



Central Connecticut Grotto

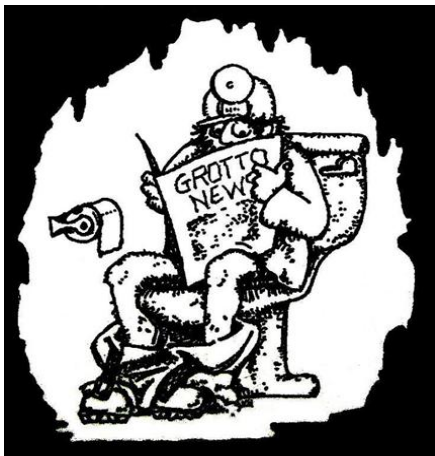


Underground Movement July 2005

**Gary Burns rappels 162 feet into Neversink Pit,
during the 2005 NSS Convention in Huntsville,
Alabama.**

Photo by Chris Beauchamp

The Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) invites you to join us in the exploration, study and conservation of caves



The Underground Movement is published monthly by the Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Reprint permission requires the approval of the Author or UM Editor.

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CCG Website

The CCG website is at www.ctcavers.org

This is an excellent way to keep informed about caving events that come up at short notice, and to review some of our Grotto history and photos.



CCG Meetings

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month, starting at 7pm. These are reasonably informal, and generally consist of a short business meeting followed by a caving presentation. Summer meetings are usually held at a member's house in Southington; please contact any CCG Officer for further information. Meetings for the remainder of the year are held at HRP Associates in Plainville. Non-members are always welcome.

Meeting Directions

HRP Associates
167 New Britain Road
Plainville, CT 06062
Contact Bob Simmons on (860) 793-6899 ext 134

- From Waterbury direction, take I-84 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.

- From Hartford direction, take I-84 West (or Rte 72 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). As you turn left through the light, take an immediate right into the driveway by the HRP sign.

The front door is on your left. Ring the doorbell, enter the building when you hear the door buzz, and take the stairs up to the second floor.

CCG Dues

Regular Membership Dues: \$5 per year
(NSS members can opt to pay \$20 for a 5-year membership)

Associate Membership Dues: \$2 per year
(Non-voting – intended for family, youth, or full-time student members)

Institutional Membership No Charge – yearly renewal
(Open to educational, scientific and conservation organizations)

National Speleological Society

The National Speleological Society (NSS) is the national organization of which CCG is a part. CCG members are encouraged to join the NSS. The NSS website is at www.caves.org

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NSS News submission guidelines can be found at
www.caves.org/pub/nssnews/style.html

Calendar of Events

Events are not limited to what is on the calendar! Contact fellow grotto members to create your own trips. Please notify the Editor in advance about any new trips, or changes to trips, so the calendar can be kept accurate.

JULY 2005

- July 4 to 8** – NSS Convention in Huntsville, AL
- July 16** – Roxbury Mine mapping trip with Bob Jacobs
- July 30** – Valcour Island (Lake Champlain) cave swim-through trip (tentative)
- July 19** – CCG Monthly Meeting at Norm's house from 6pm

AUGUST 2005

- August 6** – OFMC trip to West Virginia with Bob Simmons
- August 16** – CCG Monthly Meeting at Norm's house from 6pm
- August 20** – Roxbury Mine mapping trip with Bob Jacobs
- August 27** – Trip to McFails Cave in NY

SEPTEMBER 2005

- September 3 to 5** – Old Timer's Reunion in West Virginia
- September 16 to 18** – Fall NRO in Hancock, Massachusetts (Hosted by the Southern New Hampshire Grotto, and Larry Botto)
- September 20** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm

OCTOBER 2005

- October 18** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm

NOVEMBER 2005

- November 15** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm



Minutes of the CCG Monthly Meeting

June 2005

06/21/05 (Minutes are subject to approval by a vote at the next meeting)

Secretary – (Cheryl Kenez) minutes from last meeting approved. It was decided at the meeting that I would take back the position and also do the excel portion of membership. Norm would take over the Yahoo group duties.

Treasurer – (Norm Berg) we started with \$1260.00 plus \$94.00 in dues. Norm reported that he sold the boat for a hefty profit of \$570.00.

Chair – (Bob Simmons) absent. Norm took over the chair duties in his place.

Vice Chair – has moved to Florida, so we quickly moved to nominate Mark Lucas for the position till the end of the year. That was seconded and voted on with great speed.

Membership – We had two new members join us at the last meeting and at this meeting Neel Karkhanis joined our group.

Safety – (Doug Truitt) absent

Vertical – (Tom Oakes)

Communication – (Web Monkey) absent

Old Business – (none)

New Business –

It was decided that Norm Berg would represent us at the COG (Congress of Grottos) at Convention.

Ray Keeler, after many months absence, was at this months meeting along with Brian Pease. They were demonstrating the cave radio to a governmental group. Ray's grotto in Arizona is proposing to the COG that \$5000.00 along with a matching grant from a group be used for conservation purposes. If it passes it will go to the BOG for vote. He asked for our vote on the matter. Larry Southam recommended we vote for the proposal and it was seconded.

Larry also did a little show and tell. Merrill Gonzales, a new member, painted two oil paintings of cave scenes that are going to be displayed at Convention. Larry brought them along for us to see. Merrill will be unable to attend a meeting. She is recuperating from a serious accident and cannot ride in cars for a long time. We decided to host a meeting on a Saturday or Sunday in September at the Putnam Wolf Den so she can attend. It will be a picnic type meeting and everyone attending can bring a dish to share.

Trips –

Brian Pease caved for 36 days straight in Belize. At the NRO, cavers visited Mystery and other local caves.

Ray Keeler talked about working on four gate projects on an Indian Reservation and another one for the Forest Service.

Future Trips –

Roxbury Mines – contact Bob Jacobs or Tom Oakes if you would like to help with mapping. (See calendar for other trips.)

After the meeting we had a presentation by Amy Cox about Stewardship at Clarksville. We as a grotto are asked to volunteer for two weekends. She passed out handouts and if interested members can contact an officer for copies of the material. It will also be available on the web.

Meeting adjourned.



EDITOR'S COLUMN

Phew!


I've just got back from two hot, hazy and humid weeks of caving in Alabama – my first introduction to TAG caving!

Inbetween caves, I also attended the annual NCRC cave rescue training, and the NSS Convention. Both events ran like clockwork, and it was great to see and cave with many old friends again.

Once again, thanks to all those who have taken the time to contribute their pictures, reports, and thoughts to the Underground Movement.

Safe caving,



Jansen Cardy - NSS 50665 

July CCG Meeting

Cavers,

You are invited to the Central Connecticut Grotto meeting this Tuesday, July 19 at the summer meeting location (Norm Berg's house in Southington). This will be preceded by the usual (optional) dinner and climbing practice.

Bring dinner items for yourself, as this is not a potluck. A gas grill, plates, cups, utensils, condiments, etc are provided. Bringing munchies to share is most appreciated. A rope or two will be rigged from a tree for rope climbing practice, so bring your cave-climbing gear.

The official meeting will start at 7:30 pm, however you are welcome to arrive as early as 5:30 pm. Children are welcome - there is a swing-set and sandbox. The meeting is held outside, and the weather can be cool and windy. In case of rain a covered cooking and meeting area is available.

If you want to show your digital caving photos (or videos), contact call Norm Berg to arrange for computer, projector, and screen set up, or bring your own gear.

Climbing is dependant on experienced climbers willing to rig and supervise the climbing. If that sounds like you, please come and assist. The rope and rack is provided.

A short caving related presentation is being planned.

If you need directions or further information, contact Norm at (860) 621-2080, or email treasurer@ctcavers.org



Lebanon Springs Cave Dig

All is quiet in local caves, it seems this summer. Most people (cavers) had things to do other than caving. A caver's life isn't always about caving. However, there is one project that is being worked on, and that's **Lebanon Springs Cave Dig**.

Larry Botto and Ken Nichols are spearheading this one, with a very cooperative and helpful landowner. He is actually renting an excavator this weekend (July 16th) to dig out the remaining top soil which covers the bottom of this medium-size sinkhole. We had attempted to remove the soil by hand three weeks ago.

During that second dig three weeks ago, a neighbor had stopped by to see what was going on. He'd already made plans to rent an excavator for digging up stumps on his property, so our landowner was offered a day of digging for a small portion of the rental fee.

We had previously dug an 8 foot diameter hole following cold air movement, and made our way down 10-12 feet into some massive boulders which appeared to be the original bedding for the sink hole. Another hole was started near the apparent going direction of the cave, (apparent after digging the first hole) that got to 4 feet in diameter and 8 feet deep. It was realized that much digging would need to be done before a real cave entrance would be formed, so the excavator will be a real back saver.

There is a possible resurgence for this insurgent sinkhole about 3/4-1 mile away. We also heard from an old woman who said she'd been in this cave as a child, and had gone down 40-50 feet to where she could not climb down into a steep chasm. Limestone is present on the surface, and more holes and karst features are in the area.

Anyone interested in helping should contact Ken Nichols (questor9@flash.net) or Larry Botto. The site is on the Mass/NY line near Pittsfield. It will certainly be on the list of caves to see at the Fall NRO.

Steve Janesky
NSS 47988

News Flash!

Congratulations to CCG member **Brian Pease**, who was awarded the title of **NSS Fellow** at the recent Convention. Brian has been caving for over 40 years, and continues to dedicate his time and energy to caving projects and cave gadgets.



The Lighter Side of Cave Radio Testing

(six months worth of trip reports)

By Ray Keeler, NSS 23245

As most of you know, we have been doing some experimenting with cave radios over the last six months. Some of you, especially those who have participated in these experiments, have noticed that I have been remiss in writing trip reports.

However, even the most avid cavers would find reading about cave radios is about as interesting as being unable to find the snooze button on the alarm after a long night with the Terminal Siphons. So, here 'tis, the lighter side of cave radio testing.

Let's start with the javalina in the abandoned mine story ... Jansen Cardy and I were out looking for abandoned mine test sights north of Phoenix in February. We were in an adit (horizontal passage with an entrance) about 400 feet in when we noticed lots of scat (big diameter scat) on the floor and just beyond the passage made a sharp right.

About three feet from the turn I turned to Jansen and said, "Did you hear that?" He said "No", and with one more step I was close enough to the corner to hear the low, deep throated "Rrrrrr, Rrrrrr, Rrrrrr!!!" immediately around the corner. So I shouted "Get Out, Get Out, Get Out!" and Jansen, being about six inches shorter and about 20 years younger, whipped around and dashed for the entrance.

I thought I would run with my hand held light pointing back into the mine, kept in the eyes of whatever was in there while using Jansen's headlamp to dash out. This was a fine idea until Jansen quickly negotiated the (to him) crouching passage and disappeared around the next bend leaving the disturbing dilemma of deciding to shine the light behind me or in front to see where I was going! The javalina (we found out what they were by going back later) stayed in and we got out.



Several javalinas like these ... were in the mine



Chip Haldane on a later survey trip in the mine. Scat covers the floor.

A couple of weeks later we were trying to map the **Lower Chrysocholla Mine** while testing radio testing between the mine and the surface ... while the javalina were still inside. They were being held back (at first) by a 10 million candle power lamp until the battery went out. Oooops! They kept inching forward (because we were between them and their escape to the entrance) until a 1 million candle power light

arrived to keep them at bay while the tests were completed.

Some of the possible test sites have been less pleasant.



An Unacceptable Mine Test Site

J. Cardy photo

Here is one mine we decided might not be the correct choice if one were to error on the safety side of radio testing so it was not used. By the time this picture was taken we had already passed a 9" diameter metal air pipe that had been used to push fresh air to the miners.

We made three trips to a mine on **Piestewa Peak Park** in Phoenix to try out different antennas and frequencies. The first one was in the rain but doable for the surface teams. The second trip had to be aborted due to reported lightning strikes. For grins and giggles, Brian Pease and I were holding two CB radios while standing about 100 feet apart. Nothing on the radios so we moved closer - 75 feet, nothing - 50 feet, still nothing. At between 30 and 35 feet apart the two radios were able to hear each other's signal.

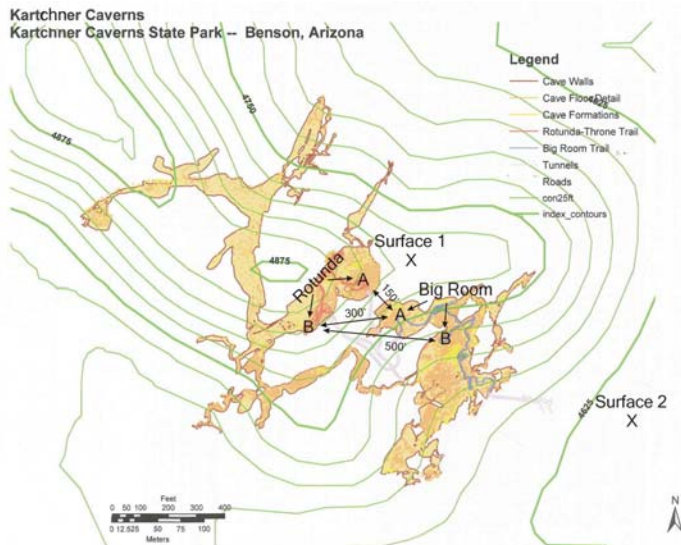
It was easy to talk directly to each other by voice but not through the radios! Go figure. Another interesting item that night was that one of the very low frequency antennas was picking up electronic noise from lightning strikes in the Oklahoma and Kansas thunderstorms. It was a great night. Paul Jorgenson, Brian Pease and I talked right through the ridge from inside the mine to the other side. It was a great way to end the series considering the first two trips were done in the rain for the surface teams.

We decided to see how the radios would work in underground Phoenix so we headed to **Patriot Park's Underground Garage**. It was my turn to stay on the surface so I got to hang out with the transients taking naps and listening to the piped in music. I discovered that there is an accepted distance of "personal space" kept between them of about ten feet between the snoozing bodies.

If someone else comes up stays they adjust appropriately. It's similar to seeing several birds perched on a telephone wire, all sitting at equal distances apart. The radios worked well to the bottom floor five stories down on one frequency band but on another there was way too much electronic noise. The fire fighter/paramedic accompanying the guys underground seemed impressed (as their radios only work to the second level), and none of the transients asked me for money.

At **Ghost Cave** up above Jerome, AZ., Jeff Harris was able to hear me from inside the cave some 380 feet away. We were all excited until Paul lined up the cave map with on the topo and we discovered the cave paralleled the hillside instead of going straight in. While we were in the cave Chip Haldane and I were also able to hear someone who was transmitting in Flagstaff about 40 miles away.

Brian and Bonnie Pease drove to **Schoharie Caverns, N.Y.** to test some items. It was quite the effort, considering he used hip waders to negotiate the thigh deep water with the radio and antenna equipment. And there was snow on the ground outside.



Kartchner Caverns Test Sites with Underground and Surface Locations
R. Keeler (Modification of Arizona State Parks Map)

The most fun was the trip down to **Kartchner Caverns** in April where we were able to put one team onto each tour route (Rotunda and Big Room) and two teams on the surface. The in cave teams started talking 150 feet apart at Rotunda A and Big Room A, then moved 300 feet apart and deeper to Rotunda B, followed by the other team moving further away to Big Room B, 500 feet away.

Both surface teams (Surface 1 and Surface 2) and both underground teams could talk with each other at all times. The surface teams had a heck of a time with other groups talking on the some of the frequencies we were using.

Finally I flew off to Connecticut to do some more testing with Brian Pease. We drove up to **Knox Cave, N.Y.** for a day and found that most everything we tried worked just about everywhere. Many of the passages are 110 to 140 feet below the surface.

The next day Brian and I did something I never thought I would do for caving. We decided to see what the background levels of noises at six different frequencies while driving through **New York City**. It was a nice summer Saturday afternoon so everyone was on the streets and traffic was clogged which was good for us.



Brian taking notes
R. Keeler

We duck taped a broad band antenna on the roof of the rental car, put the radio in the glove compartment, and drove from Central Park south on Park and Broadway to the south end of Manhattan Island. This is where the tallest buildings are. Every block or so the traffic stopped, and

Brian took readings. It was quite the day and we did not hit anyone during the trip while picking up over 300 readings.



New York City Weekend Driving in the Summer

R. Keeler

All in all, we were trying to find where we could talk, how far away, and in what kind of locations. The trips included entering 7 abandoned mines, 4 caves, an underground parking garage, New York City, a root cellar (though the snow) and other surface locations. Thirteen underground trips in all. We wanted to talk on low frequencies, so I picked up an FCC ham General License, Paul Jorgenson mentored me, and the above saga unfolded.

Thanks to everyone who helped in the efforts including: Brian/Bonnie Pease, Paul/Gwen Jorgenson, Jeff/Terry Harris, Chip/Beth Haldane, Jansen Cardy, Stephanie Keeler, Rich Bohman, Patrick Clapp, Ed Coleman, Chuck Porter, Doug Limbaugh Rick Toomey and the staff at Kartchner Caverns. It has been a hoot.



Talucah Cave

Article and photos by Jansen Cardy

On Tuesday, July 5th, (during Convention), a group of CCG members and friends decided to visit a nice, horizontal Alabama cave. Of course, you need to consider sliding around in slick mud as being “nice”.

The trip participants were myself, Mark and Diane Lucas, Norm Berg, Joe Levinson, Steve Adams, and Steve’s brother’s family - Nick, Janet, Josh, and Julia Adams. After a slight delay due to geographical embarrassment, our 3 vehicles arrived at the corner of two rural roads in the middle of nowhere. As we changed into our caving clothes, Mother Nature decided to shower us with some of that nice water that makes caves.

Following our hastily-copied directions, we made our way across a field and through some trees to the entrance. We climbed down into the cave and promptly discovered the second entrance, a picturesque skylight. Continuing down a passage appropriately named “Mud Road”, we kept slipping, sliding, and exploring our way along.



Diane Lucas and Norm Berg

Although Talucah is not what one may think of as a “formation” cave, we did find a few nice items of interest. There was a giant stalagmite mound, with a pool on top.



Patterns on the ceiling

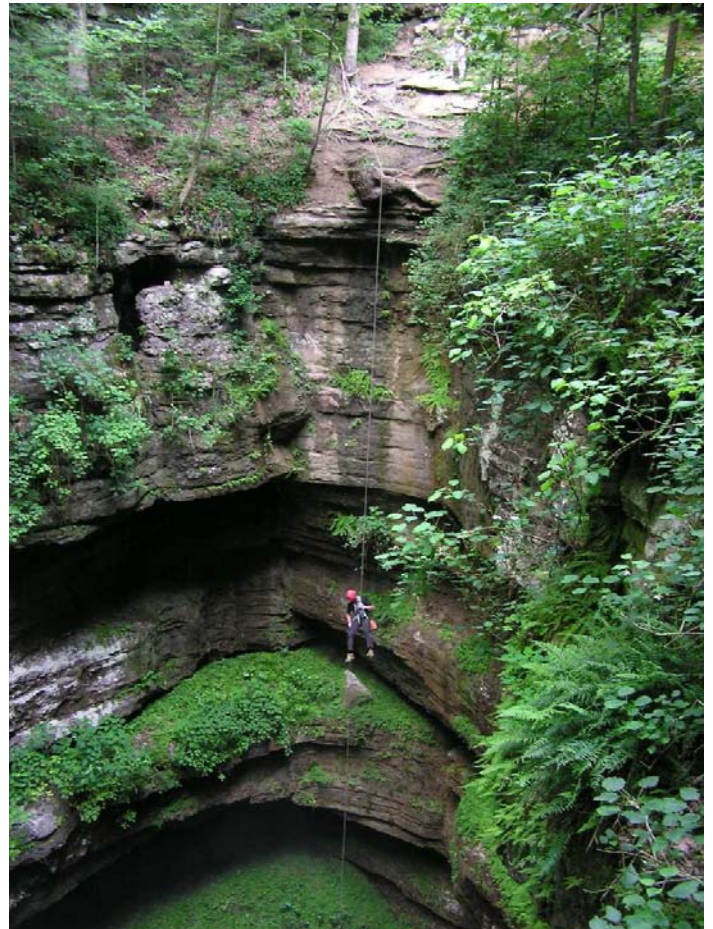
Occasionally smaller draperies decorated the walls, and in one place the ceiling design resembled a collection of blood vessels. After a few hours of exploration, it was time to turn around and head out.

A good day was had by all.



Neversink Photo Gallery

A number of CCG members visited this popular and very photogenic pit during the recent Convention...



Chris Beauchamp begins his rappel

Tom Oakes

A Salamander resting on a log at the bottom

Jansen Cardy





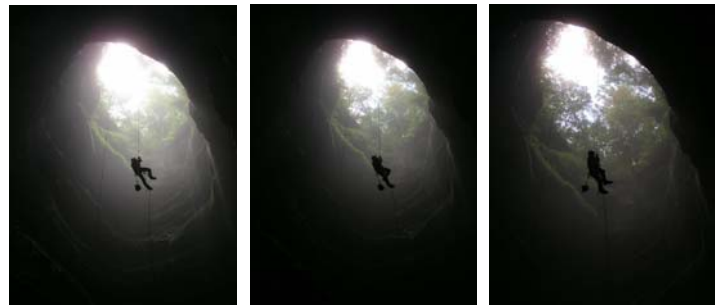
Joe Levinson begins his ascent *Jansen Cardy*



Waterfall mist

Jansen Cardy

Seth Perlman heads toward the light *Chris Beauchamp*



Mark Andrich (aka Elvis) nearing the top

Jansen Cardy

Elvis at the top "Look – no hands!"

Jansen Cardy



Photos from around Convention



Hotel CCG at breakfast time

Jansen Cardy



Hannah Berg learning the ropes
Norm Berg



Brian Pease making waves
Jansen Cardy

Steve Adams and Jansen Cardy wading through historical CCG documents in the NSS library
Norm Berg



Le Chuga (lettuce) Cave

By Chris Beauchamp

Le Chuga is a cave in the Arecibo region in Puerto Rico. We visited the cave during Chris Nicola's annual UAYCEF trip this past March.



Bob Cohen silhouetted in Window Cave, PR

Chris Beauchamp

We were given the background about the cave by Nicola. It was very wet resurgence cave, and the owner had done ten hour trips into the cave with no end in sight. We'd also heard that neither of the local caving clubs were interested in exploring or mapping the cave, due to some local speleopolitics that were beyond us. It looked like we had found ourselves the perfect project, but perhaps something had been lost in translation.

Nicola had done a good length trip (six hours?) several years earlier, and they had made it to a huge breakdown pile which almost filled the cave passage entirely, but they turned around because the cave was too hot. The plan was that four of us were going to do a serious push trip (Seth Perlman – Met, Michelle Chappel, Jodi (?) – PA, and myself) – while the rest (way too many to list) did a short trip, and then went to indulge in some touristy nonsense.

Just inside the entrance, after we finished squealing like schoolgirls, we decided that that cave was absolutely ruling. Huge trunk passage with lots of warm, warm water. You're just constantly in the water swimming and clambering over things, and never cold even when it's up to your neck. We were flying through the cave having a blast wondering why the locals weren't all over it. We arrived at Nicola's breakdown pile much faster than anticipated.

It was like a 100' high and we had to slog all the way up and over. I could definitely feel the heat Nicola had mentioned. At the top Michelle announced that she was too tired and hot, and that she should

probably meet up with the second group. As we could hear them not too far behind us, we left her at the top of the breakdown and continued on. The cave continued at bottom on the other side of the breakdown as a giant trunk passage with lots of water.

A short time later we encountered our second obstacle. A large boulder blocking the passage, that required you to negotiate a little squeeze then drop down into the water. Jodi seemed to have a difficult time with it, and we were held up for a few minutes while he tried a couple of different ways before he got through. A minute or two down the passage and he announced that he was too hot to continue and was heading out. Seth and I ditched him like a load of spent carbide and went on our way.

Eventually we reached a very deep sump, which was a ton of fun. The passage was rectangular with smooth walls and really deep water – it almost seemed man made. After swimming around treading water for a while, we determined that it was a no-go and turned back to look for high leads over the sump. We quickly found a low tight crawl up near the ceiling.



Seth Perlman warm-water caving in Le Chuga, PR *Chris Beauchamp*

Through the crawl, down a mud slope and we were back in the wet trunk passage on the other side of the sump. We were sloshing through the passage with the water up to our necks, when I started mentally reprimanding myself for being such a pansy ass. I was feeling so tired and sweating buckets as I attempted to catch my breath.

Seth and I commented to each other on what lousy shape we were in these days, and that perhaps our strict training regimen centered around donuts and online porn was ineffective. Seth mentioned that he was considering turning back. I'm not sure who, but one of us said somewhat incredulously "you don't

think there could be bad air in here, do you?" After some discussion, in which we couldn't form more than a word or so without gasping, we decided to sit and rest for a few moments to evaluate how we felt.

After ten minutes floating in the water, we still couldn't speak without panting. Nor did we stop sweating, even though we were in neck-deep water wearing tee shirts. We theorized that the sump with the small high crawl above might be trapping in carbon dioxide (CO₂), and that it was definitely time to go. After going back through the crawl to the other side of the sump, we both optimistically agreed that we felt somewhat better.

As we made our way back to the entrance we both began to feel stronger and when we hit the surface we were back 100%, perhaps we weren't a couple of pansies after all. Later we would learn that the cave is known from time to time to contain bad air, and this was part of the reason that it hasn't been pushed or mapped. That information just never made it to us. The locals also claim that the bad air seems to get flushed from the cave by heavy storms.

We also learnt that the second and much larger group recognized the elevated CO₂ levels much sooner (at the large breakdown pile) and turned around, although they had the benefit of several members of their group having experience with CO₂ caves in Thailand. Apparently, jungle caves such as Le Chuga can easily develop high CO₂ levels from the abundant vegetation that makes it way into the cave and then decomposes.

This is usually more prevalent with resurgence caves because of all the plant matter that gets washed in the entrance. As it rots, it produces CO₂. This is heavier than air, so it sits in the bottom of the cave building up. With a resurgence cave such as Le Chuga, this isn't usually an issue because any CO₂ present would sort-of roll down hill and out of the resurgence.

But with Le Chuga there are two obstacles to this. The first is the large breakdown pile blocking the entire passage. The second and probably more effective barrier is the sump. The only way for anything to get past this is through the tiny crawl, which is probably a hundred feet higher than the water level. CO₂ or not, the cave is spectacular and we were already discussing subsequent trips before we had even got our wet clothes off.

Anybody got some bottled oxygen?

