



# Underground Movement

## September 2004



Chris Sanders of Sanders Environmental welding the new gate together at Aeolus Bat Cave in Vermont.

The Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) is a happy bunch of folks who enjoy the exploration, conservation and science of caves.

#### 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.

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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

<b>Chair:</b>	Bob Simmons	860-738-1176
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<b>Vice Chair:</b>	Steve Adams	860-643-1502
(Program and activities)	vicechair@ctcavers.org	
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	treasurer@ctcavers.org	
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	secretary@ctcavers.org	
<b>Communications Chair:</b>	Jeff MacDonald	860-826-7487
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	safety@ctcavers.org	
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	conservation@ctcavers.org	
<b>Vertical Chair:</b>	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.

#### 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/](http://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/](http://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](mailto:nss@caves.org)

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

#### NEWSLETTER CORRECTIONS and RELATED ITEMS:

None Reported.

#### 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.

#### SEPTEMBER 2004

September 17th – 19th – NRO (Northeastern Regional Organization)  
at Natural Stone Bridge and Caves in Pottersville, NY (Southern Adirondacks)

## **OCTOBER 2004**

October 1st – 3rd – MAR (Mid-Appalachian Region)  
October 9th – 11th – TAG Fall Cave in. (Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia)

## **NOVEMBER 2004**

November 25th – 28th – Thanksgiving in Schoharie.

## **JANUARY 2005**

January 4th – Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

## **MAY 2005**

May 3rd – Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

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## **Future trips:**

(Not all trips have trip leaders or meeting times as of yet.)

## **SEPTEMBER 2004**

September 21st – tentative talk about the Priests Grotto by Chris Nicola.

## **OCTOBER 2004**

October 9th – Jug End Caves with Bob Simmons.  
October 23rd – Onesquethaw and End of Gulch Caves with Carl Carmoney.

## **NOVEMBER 2004**

November 11th – 14th - Possible OFMC III(or IV) (Old Fat Man Caving #3) to West Virginia with Bob Simmons.  
November 20th – Gages  
November 25th – 28th – Thanksgiving in Schoharie.

## **DECEMBER 2004**

December 11th – Clarksville

## **JANUARY 2005**

January 4th – Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

## **MAY 2005**

May 3rd – Planning meeting at HRP (our regular meeting place) at 7:00 PM.

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## **August 2004 Meeting's Minutes**

081704

Secretary's Report – (Cheryl Kenez) minutes accepted after clarification that it was Steve Janesky that found another cave with a mapping project.

Treasurer's Report – (Norm Berg) we have \$1311.50 in the bank last month.

Chairman's Report – (Bob Simmons) absent, but sent a report that Norm read.

Vice Chair – (Steve Adams) no report.

Communication – (The Jeff) no report.

Membership – (Laura Ritter) absent

Safety - (Doug Truitt) absent.

Conservation – (Carl Carmoney) talked about a video being made about Chris Nicola's Priest's Grotto.

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy (NCC) got \$16,000 towards the purchase of Clarksville at Convention. Only between 5 – 10 thousand is needed now.

Carl also stated he would do the newsletter as long as he is around.

Vertical – (Tom Oakes) absent, but sent word that Chris Nicola would host training on Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Trips – Tom Oaks had a vertical trip that he didn't make, but Bob Simmons, Jansen Cardy and Mark Lucas did. Since the last meeting trips went out to Mystery and Mcfails in New York. Aaron and Amy Cox went to Greenbriar County in West Virginia and did Scott Hollow, Norman Cave, McClungs plus.

Chris Beauchamp and Gary Burn were in the Schoharie area to push ANC and made 20 feet more than before. Also did Wolforts and Bridey's.

Future trips – The Northeastern Regional Organization (NRO) September 17-19<sup>th</sup>. Old Timers Renunion (OTR) over Labor Day weekend and Mystery August 21<sup>st</sup>.

There will also be another planning session at HRP our usual meeting place on September 7<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to attend.

Meeting adjourned 

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## **Orientation to Cave Rescue**

October 23-24, 2004

Fellow CCG Members,

You are invited to attend an Orientation to Cave Rescue (OCR) training seminar in Pittsford Vermont, hosted by the Northeastern Region of the National Cave Rescue Commission.

This weekend seminar is designed to give both Emergency Responders (police, fire, EMS) and cavers an overview and limited hands-on experience with cave rescue operations, management, and procedures. This is an excellent opportunity for beginner and experienced cavers alike to gain basic rescue training and participate in a mock cave rescue.

For further details, click here <http://stratton.greenms.com/ncrc-ne/> 

(A hearty thanks to Jansen Cardy for notifying us all of this event! –Ed.)

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# The Gating of Aeolus Bat Cave

By Jansen Cardy, Central Connecticut Grotto

On August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004, work began to replace a 19-year old gate guarding the entrance to Aeolus Bat Cave – also known as Dorset Cave - in southern Vermont. The original gate initially worked well, but over time it has suffered repeated damage by unauthorized visitors.

The location of this marble cave on Mt. Aeolus has been known for many years. Close by is the nation's first marble quarry, which opened in 1785. In 2002, further exploration and surveying by the Vermont Cavers Association extended Aeolus Bat Cave to 3,000 feet of passage, making it the longest known cave in New England. Since 1983, the cave and surrounding land has been owned by The Nature Conservancy, an international non-profit organization.



The protection of this particular cave is vital, as it has the largest bat population of any natural cave hibernacula in the northeastern United States – about 30,000 at last count. There are 6 known species of bat living

in the cave – the Little Brown, Big Brown, Northern Long-Eared, Eastern Pipistrelle, Small Footed, and the Indiana Bat. Many of these are considered rare, especially the federally endangered Indiana Bat.

Rose Paul, Vermont's Director of Science and Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy, manned the project with several TNC staff, including Daniel Dietz and Dave McDevitt. They were joined by Scott Darling and Kim Hall of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Scott is the District Wildlife Biologist and Vermont State Bat Biologist, and Kim is a Wildlife Technician with a special interest in bats.

The contractor hired to construct the gate was Chris Sanders, a Pennsylvania caver. Chris owns Sanders Environmental Inc., a company that installs bat gates, conducts bat counts and surveys, and provides bat-related education. Along with employees Jessica Kapp and Mick O'Mahoney, Chris put together an impressive gate that measures 22 feet wide by 13 feet high, and weighs an estimated 5,000 pounds.

Volunteer labor was provided by various others, including cavers Peter Youngbaer and Tom Zelker of the Vermont Cavers Association, and Michael Chu of Rensselaer Outing Club. Chad Spencer and Ken Trimble from Hand Motors Collision Repair in Manchester also provided some muscle. Their boss had built the original bat gate, which they got the job of tearing down.

For the new gate, pieces of steel L-section were cut to length and welded with reinforcing before being dragged in pairs up a mile of rough trail behind a small pickup truck. Once at the cave, they were manhandled into position and welded to vertical steel posts bolted into the rock. The "door" is simply one 3-foot removable section with a hidden lock, which blends in with the rest of the gate. This proven gate design is one that retains the natural air flow and bat movement, while minimizing the chance of intruders or vandalism.

Construction of the gate was made possible by a grant of \$17,375 from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, through their Landowner Incentive Program. This grant also covers the development of a Cave Management Plan, which should allow for future recreational caving trips outside of the September 1 to June 1 hibernation season. The total value of the project is \$38,361 - including the materials, gate contractor, TNC and State paid workers, and the estimated labor value of the volunteers. Construction of the new gate, and removal of the old one, was completed in 6 days.



## Links:

The Nature Conservancy <http://nature.org>

Sanders Environmental Inc. [www.batgate.com](http://www.batgate.com)

Vermont Cavers Association [www.caves.org/grotto/vca/](http://www.caves.org/grotto/vca/)

## Footnote:

According to NSS guidelines, the Volunteer Value of my contribution to this project (on behalf of CCG) included 30 hours of work, 4 hours of travel time, and 200 miles of driving. Food and a campsite were provided. Total Volunteer Value = \$400.

Incidentally, TNC's Volunteer Value guidelines list a labor rate of \$17 an hour (compared to the NSS rate of \$10 an hour), which would put my contribution at over \$600. 🦇

## Quote of the Month

"She had fortunately always her appetite for news. The pure flame of the disinterested burned in her cave of treasures as a lamp in a Byzantine vault." – Henry James (1843 - 1916), "The Ambassadors", Book Nine, Chapter 2