sunday, March 8th in The Patriot-News, The Hummelstown Sun and the Lancaster, Pa. newspaper. I'll post the link to PennLive.com when it becomes available.

Yours in caving,

Joel Jacobs, chairman

The York Grotto of the NSS □

Cleversburg Sink

The current water level is: **25 feet**

up to old gate
>entrance room
top of 19' ladder
mid-ladder
base of ladder
knee deep
sand room
crawls sumped
dry



checked by:

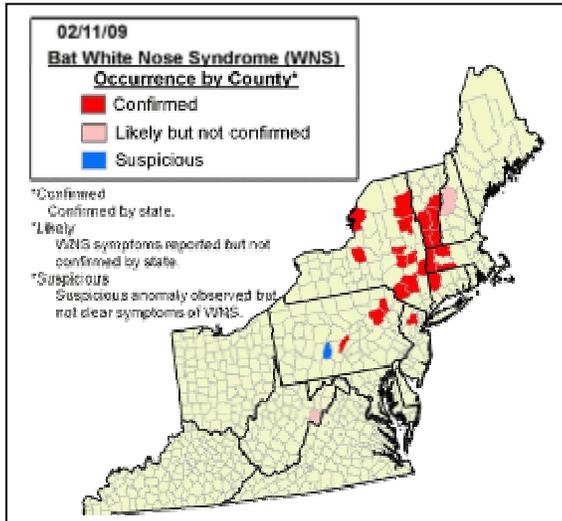
Jonathan Peterson & Ken Tayman on Jan 30, 2009

WNS UPDATES

These are excerpts from various messages and websites in an attempt to keep you current on the status of the WNS.

January 24, 2009

Dave West, NSS manager of the Guilday Preserve, has just closed the preserve due to likely White Nose found on bats in Hamilton Cave, West



Virginia.....Two bats have been observed in Hamilton Cave in Pendleton County, WV that display a fungal presence on their nose area and wings. The bats are not located near the entrance, and in fact are relatively deep into the cave. This has not been confirmed as White Nose Syndrome, but photographs provided show a strong resemblance. Until proven otherwise we will proceed as though it is. We sincerely hope it is not. The Preserve will need to be closed until further notice.

January 29, 2009

Shindle Iron Mine, Mifflin, Co, PA

Batmanagement.com website (includes chart above)

During a January 29 visit to this mine, the first mortalities were noted. About 10 bats were found dead in the water. The majority of the bats had moved to within 150' of the entrance passage, where there are not usually many hibernating bats. Approximately 70% of the bats observed during this survey exhibited visible fungus, which was a dramatic increase from 15% a week or 10 days prior. The prognosis for the bats in Shindle Iron Mine is not good. Mortality rates from other WNS sites suggest of 60%-95% of the bats will not survive the winter. Since Shindle is an access controlled

site, with no visitation the previous two years, some believe WNS at this site may have come from elsewhere. Perhaps it is passed between bats at maternity colonies or during swarming behavior in the fall.□

Subject: Breathing Cave Closed Due to WNS

On Wednesday, February 25, 2009 Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation biologists (Chris Hobson and Will Orndorf) and I entered Breathing Cave and found several signs of an early stage of WNS outbreak. The bats were roosting in their normal areas and most were in typical hibernation states. A few were awake and active with 10% to 15% of the little brown bats showing fungal growths around their muzzles, on forearms and wing membranes. The only mortalities we found involved three eastern pipistrelles. Other species were noticed but did not appear to be affected.

Based on our observations the owners of Breathing Cave have closed the cave. They have also given us the waivers from the metal box, on the tree, in their yard, in an attempt to trace the possible movement of the fungal spores from Breathing Cave to other caves. If you were in Breathing Cave between September 15, 2008 and the present please email me at: caves@htcnet.org with the names of any subsequent caves you visited.

Please disinfect your caving gear according to the decontamination procedures at:

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenosemessage.html#containment>

The Highland County Cave Survey has asked its members to take a short sabbatical from caving until we can sort out the implications of WNS to the north and now to the south of us. I am also asking all those who cave or also pause until we can trace the possible movement of the spores from Breathing Cave. This is a very bad situation and we need your help.

Rick Lambert, Highland County Cave Survey□

Please Support SB 66.

“Stony Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers Act” Amendment

This act would amend legislation enacted in 1980 by UNANIMOUS vote of both houses of the Pennsylvania Legislature (attached). It would provide additional protection for the state’s first Wild and Scenic River Corridor (map attached), located just 10 miles north of Harrisburg and 7 miles east of the Susquehanna River.

The corridor and surrounding 45,000 acre tract are owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission (SGL 211). In addition to over 16 miles of Stony Creek itself, the valley has an even longer Rails to Trails segment, the Appalachian Trail, an 8,000 year old Indian encampment, and remnants of many historic sites from the 1800s.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is reviewing this legislation and is generally supportive.

56 hunting, fishing, and other outdoor / conservation groups with memberships totaling 218,000 have sent letters of support (see other side of this page).

12 local municipalities have passed resolutions or motions in support of protecting Stony Creek Valley (see other side of this page).

Over 9400 citizens have signed petitions in favor of protecting Stony Creek Valley (available upon request).

This legislation will NOT require any funding.

An education brochure produced by the Stony Creek Valley Coalition is also attached.

A CD containing hundreds of pictures showing wildlife, scenery, recreational activities, and historic sites is available upon request.

Please contact Senator Jeffrey Piccola’s office for further information.

Harrisburg Office, Room 173, Main Capitol Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120
(717) 787-6801, Fax (717) 783-3722, 1-888-PICCOLA

FRANKLIN COUNTY GROTTO MEMBERSHIP ROSTER as of March 9, 2009

First Name	MI	Last Name	Address1	City	ST	Zip	Home Phone	E-Mail Address	NSS	Rescue Call Out	CAT	FCG	Thru Year
Richard		Anderson	6571 Buchanan Trail W.	Mercersburg	PA	17236	(717) 328-2318	randersn@pa.net	14660		R	30	LIFE
Donald		Arrowood	437 Ramsey Ave	Chambersburg	PA	17201	(717) 491-1650	darrowood@comcast.net	15433	YES	R	1	LIFE
Tina		Blaik	7036 Hames Ct	Frederick	MD	21703	(301)-788-5506	TinaBlaik@hotmail.com	60789		R	231	2011
Danny		Cumbo	407 Constitution Blvd.	Martinsburg	WV	25405	(304) 283-9631	dannycumbo@yahoo.com	58430	YES	R	229	2011
Barry		Duncan	16 W Green St	Shiremanstown	PA	17011	(717) 731-1163	formations@earthlink.com	24338	YES	R	114	2011
Christopher		Edenbo	4 Hoerner Circle	Boiling Springs	PA	17007	(717) 713-0706	edenboc@diakon.org	58477	YES	R	222	2009
Mark		Guiffre	698 Themar Ct	Baldwin	NY	11510	(516) 546-9312	cricketvass@yahoo.com			A	126	2009
James	A	Hart	233 East King Street, Apt 1	Shippensburg	PA	17257	(717) 532-2437	jahart@pa.net	22080	YES	R	6	2008
Eric	W	Heberlig	3545 Old Hershey Rd	Elizabethtown	PA	17022	(717) 520-9799	ericheberlig@yahoo.com	29855		R	65	LIFE
Christine		Heberlig	3545 Old Hershey Rd	Elizabethtown	PA	17022	(717) 520-9799	kintsy@comcast.net	44657		R	168	LIFE
George	M	Heberlig	3545 Old Hershey Rd	Elizabethtown	PA	17022	(717) 520-9799		46333		F	171	2010
Elizabeth	J	Heberlig	3545 Old Hershey Rd	Elizabethtown	PA	17022	(717) 520-9799		52298		F	205	2010
Jay		Herbein	625 Carbon Ave	Harrisburg	PA	17111	(717) 564-5589	No Email	4750		R	142	2013
Guy		Holbrook	2072 Bergen St.	Bellmore	NY	11710	(516) 679-9045	brenda_holbrook@ml.com			A	206	2009
Brian		Hornberger	222 Moyer Ridge Drive	Manheim	PA	17545	(717)808-5881	bheseeker@dejazzd.com	58105		R	225	2009
Joel	R	Jacobs	2 Locust Hollow Lane	Carlisle	PA	17015	(717)241-5635	joelijacobs@comcast.net	12534		R	216	2011
Kenneth	C	Jones	4446 Duffield Rd	Chambersburg	PA	17201	(717) 267-2669	caseycaver@comcast.net	23311	YES	R	18	LIFE
Kelly		Knepper	435 Pennsylvania Ave	Chambersburg	PA	17201	(717) 267-2416	kneppe@pa.net	44083		R	174	LIFE
Troy		Lewarchick	114 Verchick Lane	N. Cambria	PA	15714	(814) 934-5541	troylewarchick@yahoo.com	58421		R	221	2010
Gordon		Ley	34 N. Miller St	Fairfield	PA	17320	(717) 642-8970	gordylev@embarqmail.com	39089		R	157	2011
Timothy	R	Long	14935 Wrangletown Rd	Mount Union	PA	17066	(814) 542-4482	tlong_geo@msn.com	30877	YES	R	217	2011
Dick		Marzolf	309 Strickler Road	Waynesboro	PA	17268		No Email			A		2009
Terry		McClanathan	20847 Jefferson Blvd	Smithsburg	MD	21783	(301) 797-6535	mcclater@wcboe.k12.md.us	12103		R	78	2009
Kevin		McDonald	464 Brook Circle, PO Box 485	Mechanicsburg	PA	17055	(717) 512-4898	gearhd79@aol.com	36256		R	161	LIFE
Patrick	A	Minnick	14220 Blue Mountain Rd	Waynesboro	PA	17268	(717) 765-0521	patanne@pa.net	20099	YES	R	19	2009
Thomas	I	Mitchell	RD #1, Box 520	Mapleton Depot	PA	17052	(814) 542-2881	No Email			A	35	2009
Lee		Peck	1700 Coldsmith Rd	Shippensburg	PA	17257	(717) 261-5971	reespeck@gmail.com	7264		R	232	2009
Jonathan		Peterson	5406 Kennedy Ave	Williamson	PA	17270	(717) 788-1096	jonpeterson@comcast.net	39657	YES	R	163	2009
Glen		Sarvis	1602 West Lisborn Rd	Mechanicsburg	PA	17055	(717) 766-5003	glensarvis@verizon.net	6112		R	47	2012
Todd		Roberts	231 West Street	Winchester	VA	22601	(703) 599-3860	troberrt.02@gmail.com	48351	YES	R	228	2009
Dave		Scamardela	1858 Lincoln Way West	McConnellsburg	PA	17233	(717) 485-5025	dscamardel@state.pa.us	50958		R	193	2011
James		Schweitzer	112 West Granada Ave. Rear	Hershey	PA	17033	(516) 830-1462	jabschweitzer@yahoo.com	24697	YES	R	57	2009
Joe		Schock	22 Chestnut Ave	Carlisle	PA	17013	(717) 245-9083	kulcherschock@netscape.net	30620		R	125	2009
Miranda		Schock	22 Chestnut Ave	Carlisle	PA	17013	(717) 245-9083				F	208	2009
Michael	E	Scott	29 Old Woods Lane	Boyertown	PA	19512	(610) 369-5093	michaelscott@dejazzd.com	41414		R	68	2009
Paula		Scott	29 Old Woods Lane	Boyertown	PA	19512	(610) 369-5093	paula_scott@fmc.com	41415		F	136	2009
Anne	M	Shepard	14220 Blue Mountain Rd	Waynesboro	PA	17268	(717) 765-0521	patanne@pa.net	39262	YES	F	158	2009
Kerry		Speelman	740 South River Rd	Halifax	PA	17032	(717) 512-9269	kescaver@hotmail.com	47049	YES	R	213	2010
Nick		Stoner	840 Newport Rd	Manheim	PA	17545	(717) 664-3523	stonerm@dejazzd.com	58106	YES	R	224	2013
Kenneth	B.	Tayman	13373 Sunrise Drive	Blue Ridge Summit	PA	17214	(717) 794-2069	ktayman@supernet.com	32074	YES	R	86	2012
Helen		Tayman	13373 Sunrise Drive	Blue Ridge Summit	PA	17214	(717) 794-2069	yfwk@iup.edu			F	119	2012
Steven		Trevitz	8685 Orchard Dr	Mercersburg	PA	17236	(717) 328-5256	mindy@sstrev.com			A	62	2011
Istvan		Urcuyo	1192 Baltimore Pike	Gettysburg	PA	17325	(717) 253-6343	intensekarst@comcast.net	45437	YES	R	226	2009
Theo		Valcis	217 Walnut Dale Rd	Shippensburg	PA	17257	(717) 532-5059	GoldbugLDT@embarqmail.com	44987		R	87	2009
Dane		Wagle	Box 277	Fairfield	PA	17320	(717) 6425865	daswagles@superpa.net	7813	YES	R	277	2009
Howard	C	White	1160 Three Square Hollow Rd	Newburg	PA	17240	(717) 423-6005	raifan@embarqmail.com	33287	YES	R	79	2011
Diane	S	White	1160 Three Square Hollow Rd	Newburg	PA	17240	(717) 423-6005	mtinflwer@embarqmail.com	33288		R	90	2011
Douglas		Wilt	810 Fleshman Mill Road	New Oxford	PA	17350	(717) 479-1204	caver_doug@yahoo.com	58217	YES	R	223	2011



Please Verify all of your personal information and let me know if any corrections are necessary.
 Also, please note the "Membership thru Year" in the right most-column.
 Thanks, Ken Tayman

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

FRANKLIN COUNTY GROTTO



Pat next to large breakdown slab stuck vertically in the mud floor in the “Tufa Room”

Photo by Gordy