

Central Connecticut Grotto

Underground Movement

June 2004



Cave Formations – Waipuna Cave, NZ. Digital Photography by Jansen Cardy

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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

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

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

CCG Meetings:

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

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

Meeting Directions to HRP Associates:

From Waterbury direction on I-84 traveling East:
Take Exit 34 (Crooked Street). Turn left at the end of the ramp. At the next light, take a left onto Rte 372 (New Britain Ave). Proceed straight through the first light. Immediately after the second light, turn right into the first driveway by the HRP sign.

The front door is on your left, ring the doorbell and when you hear the door buzz - go upstairs.
- From Hartford direction on I-84 traveling West (or Rte 72 traveling West):

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

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

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

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

Dues:

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

CCG Website:

The Grotto website is: www.ctcavers.org/

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

NSS Information:

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

National Speleological Society
2813 Cave Avenue
Huntsville, AL 35810-4431

Voice: 256-852-1300
Fax: 256-851-9241
E-Mail: nss@caves.org

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

Calendar of Events:

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

June 2004

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

June 19th – 26th: National Cave Rescue Commission(NCRC) - 2004 Cave Rescue Operations and Management Seminar held at the Gerdon Youth Center, Corydon. Indiana. [See their website for more details.](#)

July 2004

July 12th – 16th: NSS Convention Held in Marquette, Michigan this year. [More information](#)

July 19 - Tuesday: Monthly Grotto Meeting at the summer location in Southington. Meeting opens at 6 pm, with formal meeting at 8 pm. Members will be sent directions and non-members may call Norm Berg (860-621-2080) for directions and details. Vertical practice area (bring climbing gear), also grill setup (bring your own food/drink).

August 2004

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



The next CCG MEETING will be held Tuesday, June 15, 2004 at Norm Berg's house at 8:00pm. Directions [link](#).

NEWSLETTER CORRECTIONS and RELATED ITEMS:

April Minutes: At the May meeting the minutes were asked for a correction pertaining to the status of the Clarksville Cave Purchase. The correction was changing Clarksville from a "has been purchased" wording to an "agreement to be purchased."

Future trips:

June 31st – Aug 22nd – Ukraine Caving Expedition For additional details contact Chris Nicola; Phone (718) 204-8373, chris@uaycef.org

May 18, 2004 Meeting's Minutes

Secretary's Report – (Cheryl Kenez) minutes approved after correction.

Chairman's Report – (Bob Simmons) no report, but said congratulations to grotto for donating over \$1000.00 towards the purchase of Clarksville Cave. Carl Carmony said at the NRO someone donated or pledged \$10,000.00. \$500.00 was raised from the auction and it is estimated that between \$37,000.00 and \$42,000.00 was raised all in all.

Treasurer's Report – (Norm Berg) we have \$1378.22 in the bank as of 4/02/04.

Membership – (Laura Ritter) no new members

Communications – (The Jeff) not here yet.

Safety – (Doug Truitt) had not heard of any problems, but will write an article for the newsletter about "unconscious on rope scenario" after the discussion was brought up on the floor.

Conservation-Newsletter – (Carl Carmony) when the Clarksville purchase is complete, the NCC will want members to spend the weekends there as stewards. They have someone volunteering to train the stewards. The newsletter is going great.

Vice Chair – (Steve Adams) wants to schedule a planning session.

Past trips

Bob Simmons lead OFMC2 (Old Fat Man Caving #2) to West Virginia. They visited Buckhole Creek, Borehole and did some entrances to Culverson Creek. Doug Truitt lead a trip to Morris Cave after the last meeting.

Bob Jacobs, Chris Beauchamp, Gary Burns, and Ray Keeler went to Lechuguilla to do the Human Impact Survey.

A group visited Bentley's during the NRO and scared a group of four stoned youths.

Chris Beauchamp and others went to the MAR and did Pen Aqua cave.

Upcoming trips

Mystery on Saturday if we get the proper key.

Mark Lucas and scouts will go to Schoharie and Clarksville.

Lech- the next trip is in the background.

June 19th-the NCC Board meeting at the Cabin.

Our guest speakers are Ralph and Scott Welch and they are having a contest for stories in different categories on fearful moments during caving. The three best stories will go into the newsletter.

Meeting adjourned to give the floor to them at this point.

Many thanks to Jansen Cardy for submitting the Volunteer Value Report (Next Page) to the UM for publication and historical reference.

Volunteer Value Report - Central Connecticut Grotto of the National Speleological Society

Project Title: Resource Impact Mapping, Chandelier Ballroom, Lechuguilla Cave Agency: National Park Service Project Dates: May 9-12, 2004

Worksheet 1 – Participants, Travel, & Supplies

<i>(name)</i>	<i>(city)</i>	<i>(state)</i>	<i>(mileage)</i>	<i>(travel time)</i>	<i>(arrival/departure dates)</i>	<i>(supplies)</i>	<i>(cost)</i>
Ray Keeler	Glendale, AZ		-	12	5/7/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
Mark Andrich	Ballwin, MO		2074 (driver)	35	5/8/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
Chris Beauchamp	West Haven, CT		-	30	5/7/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
Gary Burns	West Haven, CT		-	30	5/7/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
Bob Jacobs	Ashford, CT		-	30	5/7/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
Jansen Cardy	Rocky Hill, CT		-	30	5/7/04 5/13/04	food/batteries	\$ 206
<i>Total - 167 hours</i>							<i>Total - \$1236</i>

Worksheet 2 – Tasks & Work Hours

<i>(name)</i>	<i>(hours worked)</i>	<i>(group supplies and expenses)</i>	
Ray Keeler	40	Airfares: \$117 + \$278 + \$278 + \$368 + \$368	\$1409
Mark Andrich	40	Car rental \$260 + Fuel: \$44	\$ 304
Chris Beauchamp	40	Survey supplies and copies:	\$ 35
Gary Burns	40	Water filter:	\$ 109
Bob Jacobs	40	Stove fuel:	\$ 15
Jansen Cardy	40	<i>Total - \$1872</i>	
<i>(project preparation and documentation)</i>		<i>(task categories)</i>	
Ray Keeler	80 hours	impact mapping, survey & cartography, resource inventory	
<i>Total work time</i>	320 hours		

Worksheet 3 – Project Totals

<i>Total volunteer vehicle mileage @ 32.5 cents/mile</i>	2074 x 32.5c	\$ 674
<i>Total volunteer travel time @ \$10 per hour</i>	167 x \$10	\$1670
<i>Total volunteer work time @ \$10 per hour</i>	320 x \$10	\$3200
<i>Total cost of volunteer supplies/expenses</i>	\$1236 + \$1872	\$3108
<u>Total volunteer value for this project</u>		<u>\$8652</u>

The Right-Handed Frog

By Jansen Cardy

It has come to my attention that many right-handed vertical cavers have been persuaded into using left-handed ascenders with their Frog systems. They've been told its "dangerous" to use a right-handed Petzl Ascension in conjunction with a chest Croll. In my opinion, this is a misleading statement.



The main argument condemning the right-handed Ascension is that jamming the Croll up against it means not being able to access either cam (see figure 1). Simply lifting the feet up will allow the Ascension to be pushed up the rope, making both cams easily accessible. However, if the Ascension is jammed against something that stops it being pushed up, and the Croll is jammed against the Ascension, the cams will be difficult to open anyway – regardless of which ascender is used (see figure 2). You need to lift an ascender up slightly in order to move the cam. To thumb the cam when a right-handed Ascension is "in the way", simply reach through the handle. Of course, it's better to avoid this situation completely by looking where you're going, and by adjusting your Frog system to leave a small gap between the cams of the two ascenders.



Another argument against right-handed ascenders arose because the safety tether (cows-tail) has to cross over the rope in front of you to connect on the left side of your seat maillon. Not true (see figure 3). The attachment point on both left- and right-handed ascenders usually sits in line with the rope. With the use of a small maillon, my tether stays neatly out of the way on my left of the rope (which is to the right as you look at the picture). Perhaps there are more reasons to discredit the right-handed ascender. I welcome

comments from anyone who may have experienced problems specific to a right-handed ascender, not related to hand or finger dexterity. But for now, I will continue to advise new vertical cavers to start with whichever handled ascender suits their dexterity. And if that doesn't feel right, try the other one.



In summary, I believe if you are comfortable with your Frog system – leave it alone! I have spoken with several right-handers who use left-handed ascenders because it feels more natural. That's fine! Just don't dismiss the right-handed ascender for the wrong reasons. Each year, the Petzl catalog continues to show the Frog system using a right-handed Ascension with a Croll. And after 15 years, my Frog system has undergone many changes – but it still has a right-handed ascender. 🐸

Conservation Corner

On May 29th, 2004 I had the pleasure to enter Mystery Cave on the cave's first reopening for the year. Many of us experienced the 'New Discovery' passage for the first time – truly a site to behold in the North East!

However, on the way to the Heaven and Hell passages many new - erm, how shall I put this? - "Human deposits" were left on the trail. At least a dozen such deposits were left on the trail itself. We need to safely remove these wastes and restore the areas as much as possible to their natural state without inflicting more damage to the cave itself. Fortunately, these infractions are not in areas that are too fragile. Unfortunately, we cant use harsh chemicals to clean the areas as this could effect other areas of the entire cavern.

I shall be doing my homework and will investigate the manner to best clean up this mess:

- 1) for the safety of those volunteering to help clean it up (myself included)
- 2) to minimize the cleanup's impact on Mystery Cave
- 3) to ensure that those who come behind us do not become residually contaminated from passing through the area after the cleanup is completed and
- 4) leaving signage, if possible, informing travelers of the necessity to carry out whatever you carry in.

It probably wouldn't be a bad idea to scan the waterway for garbage and batteries during the next trip, too.

While in Mystery Cave I found a nonworking 12V flashlight, food wrappers and a large plastic bottle cap – all of which I carted out. Since the lock has been changed, and only those

grottos on the New York DEC access list have keys, perhaps this vandalism will end.

In other conservation news, the Lechuguilla Human Impact Survey Report is nearing completion and an article should be ready for the July issue of Underground Movement.

Cave Softly,
Carl Carmoney
Conservation



Fear of Caving Article Competition

The Fear of Caving article contest is still going on. Submit your article to Ralph Welsh at rswelsh@mail.com. Deadline for submissions is: July 19, 2004.



IMPACT MAPPING IN LECHUGUILLA BREAKS NEW GROUND

Brief By Jansen Cardy

Last month, five members of the Central Connecticut Grotto spent 72 hours in Lechuguilla Cave doing volunteer work. In an expedition led by Ray Keeler, the Chandelier Ballroom was sketched in detail to show the floor impact from human traffic.

The result is a color-coded map, designed to assist the National Park Service with future management of the cave. The color designations are yellow for pristine, green for light to moderate impact, red for heavy impact and trails, and no color for areas that were not impact mapped. In addition to Ray, a second park-approved sketcher Mark "Elvis" Andrich joined the group. Elvis is from St. Louis, and was the only non-CCG member on the expedition. The remaining workers, all first-timers to Lechuguilla, were Chris Beauchamp, Gary Burns, Jansen Cardy, and Bob Jacobs.

The Chandelier Ballroom is located 6 hours in from the cave entrance, over a distance of two horizontal miles and down 850 vertical feet. It's a very scenic journey, despite the challenges. The temperature is a constant, sweaty 68 degrees and the average pack weighs 40 pounds. There are 22 ropes to negotiate, ranging from horizontal traverses to the 150 foot straight drop at Boulder Falls.

The group spent 3 nights at Big Sky Camp and commuted about 30 minutes to and from the Ballroom each day. Mapping of the Ballroom was efficiently completed in 2 days, mostly due to the

skill that Ray and Elvis have for detailed cave sketching. Some difficulties were encountered trying to locate original survey markers, and several stations had to be resurveyed. The stations were then used as a base for the impact mapping sketches. Elvis also discovered and mapped a small alcove off the Ballroom, adding a grand total of 60 feet to Lechuguilla's known length of around 112 miles.

It is park policy that Lechuguilla be kept as clean as possible to minimize bacterial growth. To help ensure minimal impact, all cooking and eating is done over a plastic bag or ground sheet. Cave water from designated places can be used for drinking, but any kind of swimming or washing is prohibited. All solid waste, along with most pee, must be carried out of the cave.

As a result of this impact mapping expedition, future work in the Chandelier Ballroom could include floor restoration and trail modification. The Park expressed interest in starting similar projects in other parts of the cave, along with the periodic re-mapping of impacted areas.

Ray is credited with being the first to propose such a project in Lechuguilla Cave. He invited CCG members new to project caving along with him, giving them a chance to learn new skills while working to benefit the cave. The group is indebted to Ray for allowing them this opportunity.

A detailed trip report will follow in next month's Underground Movement.



Speed Caving Clarksville

By Steve Janesky

Just wanted to point out, that it is possible to enter the Ward-Gregory entrance of Clarksville Cave and exit the sump entrance faster than others can walk to it on the above ground trails. Ken and I proved this last week during a time constrained trip there before the HHG monthly meeting. We had brought a friend and co-worker of Dave's, that he'd taken once before to Schoharie Caverns a year before. He wanted to see more caves, so we took him with us to Clarksville.

After monitoring his behavior for a time it was evident he had a moderate case of claustrophobia, so Dave escorted him out where we had come in and walked him down to the sump entrance, while Ken and I did the through trip. We had done it so fast, in about five minutes, we were at the entrance about the same time they were able to walk there above ground. Ken said he'd had not been there since 1983. Guess we'll have to go back so he can see it, instead of running through it.

Steve-----

