

Cumberland Valley Caver

published by

Franklin County Grotto



CUMBERLAND VALLEY CAVER

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

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Cover: Dane Wagle on carbide trip in Goods Cave, Franklin County, PA

Photo by Gordy Ley

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From the editor... I found a cave cartoon on the internet by Roger Brucker, renowned caving author, and when I requested permission to use it, he offered an additional article written by an acquaintance of his, Ergor Rubreck. It wasn't until after I had formatted it and worked it into the newsletter that I realized that it was an anagram for Roger. It is good reading!

Pat is working with ER-NCRC, WNS continues to march westward, VAR Spring Meet in Lewisburg, WV had good FCG turnout and Terry is still tracking down new 100 footers in TAG. We are getting several emails each month regarding access, parking and water levels in Carnegie Cave. It looks like we have been fairly successful establishing and maintaining an email contact list for Carnegie Cave users. Cleversburg Sink is still flooded with 25' of water as of June 10, 2010.

FCG will be hosting the Spring MAR in May of 2011 in Shade Gap. We have made arrangements with the Shade Gap Fire Department to use their picnic grounds, have already arranged permission to visits some of the caves in the area and continue to coordinate activities. It will be a significant change from the Ruritan Park we've been using in Williamson the last several events we sponsored.

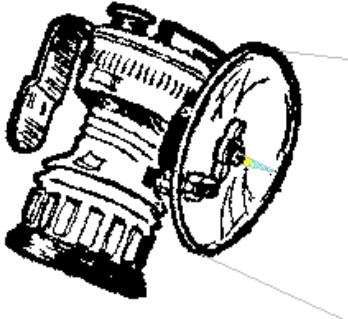
Thanks to Pat, Terry, Don, Gordy, Ken J, Alan, Anne, Jay, Nikki and Roger Brucker for contributing articles, pictures, info, quotes, jokes and scanner support for this issue.

Ken Tayman, Editor

Speleo-Spotlight...

Jay Herbein

NSS # 4750 FCG # 142



My first direct contact with Jay was about 15 years ago when I was doing my first stint as editor. I received a note from Jay, advising that he had received the York Grotto exchange copy of our newsletter but he hadn't received his personal copy. I sent him his newsletter and told him I was happy to find out there was actually someone out there who anticipated receiving their copy.

Jay's primary grotto has always been York, but he has also been a Franklin County Grotto member for 20 years. Our main contact with him has been via the MAR activities. He just recently received recognition from NSS President Birkmeyer (Honorary Life NSS membership) for hosting the MAR annual business meeting at his home for 45 years.

After a two year hitch in the Army (1953-55), he worked in a machine shop for a year and went back to Penn State. It was his rooming house friend, Mike Ziegler from York who introduced him to caving. It was simple then, and cheap to get started in caving. Boots, cotton coveralls, an Army helmet liner, carbide lamp and gloves did the job. His first wild cave was Millheim Cave in April 1958, then Veiled Lady and Aitkin.

For later vertical work, Goldline and cable ladders were the norm with brake-bar rappels and Prusik



Jay Herbein

knots for single line vertical work. He did the Grapevine drop in West Virginia before it was a commercial cave and has done several trips through Hosterman's Pit.

Jay was present at the York Grotto organizational meeting in 1959 and designed grotto bat emblem, which is still in use, made 40 metal car badges and designed the semi-round grotto badge that pairs up with the NSS semi-round badge.

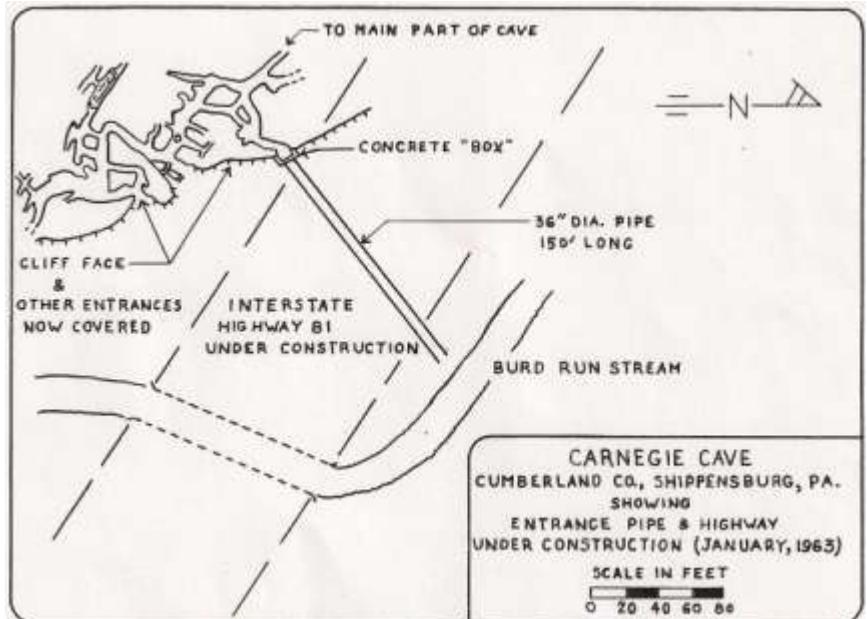
The 1963 NSS Convention at Mountain Lake, VA was one of his more memorable trips. Back in

those days once they set up camp they mostly caved. He did Haynes, Crossroad, Canoe, Giant, Pig Hole, Tawney's, Newberry-Bane, Dixie Caverns and New Dixie Cave. The 130' drop into Pig Hole and walkout was quite enjoyable. A small claim to fame is when he bumped into Bill Stevenson, NSS #1, in Canoe Cave. So he says he has caved with the founder of the NSS.

His first OTR was 1965 at McCoy's Mill, WV. He has been to 40 OTRs and enjoyed them all. Jay says he's now retired from active underground caving at age 76, but he says he can still drink with the best of cavers.



Jay, not sure "when or where", but a while ago



Sketch showing proposed 36 inch pipe that will go under I-81 thus providing a drain for high water and access to the cave.

Jay says one of his accomplishments he is the most proud of is his work in saving Carnegie Cave in Cumberland Co, PA. In 1960 the proposed new Interstate-81 Highway would not destroy but fill would close all three entrances to this cave. Access to the cave would be lost if the Pennsylvania Department of Highways could be persuaded to provide it. York member, Chuck Boster, started the campaign but left the area and Jay picked up the ball. He worked with Dr Stone to develop a strategy. He wrote letters (along with many other notable cavers) urging access by means of a pipe under the highway.

In March 1961, a highways department engineer sent a letter to Jay advising that 200 feet of 36" pipe would be placed under the road at one of the cave entrances..."to drain water that might build up in the cave." This would also allow access.

Recently, Franklin County Grotto has been working with the Southampton Township on access to this cave, and under normal conditions there are between 600 and 750 visits to this cave in a year. Thanks to Jay for the successful completion of this project.

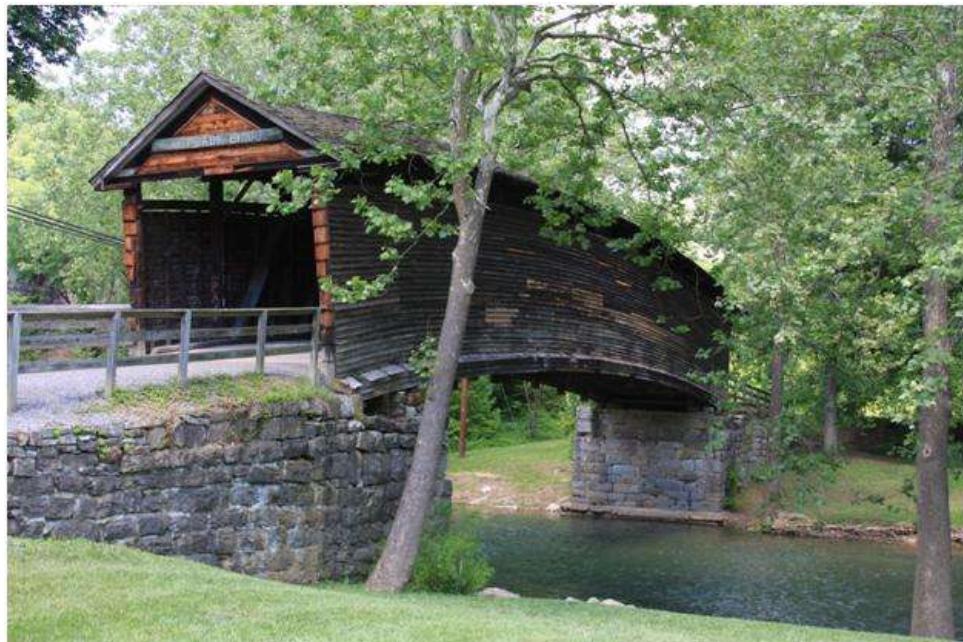
by Ken Tayman

2010 VAR Report

By Gordy Ley

Traveling to Greenbrier County for VAR, I hoped to be as productive as I could with my time. On my trip down, I visited Humpback Bridge. This is a beautiful historic covered bridge with a huge arch to it! Arriving on Thursday evening, I camped at Bubble Preserve with some other early birds, thanks to the gracious invitation and sponsorship of Mr. John Pearson. This enabled me to get an early start on Friday to do some recon on various caves in the area.

My first goal was to visit Martha's Cave in Pocahontas County. I had been close to it years before, but did not go beyond some closed gates at the time. I encountered the owner working in the field this time, however, and off I went, GPS in hand. After crossing several gates and fences, and walking up and down some hillsides, as I frustratedly walked back out to my truck. I took one last opportunity to go *where I thought I should go*, and walked right to it! The cave is surrounded by chain link fence, or I should say, was surrounded. The area had experienced some major flooding the past week and the fence was flattened!



Humpback Bridge, oldest covered bridge in VA, near Covington. Built 1857 Photo by Gordy Ley

The owner's grandson said I should really go across the field and check out a cave with water gushing out of it. 'You'll hear the water before you get there!' he said. I turned back by the house and drove back and parked by the barn as instructed. As I walked back, I was drawn by the sound of rushing water, as promised. I came upon a stream and a waterfall issuing from a beneath a rock face. The stream was only about 100 yards long! The waterfall disappeared back into the ground! What was even more impressive was that as I approached this little stream, the ravine leading to it displayed a bank-full mud line! This little stream had indeed been a raging river

gushing out of the hillside! How I would love to have seen that!

My next stop was Spencer's Cave. This cave is the outflow for the Buckeye Creek system. Again, thanks to John Pearson, I knew where I was going. I took a super hairpin turn into Bob Handley's driveway and drove down closer to stream level. (Some of these things are not readily apparent from topo maps!) Bob was not home but his dog was more than happy to accompany me across the bottomland of Second Creek to exactly the location that I expected it to be. The literature on the cave describes it as having such a vigorous outflow that

it would, at times, blow sawn logs clear across the creek and deposit them on the bank! As I approached the spot, sure enough, there was a pile of logs and trees on the bank opposite! I found out later at supper back at VAR that *this* pile was the work bulldozers and such cutting trees along the stream.

My next stop, appropriately enough, was Buckeye Creek Cave, the inflow to the system. This was easy enough to find, and gave me the opportunity to meet the owners. They voiced their concern of the need for a work project to clear some of the woody debris accumulating upstream of the cave, since everything seems to get washed into this cave.

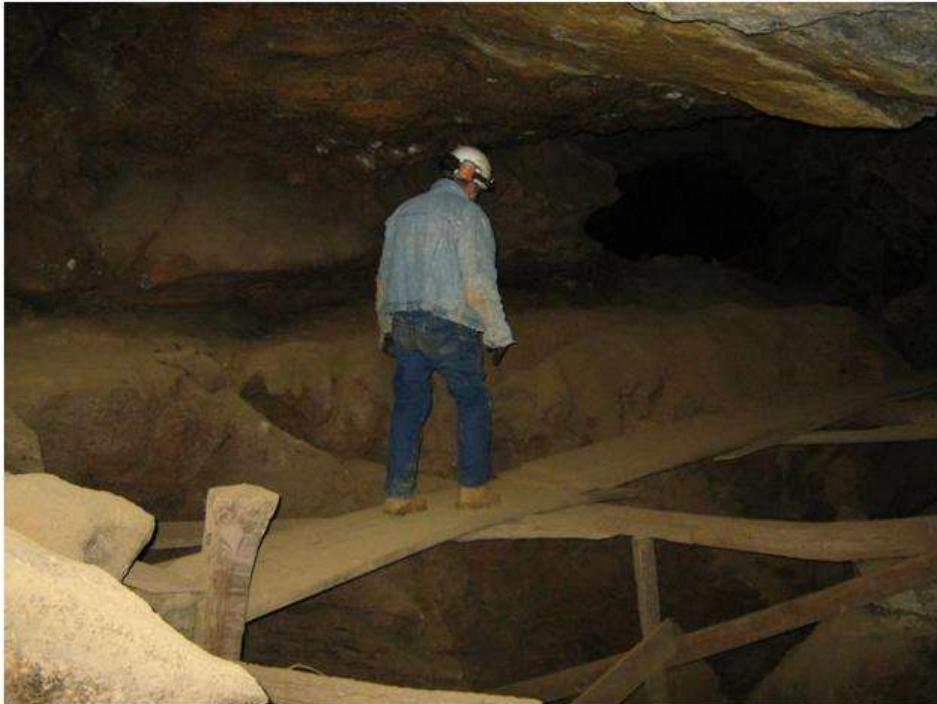


Dane Wagle at the hand powered winch in salt peter works

Photo by Gordy Ley

I then headed to the VAR site to sign in and hook up with Dane. I had been doing some research on Haynes Cave, and had previously contacted the owner for

permission to enter at my convenience. There is a picture in Davies' West Virginia Geological Survey of a flowstone-covered trough in this former saltpeter mining cave. This photo looked exactly like a picture of 'Vertical Bill' Cuddington in 'On Rope'. I had to check this out! It turns out that the trough is no longer in the cave, unfortunately. BUT, there are many beautiful artifacts from the mining days still remaining. The 'bridges' are more like scaffolding, and are as solid as a rock.



Dane walking in salt peter works in Hanes Cave

Photo by Gordy Ley

picture. This is a work in progress -- stay tuned!

On Saturday, I rappelled Grapevine Pit again, trying some new techniques to photograph the upper chamber. These efforts were not as productive as I would have liked. Afterwards, Dane and I did some more recon and visited two entrances to Maxwelton Cave, and Persinger's entrance to Benedict's Cave. We also visited the Freeman entrance to McClung's Cave. This is such a beautiful entrance sink in a field! You can see it from space!

On the trip home Sunday, I visited Island Ford Cave. Inside the cave, traps are set to determine what various critters are frequenting the cave. Near one of the traps, was a wing presumably from a pigeon, with a couple cave salamanders chowing down on it! As I shined my light on them, one actually became aggressive and flared around at me! Interesting! □

Cleversburg Water Level

On Thursday, June 10, Ken Tayman and new caver Ron Emge measured the water in Cleversburg Sink at 25 feet. We then went to Carnegie to retrieve the cave register and picked up a garbage bag of trash. The crawl to rear of the cave was completely sumped. The ceiling of the crawl was about 3" under water

VAR Addendum by Ken Tayman



Pat Minnick on rope, in the not too large entrance to 120' Briar Pit Photo by Nikki Fox

Jonathan and I decided to make this an easy weekend. Early departure, set up camp, socialize a little and try to get on a trip that would be new cave for both of us, but also

not a long tough trip.

There was the treat of severe weather for the entire weekend but other than a few showers it was very good.



Frog Hollow group L-R front: Pat Minnick, Anne Shepard, Ken, Tayman
Rear: Jonathan Peterson, Steve & Jerry Bowen, Danny Cumbo, Gavin Miller, Guide

Franklin County Grotto had a good turnout. Jonathan, Gordy, Dane, Alan, Danny, Pat, Anne, Terry, and the Shock family. Also, Barry had his store set up. I think turnout was over 300.

Since we didn't have a "centralized" plan, we all ended up doing different things. Gordy and Dane checked entrances did Haynes, dropped Grapevine. The Shocks had planned working on conservation project which was cancelled.

Jonathan, me, Pat Anne, Danny and his friend (first time caver Gavin), joined up with Tri-state Grotto Jerry Bowen and his son Steve and went on a guided trip to Frog Hollow.

This is short cave, mostly walking in stream passage with option to take an alternative parallel crawl. We all walked in and some of us did a partial crawl out. A nice two hour trip.

Dinner was good. Phil Lucas and Bill Balfour did a presentation on the Exploration of Culverson Creek and then made a surprise announcement that Mr. Rick Banel, owner of the "Wildcat Entrance" to the 20+ mile Culverson Creek System, had donated the entrance, some surrounding land and walking right of way to the cave, to the West Virginia Cave Conservancy. He then received a well deserved standing ovation.

Sunday morning Pat joined up with Terry, Nikki Fox, Chris Coates, Cory (TSG) and a few others and did Briar Pit. This is a dead end 120' vertical drop, with small entrance. The owner was shuttling cavers across the field to the

cave. Pat said the entrance hole was a little tight but was not too bad. He summed it up as a very nice vertical cave and was definitely worth setting up a future grotto trip.□



Chris Coates doing the drop in Briar Pit Cave.

Photo by Nikki Fox

Orientation to Cave Rescue Class Spring 2010- Harrisonburg, VA.

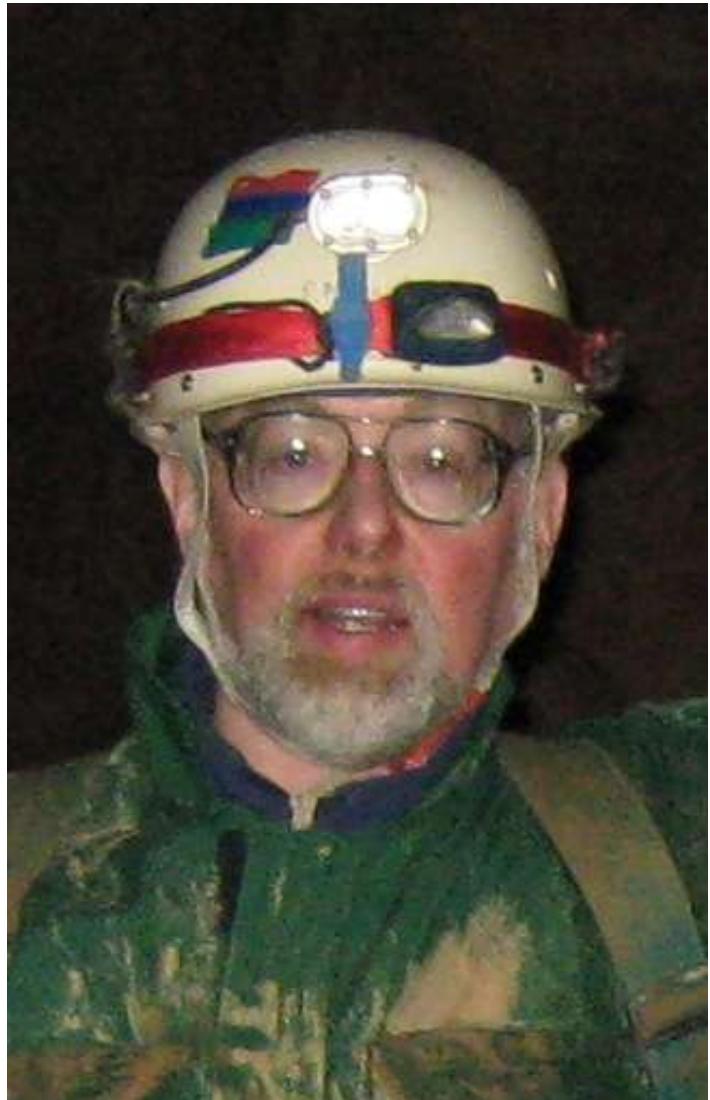
On March 26, 27, 28, 2010, the staff of the Eastern Region of the Nation Cave Rescue Commission (ER-NCRC) presented the introductory class "Orientation to Cave Rescue" at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA and at Fountain Cave in Grand Caverns Regional Park, Grottoes, VA. NCRC is a commission for the National Speleological Society (NSS) and the Eastern Regional is the local branch for Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and North Carolina. The primary mission of NCRC is training; to teach skills and techniques which cavers and first responders will need in cave incidents.

The Orientation to Cave Rescue class (OCR) is a weekend Course – Subjects include Cave Environment, Incident Command System (ICS), the Callout Process, Cave Search, Communications, Medical Emergencies, and extrication techniques such as Patient packaging, and Patient movement. The course has a written test, and mock rescue scenario followed by a de-briefing. Eastern Region supplied the staff, the power point presentations, the printed hand-outs, the hardware (stretchers, blankets, webbing, phones & medical equipment; lots of stuff; a trailer load in fact) and Lunch; all for the price of \$40.00 per student. Two twenty dollar bills don't go very far today, so the price is almost nominal.

Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) hosted the class and supplied the classroom facilities through their Outdoor Instructor, Lester Zook, who also took the course. The site and facilities provided were first rate.

Eastern Region staff who instructed the class are as follows: Jeff Good- Regional Coordinator, Tony Smith –Assistant Regional Coordinator, Scott Davis-course coordinator, Janet Smith-registrar, and in no particular order, the rest of us; Andy Funkhouser, Susan Fisher, Glenn Hugus, Alan Staton, Beka Powers, Tim Barb, Carl Amundson, and myself.

Twenty four (24) students participated in, and completed the course. Of that number, eight were college students from Eastern Mennonite University, a few others were college students from James Madison University (also in



Pat Minnick has been working with ER-NCRC on several of their recent courses.

Harrisonburg), some folks from local fire & rescue squads, some unaffiliated cavers and two guys from Nittany Grotto who drove down from State College, PA.

This class started on Friday evening with registration and gear inspection. In addition to inspecting helmets, lights, cave packs, adequate footwear, and adequate clothing, the gear inspectors, (Carl and I) also ascertained whether the students had adequately decontaminated any cave gear as prescribed by US Fish & Wildlife Service protocols for White Nose Syndrome. After that, the instructors and staff introduced themselves, and the students were shown the NSS cave rescue video, "A Call for Help". Following the video, classroom segments were presented until approx. 10 PM.

The staff stayed until after 11 PM for some additional matters relating to the course. I had made prior arrangements to stay with Scott Davis in Grottoes (within walking distance of Grand Caverns). He and his wife graciously hosted me as they did during the OCR class at Grottoes in March 2008.

At 8 AM Saturday morning, the class room segments resumed. Coffee, juice and donuts were also on the agenda. (Again, paid for out of the forty bucks.) As previously indicated, classroom segments included Cave Environment, Incident Command System (ICS), the Callout Process, Cave Search, Communications, Medical Emergencies, and extrication techniques such as Patient packaging, and Patient movement. If you want to learn the particulars of these subjects, I'll be glad to talk your ear off, but I also suggest that you take an OCR course and perhaps do a little reading. Check the NSS bookstore for "On Call", among others.

At noon, a pizza lunch was provided with soda, juice, chips and apples. Saturday afternoon, after the classroom work and lunch, we moved to hands-on sessions and exercises for the following Patient care and packaging skills:

1. Application of the cervical collar, Oregon Spine Splint (OSS), and /or Kendrick Extrication Device (KED)
2. Patient packaging with the Ferno (Ferno-Washington Model 71) litter and SKED stretchers.
3. Patient Movement with various accepted techniques for moving a LIVING HUMAN BEING in rocky, muddy, low, narrow wet environments. (Note: OCR does not cover Vertical; if a student wants to cover Vertical work, they will need to take NCRC Level One.)

After these exercises, the student s, now divided in two groups, took on the obstacle course. Each group transported one of their members as a Patient, now properly packaged in either a Ferno or a SKED through an outdoor course which simulated a number of cave obstacles. Although sweaty, muddy, damp, and possibly bruised and wet, all students survived. By 6PM, all the Patients were unpackaged, all the gear cleaned and stowed, and the students headed back to the classroom for the" Rules of the Mock"; instructions on Sunday's in-cave mock rescue exercise and the Written Test.

After the Test, there was a short review and further instructions for Sunday's Mock Rescue Exercise. The students were dismissed and the instructors were advised of their roles for the following day. On Sunday's exercise, all the "Lost Cavers" and "Patients" (injured parties) would be distributed in various areas throughout the subject Cave. In this case, the cave would be Fountain, a former show cave on the Grand Caverns property. Staff members who were not "Lost" or "Injured" were given assignments to oversee the various aspects and various Task Forces as "Angels". An "Angel" watches over the rescuers in action, but does not usually direct or advise unless there is a matter of safety. I was assigned to the Evacuation Task Force; others were assigned to the Patients, and to Incident Command,

Entrance Control, Search Task Force, Communications, and Initial Response Task Force. On "Evac", I would likely go into the cave, later than some, as many parts of the situation should have already played out. With staff assignments complete, we adjourned for dinner. After dinner, we again headed back to Scott's house with brief visit to the Grand Caverns campground to deliver left-over pizza to the students camped there.

Sunday morning, Palm Sunday, March 28, 2010

Scott's wife fixed us a wonderful breakfast and we headed to the Grand Caverns Park, arriving at 8 AM. Scott was assigned to the Communications Task Force, so he wasn't going to be first in action either. A quick glance at the respective vehicles in the parking lot indicated that the "Lost Cavers", Injured Parties" and their "Angels" were already situated underground. As per plan, the "reporting party" informed the "rescuers" of the lost, missing, injured and otherwise distressed cavers in the nearby cave.

An Incident Command center was established in the parking lot, while Search Task Forces were sent out to evaluate the situation and report. It soon became clear that all parties were in Fountain Cave and Incident Command was moved to the entrance area where Entrance Control had been set up.

When some of the missing were found, an Initial Response task force with medical equipment and a Communication task force were dispatched, each with their "Angels" tagging along and observing. Most of the team members were glad to get moving because the cave was a good bit warmer than the outside air and those folks left on the surface were being treated to some intermittent rain along with the chilly air. I had deployed a large trash bag over a fleece vest and cave gear and had nestled into a nearby tarp. Others were not so comfortable. Blankets were passed to some of the waiting rescuers and right after the EvacTask Force was sent out, all parties including Incident Command and Entrance Control were moved into the cave.

The Evac Task Force was transporting the Ferno litter, tarps, blankets and webbing and as their "Angel", I was following along. The last "Patient" (Carl Amundson), had been found with a leg injury in a back portion of the cave where the Ferno would not fit. Extrication would require that he be packaged in a SKED stretcher and then moved to larger area and be re-packaged in the Ferno for ease of transport. Most of the rescuers previously assigned to various Search or Initial Response Teams were re-assigned to assist with the Evacuation. Carl was soon packed into the OSS and SKED, and the rescuers began the task of lifting and twisting the package out of the crawlway. I am happy to report that the "package" survived without injury, although at one point Carl's helmet was pushed downward onto his protective goggles to the temporary detriment of his nose. After needed adjustments were made, the Patient was moved onward towards walking passage and then to the Entrance.

By early afternoon, the Patient, all rescuers, and the staff were on the surface; the Mock Rescue had been completed in good time. The Patient was freed from his packaging and the gear clean-up began. Scott provided a pressure washer and all the gear; ER-NCRC gear, students' gear, and staff gear were cleaned and also decontaminated for WNS.

Following the gear clean-up, a de-briefing and recap of the Mock Rescue was held. The students were given their certificates of course completion and all parties headed home. All in all, a successful course and Mock Cave Rescue.□

TAG'S Newest Hundred Footer and Other Adventures

Terry McClanathan



Terry McClanathan:
FCG's TAG vertical nut.

While historically TAG has been synonymous with deep pits, things have been pretty quiet down there over the past decade. I don't think there have been a dozen new hundred footers found in that span. At least six of the new ones have been through the efforts of perennial vertical U. S. caving guru Marion O. Smith. By contrast, within the same time frame, West Virginia's Germany Valley caves have seen a rash of exploration yielding many miles of new survey and over twenty new pits or domes in excess of a hundred feet deep or high. And, another big plus, only a three hour drive and all short walks to the entrances.

Still, when TAG beckons, I answer. Around Easter Marion called to tell me he and some others had just found a new hundred footer by traversing around a pit in a known cave. I was interested, of course, but at the time had other caving plans in West Virginia. About a month

after that Marion called again to inform me that he had just found a virgin cave with a thirtyish foot pit inside. There was a deeper pit beyond this which would require some bolting to assure a safe descent. He wanted to know if I'd set some bolts for him in the new cave. As incentive, the new hundred footer was not far away, so he could take me there. Well, dangling the new hundred footer pretty much sealed the deal, so on the night of April 23rd I soloed the 600 miles to his house, arriving around daybreak on the 24th.

Since his retirement a few years ago from his position as historical researcher for the University of Tennessee, Marion has been scouring the hills daily around his home in cave-rich central Tennessee for new caves. He lives within twenty miles of almost two thousand known caves covering a three county area, but he still manages to make many new discoveries. He told me he had recently turned in about 200 additions to the TCS that he'd found in the last few years. Not surprisingly, many of these had been digs. He said he averages one "real" cave for every fifty nerdholes. Make no mistake, many of Marion's "nerdholes" would be considered decent finds in Pennsylvania or Maryland.

Marion informed me that we would be accessing three different caves from our one parking spot, with a total hike of about two miles. Our first objective would be the cave he had just found. He called it Larry Gerlock Cave. He's been naming his most recent

discoveries alphabetically after folks who were in his high school graduation class (yes, most of us would not remember after nearly fifty years, but Marion is a meticulous record keeper). On his earlier trip Marion had dropped the shallow pit that was just inside the entrance. We used a long rope tied outside the entrance as a safety line to traverse around this pit. Beyond this, breakdown continued steeply upslope to the unplumbed pit. Rock drops suggested perhaps something in the sixty foot range, but some of the tosses seemed to go deeper. Contact caves are notorious for breakdown, and of course, breakdown in virgin cave always requires extra caution. Things just tend to move around a lot with those first bootprints.

The soon to be conquered pit was actually sizable at the top, but a car sized slab of sloping breakdown spanned much of its diameter. A crack just large enough to allow a caver to slip between the wall and the slab provided the only feasible rig point. A waterfall could be heard whispering from the depths below.

Hartselle contact caves are also known for bad rock. Here the Hartselle consisted of friable sandstone. The first good rock was actually in the aforementioned crack. Setting bolts was laborious due to minimal swing room for the hammer and an awkward position where I'd attached myself to the end of the belay line as a safety while working over top of the drop. I took over half an hour to set two bolts which I then rigged with a Y-hang. We also tied into

the belay line as a back-up. Marion even had a brand new rope for the occasion. It made for a nice rappel. After a couple of ledges which I cleared near the top, the drop was free. We taped it at 67', and it ranged from 10-15 feet in cross-section. About half way down it intersected a large canyon. A waterfall was cascading from the wall of the canyon into a second pit. Beyond this was a breakdown bridge and what appeared to be a third pit. The cave was getting interesting.

A climbdown, followed by a steep slope covered with small loose boulders, led to the second pit. We used the excess from Marion's new rope to traverse around the left wall. From the top, this pit appeared to be deadbottom. Our immediate goal became the third pit past the breakdown bridge. The lip of this pit was also well guarded with breakdown, so I chimneied up to place a bolt high above the scary stuff. We backed up by tying into the end of Marion's 150. The third pit was not very deep. We taped it at 29'. It dropped into a large deepened end of the canyon. A small waterfall issued from the far end of this and drained into a meandering fissure passage. A second lead near the rope landing proved to be a climbdown into a small dome room perhaps twelve feet high with no passable outlet. While I looked at this, Marion started into the fissure passage, staying high where it was possible to traverse along on ledges. The bottom of the fissure was tight for about thirty feet but then it opened up. The stream was about 15 feet below. The walls belled somewhat with no handy ledges for purchase. Marion was not comfortable with the climbdown, and even less sure

of the climb back out if he did get down.

Beyond the wide spot the top of the canyon appeared to be blocked by small breakdown. The drop to the stream appeared to be pretty dicey, but when I checked it out I found that the walls were kind of Velcro-like, making for a not too difficult friction chimney. The main fissure pinched off almost immediately, but the stream took a left turn under a low ledge. I maneuvered my way into this and could stay on chert ledges for a couple of body lengths before things got nasty. The passage seemed to continue around a bend, but further progress would require a complete soaking in the constricted stream crawl. I could detect a minimum of airflow. Neither Marion nor I were dressed for this type of caving. Outside it was stormy and cool and we still had a lot of hiking and two other caves to visit. I did not relish spending the rest of the day soaking wet and cold. I suggested that Marion return with some young thin stalwarts to push the wet lead. We dropped the middle pit which we had already traversed around. It also taped at 29 feet, and, as predicted, was deadbottom. Except for taping the three drops, we did no actual survey and exited the cave after five hours of exploration.

Once back outside we took a circuitous route to our next objective about a mile away. We dodged in and out of thunderstorms, and after some floundering on the hillside Marion located the entrance to a long known pit called Well of Souls. It taped at 89' and was pretty nice. Our last stop was the promised new hundred footer. It is in a

known cave called Earth Day. It has a large scenic entrance backed up at the edge of a big sink. It was originally thought to end a little beyond the dripline in a semi-pit of about 30 feet when Marion went there the month before. At that time he was accompanied by Andy Zellner and Philip Rykwalder. Andy led a traverse over high ledges, bypassing the 30 foot pit, to discover going cave at the top. A breakdown filled passage lead to the top of the deep pit. Marion said they had already taped the drop at 100.1 feet but he wanted to re-check it since he wasn't exactly sure where Andy had placed the tape at the top. I suggested we let it go as originally taped(I certainly did not want a repeat of Ross Reason, which is a long-known Tennessee hundred footer that Marion had recently re-measured at 95', forcing me to lose a hundred footer and re-adjust my master list). Marion prevailed, though, and our second taping turned out to be 100.2' so all was well. It was a shear clean drop, averaging about 10-20 feet in elongated profile. Not a bad pit at all for #543 on my personal hundred foot pit list.

There wasn't much else to the cave. We each bounced a 33 footer which we had to traverse around to reach the deep pit. It was about dark by the time we made it back to Marion's truck. Next day we spent in a cave I'd been to years before, with Marion giving me a tour of some of the internal pits. Finally the 600 mile drive back to Md. on Sunday evening. A few nice pits, some virgin cave, and a new hundred footer..... All in all a productive weekend. As always, many thanks to Marion and Sharon for their hospitality.□

Fantasy Land Owner Appreciation

March 31, 2010 By Ken Tayman

Franklin County Grotto members thought it would be appropriate to show our appreciation to Max “Bugger” Baer, Fantasy Cave land owner, for allowing us to explore and map his cave, by framing a large scale map and giving it to him.

The problem was that we were way behind schedule on getting the final copy of the map and didn’t want to give him another “draft” copy. We wanted it to be a map that he would be proud to show his family and friends.



Ken Jones presenting map to Bugger , Fantasy Cave owner. *Photo by Don Arrowood*

Finally, after two years of cartography work we received the map from Todd Roberts, who now lives in New Mexico.

You know how it goes. Lot’s of people suggest good ideas, but the actual project kind of slows down to a creep. The conversation dies out. Nothing is done for another month. However, within days of receiving the map, we got things moving.

Several members had a hand in this project: obtaining the frame (minus glass and back), printing a map that would fit the frame, going through many old computer files and

selecting four color pictures of landmark formations, writing captions, toss in a few ideas from different individuals as to what it should look like, pile all the pieces together and then drop them off at Dane’s and ask him to come up with the missing pieces and assemble it.

The final product is an excellent framed map (2’x3’) which was presented to Bugger on March 31, 2010 by Ken Jones, Don Arrowood and me, Ken Tayman.

PS: Bugger’s last comment was he’d be taking down the poster of the Harley and hanging the map instead. □

ERGOR'S WNS ALTERNATIVE

By Ergor Rubreck

Bats in several states are dying by the hundreds of thousands of WNS (white nose syndrome) and nobody knows the cause. Dozens of cavers have urged that I curtail my own intensely dangerous and exciting wild cave exploring adventures until the cause and cure are found. Others have urged me to defy the pleadings and plunge into cave willy-nilly and hither and yon until it can be definitely PROVED that Ergor Rubreck in person is totally responsible for spreading WNS.

I thought seriously about dipping my cave gear and my entire body in Clorox, 409, Lysol, and Listerine before heading underground. I finally did so, at enormous expense, I might add, because I believe in taking baths, not showering. However, I decided that conformity **or** defiance is short-sighted. Instead, here is what I have decided to do:

Basement and cellar exploration is my alternative. My own basement has seldom-visited nooks and crannies. Nobody living has looked behind my furnace since it was moved during a remodeling in 1987. I looked and discovered a plastic mouse trap containing a mouse (or bat?) skeleton and a little fur. When a leaking water heater was replaced in 2008, I did look behind it and found a mountain of dog hair left over from grooming my four Standard Poodles. Since I have the most expensive Sten light, climbing gear, and knee pads, I'm able to adapt these specialized tools to basement and cellar exploration.

I do not own a wine cellar, but I called on the proprietor of the *Chez Ritz* French restaurant in town. I asked if I could explore his wine cellar and in exchange make a cellar map. He thought that my rummaging around in his cellar might contaminate the wine somehow. I assured him I had disinfected all my clothing, gear, and self in Clorox and Lysol. He did notice that I smelled funny, and that was the contamination he was concerned about. I said I'd apply deodorant to everything and show up ready to investigate the following Saturday.

The dust and cobwebs in the wine cellar were unlike any cave I have visited. Thank goodness I brought my Swiss Army knife with its corkscrew, for I was able to investigate several bottles of wine before the sommelier showed up. He demanded to know the origin of the purple stain around my mouth. I thought fast and told him it was PMS (purple mouth syndrome) and launched into an explanation of WNS and its possible parallel with PMS. He ordered me to leave his cellar immediately, totally unsympathetic with my explanation. As I hastily left, he yelled that PMS is a woman's problem.

My next adventure was to approach the manager of Macy's in the shopping center near where I live. I volunteered to explore their bargain basement at no cost and to prepare a map of that space. "What for?" he demanded. I told him that basement maps are quite rare and that few department stores had such a document to aid shoppers, help in scientific studies, and heighten environmental appreciation. He said OK.

I spent several nights making a compass and tape survey of Macy's basement after hours. When I went to plot the survey, which failed to close by a larger error than I am prepared to admit, I concluded that electrical interference had skewed all the compass bearings. In short, I had made an inaccurate and useless survey from which I drafted a beautiful but useless and inaccurate map. I decided that if I framed the map the manager might think it was a valuable, if unusual, portrayal of the layout of the place. He must have appreciated the final appearance of my map because he told me, "Never come back."

What I went looking for next was a basement I have seen in many movies and TV shows. It is filled with pipes and galleries, valves, dripping water, and very few light bulbs. In these entertainment programs the bad guys are always lurking with automatic pistols, and the good guy (or girl) is either trying to escape or find the bad guys.

A third scenario is where the bad guys have an innocent prisoner they intend to kill, and the good guy must find the prisoner among the pipes and nail the baddies before they terminate the victim. Gunshots in those basements have a menacing echo.

The only basement like that was our local sewage treatment plant. I called on the Superintendent and explained that I was a skilled and intrepid cave explorer, a paid-up member of the NSS and hence trustworthy, and could I make a map of his maze of underground pipes? I explained that such a map would be useful for finding bad guys hiding in his basement and for directing good guys on where to look for innocent victims.

He made an unkind personal remark about the purple stain around my mouth as he unrolled a diagram of all the piping in the place. He also asked what law enforcement branch I belonged to. I think he turned down his only hope of victory over the bad guys when he showed me the door.

To date, I have not found quite the challenge, danger, and adventure I seek in basement and cellar exploration as an alternative to caving. But I am determined to keep looking. Caves are not easy to find and neither are the alternative places of mystery and thrilling underground adventure.

Do you think Lestoil can remove wine stains?□

Cave Conservation Motto

*Take nothing but Pictures...
Leave nothing but Footprints...
Kill nothing but Time...*

Culverson Creek (Wildcat Entrance) donated to West Virginia Cave Conservancy

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Wild Cat entrance to Culverson Creek Cave. This is the easiest and most popular entrance into the 20 plus mile long system.

Rick Bantel donated close to an acre surrounding the entrance and a walking right-of-way from the gate along Williamsburg Road in downtown Unus. Rick was honored last night at the VAR as "2010 Landowner of the Year"



"I brought them to leave in the cave."

Killer in Bat Cave

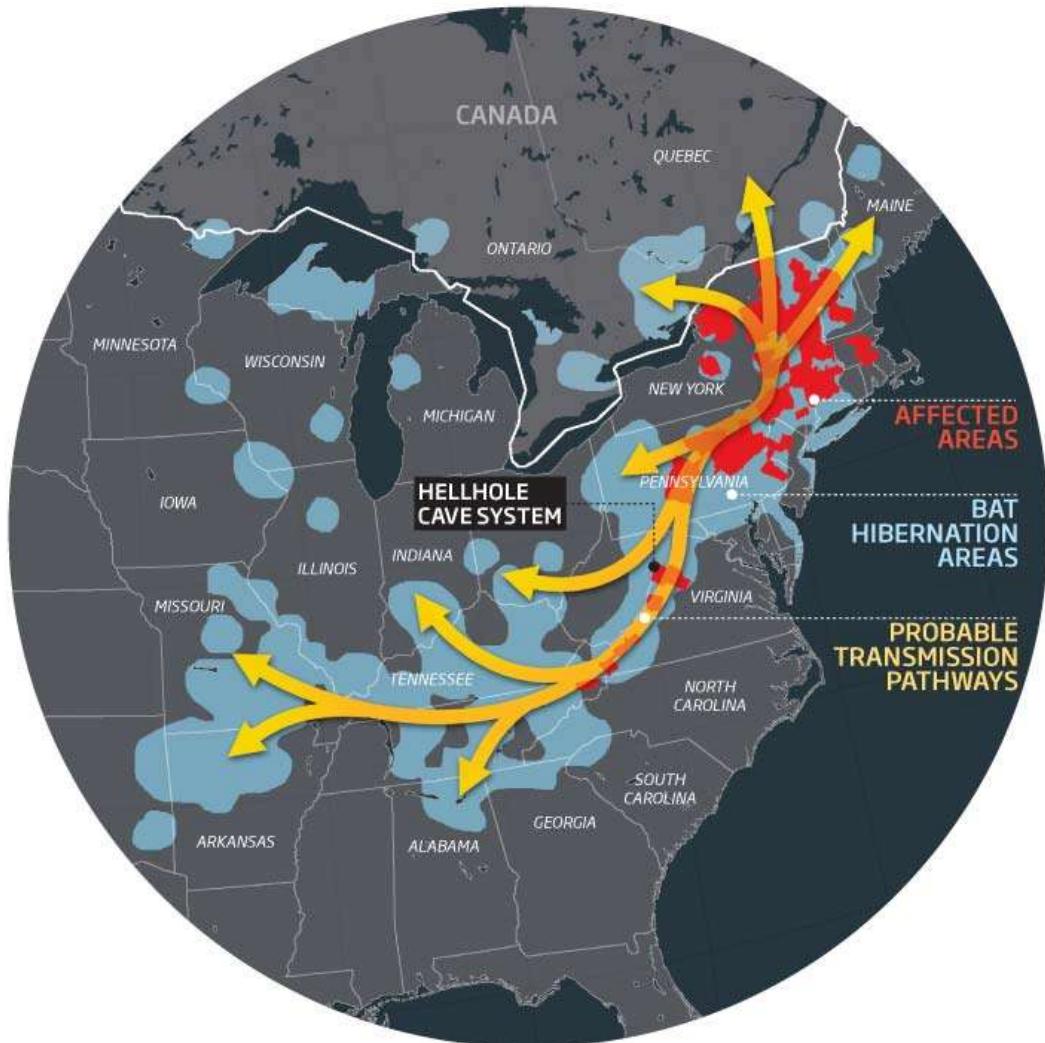
CORPSE upon corpse they lie, a carpet of emaciated, fungus-ridden carcasses. Where once healthy animals hung in slumber from the cave roof, now there is a mass grave on the floor. America's bats are in crisis.

A fungus, *Geomyces destructans* is the prime suspect and the focus of an intense research. One theory is that the fungus is killing bats indirectly, by disturbing their hibernation. When bats hibernate, they usually wake every 15 to 30 days to urinate, drink and mate. Those with WNS rouse every three or four days and dangerously deplete their fat reserve.

Spreading like the plague

White nose syndrome has killed at least 1 million bats in the US since it was first spotted there, in New York state, four years ago

©NewScientist



For a color version of this chart, check FCG Website at www.karst.org/fcg and go to newsletters page

Preliminary studies suggest it is transmitted by physical contact between bats during the autumn "bat swarm", when hundreds of thousands of the animals gather outside their hibernacula to mate and feed.

Hazel Barton at Northern Kentucky University is trying to develop a fungicide that will kill the fungus without harming the bats or cave ecosystems. They have tested almost 100 antifungal compounds of which the most promising candidate kills the fungal spores on culture plates and does not harm healthy bats, but it does not seem to cure sick ones. □

Parker Cave

May 07, 2010

Please be advised that a local cave, Parker Cave in Cumberland County, PA has been physically closed by the land owner. A recent visit with the owner by a FCG friend doing some research for a cave video was shown the former location of the entrance. The owner told him he had placed large boulders over the opening, then small rocks and then dirt. He is now farming that area. (Ken Jones)

WNS Marches Westward!!

Edited from various CaveList Emails

Geomycetes destructans in Pike County, Missouri

April 19, 2010

Missouri Department of Conservation reports that lab cultures confirm Geomycetes destructans on the Missouri side of the Missouri/Indiana border.

"MDC found the first signs of the fungus in Missouri in a privately owned cave in Pike County, confirmed by laboratory results on [April 13](#). One little brown bat was found with incipient fungal growth on its wing, but it was otherwise healthy."

WNS is in Oklahoma

May 19, 2010

WNS has been found in a Myotis velifer colony in western Oklahoma. This crosses the eastern/western flora fauna line of the United States. This is grave news because the cave Myotis is a very robust species and is the prolific bat in western Oklahoma gypsum caves. There are very large colonies found across the western half of the state.

This jump shows a very large gap from eastern Missouri to western Oklahoma, with a question as to the method of transmission. Myotis do not frequent eastern Oklahoma, and Gray bats do not frequent western Oklahoma. There are no caves that both species are found in or share.... and the space between the closest roost sites is several hundred miles.□

"Quotes" of the Quarter

"IT'S ANOTHER BUCKET OF ROCKS"

PM TO KT @ DIG

"IT IS WHAT IT IS"

AS SUMMARIZING CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

"I'M RETIRED FROM ACTIVE UNDERGROUND CAVING..., BUT I STILL DRINK WITH THE BEST OF THE CAVERS"

JH TO KT IN INTERVIEW



Do you know which local cave entrance this is??

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

FRANKLIN COUNTY GROTTO

