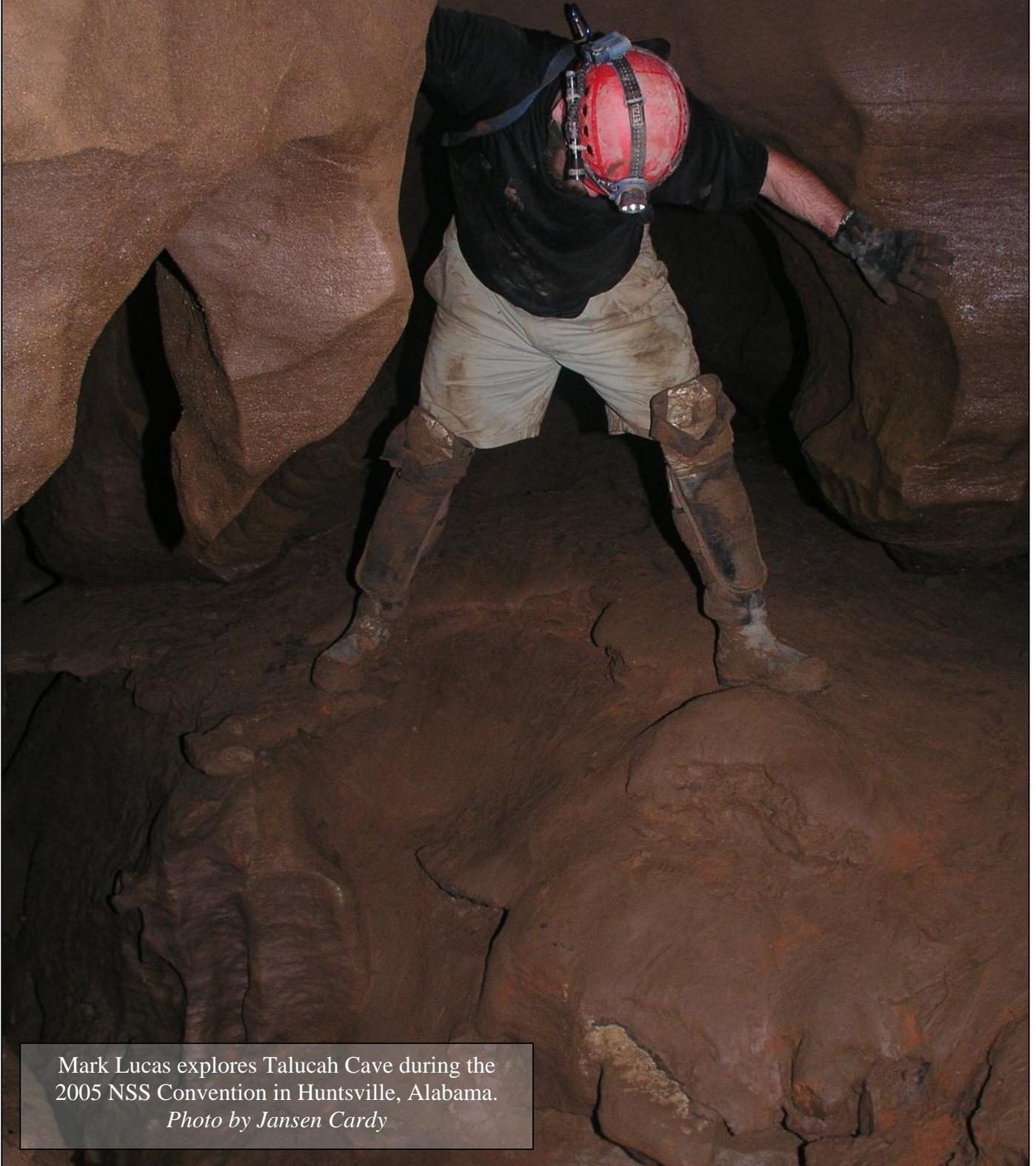




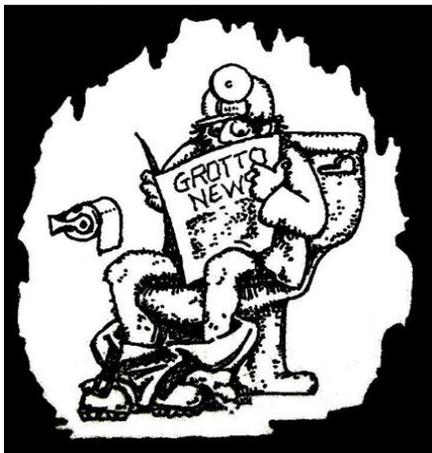
# Central Connecticut Grotto

## Underground Movement August 2005



Mark Lucas explores Talucah Cave during the  
2005 NSS Convention in Huntsville, Alabama.  
*Photo by Jansen Cardy*

## 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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Anyone can submit articles, photographs, and other items for publication. Please contribute!

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### CCG Website

The CCG website is at [www.ctcavers.org](http://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](http://www.caves.org)

2813 Cave Avenue  
Huntsville, AL 35810-4431

Voice: 256-852-1300  
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NSS News submission guidelines can be found at  
[www.caves.org/pub/nssnews/style.html](http://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.

### 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 21** – Caving at Sleeping Giant State Park with Steve Millett
- August 27** – Trip to McFails Cave in NY

### SEPTEMBER 2005

- September 3 to 5** – Old Timer's Reunion (OTR) in West Virginia
- September 10 or 11** – CCG Monthly meeting and picnic at Putnam Wolf Den (location and date to be confirmed)
- September 16 to 18** – Fall NRO in Hancock, Massachusetts

### OCTOBER 2005

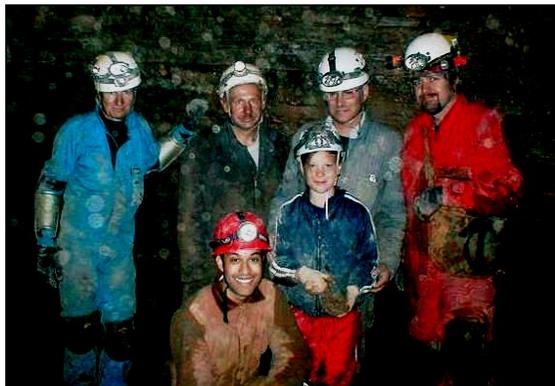
- October 15-16** – Orientation to Cave Rescue training, Albany, NY
- October 18** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm

### NOVEMBER 2005

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

### DECEMBER 2005

- December 20** – CCG Christmas Party at HRP Associates 7pm (location and date to be confirmed)



On a recent CCG trip to Knox Cave (from rear left) - Garth Varian, Doug Truitt, Norm Berg, Jeff MacDonald, (front) Neel Karkhanis, Hannah Berg.

Photo by Ken Nichols

## Minutes of the CCG Monthly Meeting

### July 2005

07/19/05 (Minutes are subject to approval by a vote at the next meeting)

Attending: John Schwenk, Norm & Trish Berg, Mark & Diane Lucas, Neel Karkhanis (new member), The Jeff, Garth Varian, arrived late: Chris Beauchamp & girlfriend (name unknown to me). Neel has caved in Pennsylvania near Penn State and in Western Virginia.

Secretary, Cheryl Kenez, not present for health reasons. (Get well soon, Cheryl!) John Schwenk volunteered to take minutes.

Vice Chair, Mark, declined to run the meeting. Norm volunteered to do so.

Chair, Bob Simmons not present.

Minutes from June meeting were read and approved as amended.

#### *Officer's Reports*

Treasurer: Norm reports that the account contains \$2,113.50 including some outstanding expenses and income. The Jeff: let's spend some!

Communications (Web Monkey): no report.

Membership: Norm reports 4 new members, 3 of them female, one a 16 year old. New members are finding us from the website. Steve Janesky continues to respond to enquiries.

Safety Chair: not present. Doug intends to get to the next meeting.

Conservation: Garth will contact Joe Armstrong in search of a conservation-related project to get involved with.

Vertical: not present (probably horizontal).

#### *Old Business*

Norm reported back from the Congress Of Grottos (COG) meeting at the July 2005 NSS convention. He voted on our behalf to support a Caves & Karst Restoration project promoted by CCG member Ray Keeler but which was not unanimously supported. Despite some who spoke against the project, it passed.

As previously approved, Norm purchased a new club helmet & light set. It cost \$59.40 with tax and is a Petzl Elios, size A42, which fits smaller heads.

Mark reported that one of the other light sets (associated with a red helmet) didn't work on a recent trip. Reportedly, the batteries sizzled. Norm will check it.

#### *New Business*

The Jeff wants to spend some of our relatively large bank account. John suggested more club equipment like in European caving clubs where they share almost all their equipment. Perhaps vertical gear. Norm implied that many members already have all the gear they need. John countered with examples of vertical gear he didn't have but thought he and others might benefit from if the club had it, such as longer ropes and a Mitchell climbing system. Norm suggested a fully adjustable vertical rig for use on the surface only – unless others thought differently – for use by

beginners in training at club vertical practices. Norm also pointed out that there are potential liability issues with club equipment, especially vertical gear. Mark suggested paying entrance fees for members, such as that to the Stone Age rock climbing gym previously used for an indoor vertical practice. Norm (always the voice of moderation) suggested subsidizing the fees instead. Garth wants to spend it in some way to help increase the club's vertical skills. No actual motions for purchases were made, however.

### **Past Trips**

No one present was on the **Roxbury Mines** survey trip that happened on July 16<sup>th</sup>.

**NSS 2005 Convention in Huntsville, AL:** Ray Keeler reportedly counted 17 CCG members or CT-associated people at convention. The photo salon was reported to have technical problems and go on far too long. The fireworks were good.

During convention, Mark went to **Tumbling Rock** cave, **War Eagle**, and **Talucah**. A show cave he visited was especially nice and tastefully executed. He did his first pit, took pictures of nice formations, and found a route to an awesomely huge waterfall dome the others had walked right past. In War Eagle, he came upon a naked woman among formations. A photo shoot for one of those naked caving calendars was in progress.

Some members visited a highly graffitied "party cave." Hannah Berg reportedly counted every "bad word" encountered.

Chris (aka Cramp) "did a ton of stuff" at convention including **Neversink** and **Valhalla** pits. These are legendary and beautiful open-air pits but without much cave at the bottom. He also did 3 "wetsuit, multi-drop, pull-down trips" in a row. After seeing a TV program being screened at convention which reenacted a disastrous multi-injury **McBride's** trip from a few years ago, he was reluctant to go. However, McBride's ended up being an "awesome" cave with little mud, clean washed passage, rappelling in waterfalls, and 9+ drops. It is now on Cramp's "top 10 list." He regretted *not* taking his camera. **Solution Rift** on the other hand, involved 3 grueling crawls (while carrying lots of rope) and, at the exit, a dead cow and an uppity beaver which prevented exit until Gary whacked it with his pack. In Solution Rift, Cramp regretted *taking* his camera.

### **Future Trips**

Will there be an OFMC III ("Old Fat Man Caving West Virginia long weekend trip #3 on which it's not necessary – indeed, not even desirable – to be old, fat, or male to participate)? Garth wants to know. Mr. Simmons was not present to advise. The tentative date is the weekend of Aug 6/7. John can't make it that weekend and other weekends are more convenient for Garth. Garth will ask Bob if it's possible to delay that trip a week or two.

Garth also has a 14 year old who wants very much to do more caving.

Norm wants to lead a Knox trip. 3 possible weekends were mentioned. Norm will poll the membership via email to determine the best date and arrange the trip.

**Next Meeting:** will be at Norm & Trish's house again.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM.

## **EDITOR'S COLUMN**

Last month's UM received lots of great feedback from readers. Thank you to all those who contributed articles and photos – nice work!

John did a fine job of taking minutes at the last meeting, especially copying down people's stories of past trips. It makes great reading! But it's not really John's (or Cheryl's) job to be the author of your trip reports. It's up to YOU, or someone that was on your trip, to create that important little part of our grotto's history. Carpe Diem!

And speaking of grotto history, how do you feel about the idea of producing our very own **grotto patch**? Renown NSS patch collector Gary Soule spotted our banner at Convention, and promptly preached to us the virtues of creating a patch with our logo (like MET, VCA, and many other grottos have done). Our healthy grotto funds could help subsidize the setup cost, if members are interested in pursuing this idea.

Feel free to discuss it at the next meeting, or email your opinion to [officers@ctcavers.org](mailto:officers@ctcavers.org)

Safe caving,



Jansen Cardy - NSS 50665

## **August CCG Meeting**

Cavers,

You are invited to the Central Connecticut Grotto meeting this Tuesday, August 16 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](mailto:treasurer@ctcavers.org)

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I'd like to thank you for printing the esteemed Ansel Beauchamp's flattering photo of my ass sticking out of Le Chuga Cave in PR. I can confirm that the cave was indeed riling and that it warrants a return visit, bad air or not.

If my crappy grotto actually published a newsletter (it's hard to find members, living in remote, rural Manhattan) I might have contributed a trip report of my own.

See you at NRO,

Seth Perlman

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Hi All,

I'm writing to let you all know that you are all welcome to stay at my place instead of one of the cabins while caving in the Cobleskill area. I've just built a large bath house which houses a 7-person Hot Tub, just one of the fringe benefits I offer when you cave with the Janesky's. I also provide breakfast, of course.

Just trying to get some of you off the lazy caving streaks in progress, and get some trips going. I am very interested in getting some more McFail's trips in, before I get too old. Email me at [caving2@yahoo.com](mailto:caving2@yahoo.com) or call me at 518-284-3201, let's hook-up, go caving, and then un-wind in the hot tub.

Steve Janesky, NSS 47988

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## Invitation to clean up Baugh Cave

I have put this cleanup off long enough. I will make myself available to anyone willing to help out on this project; it really needs people to make this work.

The Cave: a beautiful example of NY caving at its best. You need skills, either on rope, or cable ladder, to get down the entrance (~30 ft. or so) then it's a fun cave. There are a few chimneys and other caving "tricks" that will bring you down to the bottom of the cave (~126 ft. nice).

The trash: this is the one people, if you think of yourself as a caver who cares. SHOW ME. This cave doesn't have a couple of pieces of trash in it; it's full of trash from some idiot who thought it was a good place to dump junk.

My goal: is to make this cave clean again, period. We have already cleaned a lot of the main passage making getting through the cave possible.

Really what we need is a large crew of cavers willing to clean up a cave. What will I do with the trash? My hope is to involve the community, and the area trash collectors, dreaming that a little good PR is worth helping us out. In order to help, ask a caving friend/group to come out some time in the next two months (August/September) - no pressure, no reason for excuses. You pick the time, any night, any weekend, and I will be there. The digging of new and undiscovered caves will just have to wait. If you want to help - thanks.

Progress to date: There have been at least 4 trips to clean, resulting in at least 40 "asswheat bags" being filled. Tires and other larger things have been staged for removal.

We need help. Remember, just let me know, and I'll drop everything to get this cave clean. Thank you all.

Joe Armstrong

Home (518) 295-6281 Cell (518) 378-9743

e-mail [gonecaving@hotmail.com](mailto:gonecaving@hotmail.com)

*Editor's note: see Chris Beauchamp's article and photos of Baugh's Cave in the April 2005 Underground Movement.*

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## Cave Rescue Training at Lava Beds National Monument, California



Park Rangers and Staff evacuate a mock "patient" named Sharon from Catacombs Cave, July 30, 2005

*Photo by Jansen Cardy*



## Location! Location! Location! Cave Conservation and the Implications of Global Positioning Technology *Submitted by Ray Keeler*

At the 2005 NSS Convention, the Cave Conservation and Management Session held an open forum to provide different positions on the subject of cave lists, GPS, the internet and secrecy.

Four panelists were invited to provide different positions on the topic. I was privileged to be invited to represent the Arizona Secrecy position. Below is the session abstract followed by (abridged versions of) the three submitted position statements. Permission was granted for their republication. I think you will find they provide interesting points. It was a lively session and the topic will surely be discussed more in the future around the campfires.

Some feel strongly on each of the different perspectives. We all care. The internet is here.

### - Cave Conservation and Management Session Abstract -

*Moderator:* Bern Szukalski

*Panelists:* Tom Gillian, Ray Keeler, Ron Kerbo, Fred Luiszer

GPS and other location technologies have made recording and finding caves easier than ever. The information sharing capabilities of the Internet, the ubiquity of affordable and reliable GPS devices, and the evolution of low-cost digital mapping software have made the use of location data a powerful tool in recording and finding caves.

The ease of collecting and sharing accurate location information makes relocating caves much easier than ever before, and also presents new concerns for cave conservation and challenges for cave resource managers.

Will this make more caves accessible? Should sensitive cave location information be protected? How? What about the growing "gray market" of cave location traders? Do we really need to be concerned? Should anything be done, and if so what? How does the FCRPA factor into this landscape?

Panelists will include cave resource managers, federal government representatives, and cavers covering all aspects and both sides of the subject. Bring your opinions and ideas, and join this lively, open panel discussion as a variety of topics concerning cave conservation in the age of global positioning technology are discussed.



### STATEMENT FOR CAVE LOCATION PANEL DISCUSSION (Abridged)

*By Dan "Vader" Castellari and Steve "CaverOne" Hawkins*

The groundwork for [www.cavesr4all.com](http://www.cavesr4all.com) was laid about 1987. After seeing all the popular caves that could be easily found we wanted to see more, so the obvious decision was to try and join a grotto. The logical assumption was that in order to find more caves, one needed to go to where the cavers were.

We joined two Grottos, The Front Range Grotto and the Colorado Grotto. We were able to go along on a couple of trips. But something seemed amiss when, after being grotto members for some time, our requests for information were flatly denied. It could have been simply a result of running into the wrong people at the wrong time, but we both felt about as welcome as the Plague.

In the end, the two of us decided to go about our caving business on our own. For the next 10 years or so we found caves using whatever clues we could dig up, when we went caving at all. We didn't hold much of a grudge against the Grottos; we just figured that if they wanted to be unfriendly and cliquish, that was their prerogative. The problem came when they tried to silence us from publicizing cave location information.

About five years ago Dan came across a new hobby called Geocaching. Dan had hidden a Geocache in a local, well known granite cave in July 2000. When organized cavers found out that the cave coordinates were available for all to find, their response was harsh. We began receiving hate mail and threats about the posting of cave locations. The whole problem just continued to escalate.

Hate mail wasn't the only type of mail we were getting. Requests for more information on caves and their locations from fellow Geocachers that were enjoying these posted caves came in with regularity. Realizing that there was this much interest in caving online, and after much discussion, the idea for the web site was born around October of 2000. The existence of this website would accomplish two things. First, get the information to those who could use it and, second, sharing our cave information with other cavers would prompt them to share what they knew with us.

More and more emails came in from people who had had the same experience with their local grottos that we did. People ranging from Boy Scout troop leaders to frustrated grotto members were thanking us for having the nerve to do what no one else had been able to do: bring Colorado caving to the people who craved it.

It is important to understand that the creation of [cavesr4all.com](http://cavesr4all.com) was not a "let's stick it to 'em" proposition. It was not created out of spite because of the events that took place regarding Geocaching, but rather because of the many requests we were getting from Geocachers about caves and their locations. We

knew how difficult it was to come by cave locations due to our personal experiences with the Colorado grotto.

We have been asked, "Why post cave locations, what are you getting out of this?" The answers are simple. Foremost, we like to help other people out, especially cavers. We have had opportunities to go caving with other people that we would not have met if it wasn't for the site and their interest in it.

And thanks to like-minded cavers sharing their information with us, we have been to caves we would not have found otherwise. Due to this sharing of information, we have been able to increase our own knowledge of cave locations many times over. This has provided us more recreational opportunities, and allowed us to compile an extensive (and still growing) database of Colorado caves.

Secrecy, while effective from a conservation standpoint, sacrifices too much. Countless potential cavers are shut out and turned away from this great sport as a result. Secrecy is no longer the only answer. Cavers need to learn how to deal with this issue from another angle. Education is key. Teach people who are interested in caving how to do it the right way.

#### **GEOCACHING, POSTING CAVE LOCATIONS ON THE WEB, CAVE SECRECY, CAVE MANAGEMENT, AND THE FUTURE OF THE NSS**

*(Abridged)*

*By Fred Luiszer*



The recent development of a new sport called Geocaching has distressed some cavers. The sport itself is not inherently evil. However, when part of the sport includes posting GPS locations on websites which detail caches located near caves, at cave entrances, or even in caves – cavers become worried.

Some of the perceived problems range from increased rescues and general degradation from visits by untrained neophytes, to wanton vandalism and mineral collecting from non-Geocachers. Efforts have been put into trying to get cave locations purged from these websites, with some success. However, there are small, but nonetheless active groups that continue to post cave locations on the web. What can be done?

I believe that these people are only messengers that are telling us a very simple truth that many cavers do not want to hear. The message is that in the 21st century with the continued growth of the Word Wide Web the GPS location of nearly every known cave in the world will be posted on the web. There is very little that we can do to stop this.

Why will this be inevitable? There are two main reasons: pathological cave secrecy and the disenfranchised abnormal caver. What is pathological cave secrecy? True cave secrecy is a lie. If someone asks a caver if they know of "secret caves" the caver should answer "No". If the caver tells people that they know of secret caves, but does not plan to include these people

in on the secret, the caver begins a very nasty egotistical game that has no winners.

Besides not talking or bragging about secret caves, I believe that truly secret caves should not be written about in any type of publication, they should not be used for slide presentations at grotto meetings, and except in very rare circumstances, they should not be used for scientific study.

If a caver has the audacity to try to start their little "I know of a secret cave" game with you this is what you should do. Ask them if you can go on a trip to the cave, if they say, "Sure," great, listen to their story and have fun caving. If they say, "No," then tell them that you don't want to hear about a cave that you can't go to and ask them to change the subject. The normal caver will either invite you on a trip or shut up. The pathological secret caver will not like it at all because you caught them at their game.

At one time I was what I would call a disenfranchised caver. I started caving with people I worked with back in the early 80s. We were very safe, we used the proper equipment, and we didn't break formations. In short we thought we were good "cavers." When we met National Speleological Society cavers, they were very stand-offish, and we got the feeling that they thought we were dirt.

My work friends told me of a certain young lady that they had met near Colorado's Groaning Cave, who told them about a beautiful secret cave that of course she had no intention of ever taking them to or telling them where it was. They hated her and from that day on, and did everything they could to find that cave. Now these were fairly normal cavers, and if they found that cave they would have just visited it. In fact, they probably would have kept it secret.

So the problem is not with the normal disenfranchised caver, the problem is with the abnormal disenfranchised caver. The slightly paranoid, the antisocial, you know, the ones that line the inside of their helmets with aluminum foil. They believe that organized cavers are conspiring to keep them out of the dark. I firmly believe that no matter what cavers do, there will always be the abnormal disenfranchised cavers with access to the web. We need to get past that and deal with the real problem.

As we enter the 21st century, we need to stop worrying about Pandora's Box - it's open and we ain't gonna get it closed. What we need to realize is that the future of cave protection is in cave management. We need to forge better relationships with managers at National Parks, National Forests, the Bureau of Land Management, state lands, and with commercial cave and private cave owners.

We need to help decide which caves will be sacrificial, gated, permitted, fenced, guarded and in some cases, cemented shut. We need to educate the public about caves, because we will not be able to protect caves without tax dollars and donations from the public – and the general public will not pay more taxes or donate money for something that they don't know about.

And here is the part that I know a lot of cavers will not like. We need to judicially post cave names and locations on our websites,

because more and more people are doing searches for caves and they will be finding renegade sites that give them the information they want. We need to make sure that when people go searching for cave information on the web that our sites are the ones they go to first.

The NSS policy of not publishing cave locations may very well help in the death of the NSS when more and more renegade caver sites give neophyte cavers what they want - cave locations. This is one of the few perks that the grottos had to offer to get people to join and become good cavers. What can the NSS and the grottos offer now that will attract people?

We may be forced to realize that a large number of new cavers in the future may be recreational or sports cavers. And we must not turn them away or turn up our noses at them, because these cavers will have the most impact on caves and will help us get the cave conservation and cave safety message out to the public. We may find that working with cave-for-pay operators and commercial caves may be very beneficial.

The NSS and local grottos have to pull their heads out of their caves and start looking at what is really happening. The Geocachers and the renegade cavers are just the messengers. We need to look at the future and be proactive, not reactive. Yes, it will be a lot of work; cost a lot of money and keeping it secret will not help.



### ON CAVE SECRECY, LOCATIONS, GPS, AND THE INTERNET

*By Ray Keeler*

In the West, we have HUGE chunks of Federal, State and Native American Lands. These are the USFS, NPS, BLM, military, tribal, State Trust Lands and Non-resident land owners. Tribal lands are considered private lands. This means there are land managers, not land owners, watching over the caves on these HUGE tracts of land.

The land managers are conscientious, but have priorities pulling them in directions other than cave management. In many, many cases, cave location information control is the only protection the cave environs have.

With the internet and GPS locations, it is possible – and unfortunately easy – to gather information on which caves are located where, with the following neat things inside... (insert the "\_\_\_ology" of your choice).

Forty years ago the NSS required new members to have a sponsor to join. In part this was due to safety and conservation. It was part of the learning curve. It is why the NSS does not publish cave locations. Now the NSS only requires a "click" on-line to say that you have read the NSS Conservation Policy.

With the internet and GPS locations, it will be possible for crystal hunters to gather speleothems, pot hunters to gather artifacts, new cavers to entirely bypass grottos, and bone hunters to take the bones from the matrix.

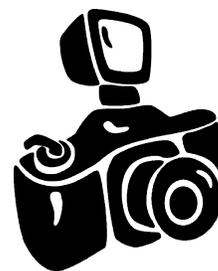
With the knowledge of the resource comes a responsibility to protect it. While helping others whom you trust with the knowledge, you also trust them with the management of the cave. With the internet and GPS – from where does the trust, or learning, or protection, or camaraderie come?

I am honored that cavers I know and trust, including close friends, have secrets on caves and projects they are working on that they are not willing to share. I have similar secrets. We are still friends because we TRUST each other's judgment in the Cause.

**"It is not about who you tell about the cave. It is about who that person tells."** Do you want the internet to be that person?



## "On Caves and Cameras"



The NSS has just printed a new hardbound book on the subject of Cave Photography.

"On Caves and Cameras" brings together in one volume the collected knowledge and experience of sixteen of the world's most experienced and skilled underground photographers. This hardbound book is indispensable for anyone who is interested in photographing in caves or mines, outdoors at night, in large indoor spaces, or in any other situation where artificial lighting is required.

Whether you are just beginning to take pictures with a point-and-shoot camera or have many years of experience photographing in the dark, you will find information tailored to your needs.

Topics include single-flash and multiple-flash photography, point-and-shoot cameras, digital cameras, photo-editing software, lighting huge spaces, close-up photography, and photographing in show caves.

This book will enable you to take better photographs - and inspire you to do so!

Price: \$35.00 Members, \$38.00 Non-Members

Shipping: \$7.00



# “STRANGE CAVING TALES...”

By Jo DeMarco



Since ancient times, caves have held wonder, mystery, and deep fascination to all those who dared to enter.

Some have returned with amazing tales and stories of mysterious artifacts, long-lost cities, advanced ancient technology, and strange encounters with unknown beings and creatures.

In this column, we will examine the bizarre and astonishing reports encountered in subterranean caverns, tunnels, mine shafts, etc. both from the United States and other countries.

Caves are not only the home of Karst, troglobites (cave-dwelling animals), and other organisms. Sometimes that home is shared by something else...

Something far beyond your imagination.

Sometimes the truth lies in the dark...Waiting...Waiting to be discovered...or to reveal itself to you...

It is up to you, my dear fellow caver, to determine the veracity of these reports. That they have been reported is a fact.

The people reporting these incidents come from all walks of life. Some are cavers, miners, scientists, even teenagers going for a quick stroll in the woods.

But there are two things they all have in common: One, they came upon these subterranean entrances by mere accident. And two, they all came face to face with something down there.

Some were shocked! Some were awed! Some were visibly shaken and terrified beyond their wits!

I urge you to please read these astonishing reports with an open frame of mind. And remember one sincere bit of truth...

## **SOMETIMES, TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION.**

Are you ready to know what really lies down there, in the dark, waiting to be discovered? Alright then! Let's begin our journey into the depths of the unknown!

### **CASE #1:**

Joan Howard, author of a book entitled *"The Space-or Something-Connection,"* devoted an entire chapter to a strange and rather eerie incident that happened to her husband.

Her husband worked for a certain company that required a lot of field work in the outdoors.

On one of his field work assignments, he and his co-workers had to travel through some unpopulated terrain in West Virginia, particularly in the regions between Newville in Braxton County, Helvetia in Randolph County, or rather the general region in and around the northern part of Webster County.

While they were making their way through the wilderness and the rolling hills and mountains of West Virginia, they were told of strange cave-related incidents from the locals in the area.

And they themselves encountered some very strange things...

At one point, he and his co-workers came upon what appeared to be a pipe sticking up from the ground very far away from the nearest town. There was no other sign of civilization or anything man made for miles on either side.

Yet, there was this rather huge pipe or tube sticking straight up from the ground.

But wait! Here's the weird part. There was this flame that was shooting out of the pipe as if it were burning some type of gas! They never did find out just exactly what that was.

Now here's where it gets really strange. Close around the same area, they came upon some caverns.

These caverns contained some very strange things. One of the caverns they explored had strange hieroglyphic-like writing on its walls.

Some of his co-workers claimed that they heard what sounded like faint voices and sounds like machines moving underground. These sounds, they said, were felt as if they were coming from beyond the walls of the caverns, or from their unexplored depths.

Joan Howard's husband claims that two of his co-workers laid down their beds one night in front of a certain cave in that same area. This cave contained a very deep, unexplored chasm some ways inside.

The next morning, one of the men woke up and found that his partner had completely disappeared. No trace was ever found of him again!

This particular cave that the two men bedded down in front of has been well known as a place of strange, unusual, and bizarre happenings.

This cave is one of those places that the locals like to warn you about:

"Don't you go into them caves!"

"You go in them caves and you'll never see daylight again!"

"Those caves are haunted! That's where the Devil lives. Now don't you go down there and find out, ya hear?"

Some locals even went so far as to call it "Satan's Lair!"

One remarkable account that Joan's husband and his co-workers heard was about a man that claimed he was exploring the labyrinthine depths of a particular cavern in that area.

All of a sudden, he had come face to face with a very attractive woman. The weird thing about this woman was that she was completely void of hair, as if she had undergone some type of radiation poisoning!

The woman, who spoke in some unknown language, tried for some time to communicate with the man. After they found they weren't really understanding each other, they went their separate ways.

Anyway, here's the million dollar question:

What *really* happened to Joan's husband's co-worker? Where did he disappear to? Was he taken in the middle of the night by something lurking quietly in the darkness of the cave? If so, where was he taken to? Or rather, *why* was he taken?

Also, what were those strange looking hieroglyphics on one of the cavern walls? What other strange artifacts lay there waiting to be found?

What were those strange voices and sounds of machinery coming from the cave walls? And who the heck was that woman? What was she doing in a cave all by herself? What is going on down there?

My dear fellow caver, I leave you now to ponder on this amazing and wondrous tale.

That there's something down there is no doubt.

That the locals are afraid of those caves is a fact.

Only you can determine what and what not to believe. As for me, I'm a true believer that there's more to this world than meets the eye. This world is **filled** with many, many mysteries.

And some of those mysteries are hidden in plain sight. Down below. In the dark. Waiting...to be discovered...or to reveal itself to you!

Until next time, my dear fellow cavers. And remember one very important thing:

**Sometimes, truth is stranger than fiction!**

Please feel free to share any comments about "Strange Caving Tales" with the editor. Also, if you have any strange stories pertaining to caves, etc., or know and have experienced any strange phenomena, we would love to hear about it! Thanks!



## Fall 2005 NRO September 16-18 Hancock, Massachusetts

Larry Botto announces that he and Southern New Hampshire Grotto will host the Fall 2005 NRO at Privacy Campground in Hancock, Mass. This has been a popular site for previous NROs, with plenty of marble caves nearby. All cavers are welcome.

Featured are: led cave tours, kids playground, hiking trails, waterfall, sauna, karst area at camp, slide shows, NCC auction, cave guidebook by Larry Botto (partial reprint with some new stuff), underground bunker and tunnel, pond for swimming, pistol range, bonfire, vendors, etc.

Weekend total for adults is \$12 camping + \$6 Saturday dinner + \$4 NRO registration fee = \$22. For kids, \$3 + \$3 + 0 = \$6. At the gate, camping and registration are each \$1 more.

Guidebooks are \$6 pre-registered or \$8 on-site. Day passes \$5 adults, \$2.50 kids. Day pass and Saturday dinner \$9 adults, \$2.50 kids.

To take advantage of pre-registration prices, send a check made out to Lawrence W. Botto to 249 Robbins Ave, Pittsfield, MA 01201. Please include your name, address, phone and email.

No dogs are allowed at the campground. Bring a chair for the breakfast(s) and dinner.

Privacy Campground is on the east side of Mass. 43, about midway between US 7 south of Williamstown, Mass. and NY 22 at Stephentown, NY, and a mile or two north of the road to the Brodie Mountain and Jiminy Peak ski areas.

The campground phone is (413) 458-3125.



# The National Cave Rescue Commission of the National Speleological Society Northeastern Region

## ALBANY-SCHOHARIE CAVE RESCUE TEAM WEEKEND SEMINAR

The Albany-Schoharie Cave Rescue Team will sponsor an NCRC Weekend Orientation to Cave Rescue Seminar in Albany County New York on October 15 and 16, 2005. The registration fee is \$40.00 per person, which includes classes, coffee breaks, lunches, and dinner Saturday night.

For those not familiar with the National Cave Rescue Commission weekend seminar, the goal is to give EMS, fire dept., (paid or volunteer), rescue squad, police, (state or local), county sheriff and emergency management personnel, as well as local cavers, an overview of and some limited hands-on experience with cave rescue operations, management and requirements. The weekend course is not designed to make "hero rescue teams" out of anyone. One of the major goals is to get all these groups familiar with each other, their knowledge and equipment, thus promoting inter-cooperation among all. Experience has generally shown that in the event of a real cave rescue emergency, the more prior contact among all parties, the better the coordination at the scene.

The weekend course provides an introduction to the materials presented and skills developed during the NCRC weeklong Cave Rescue Operations and Management Seminars. Those wishing to become skilled in cave rescue operations are encouraged to take the NCRC weeklong seminar.

We would be very pleased to have participants from your local organization attend this seminar. Since the seminar is designed not only for experienced cavers but also for non-cavers and novices, it may be a good opportunity to introduce neophytes in your local area to some of the basic techniques involved in safe caving.

Enclosed is an application for interested individuals. Feel free to reproduce it. Please announce this seminar in your upcoming newsletters as well as at your general meetings, and sent in your registration forms with checks as soon as possible. Space in the program is limited. All registrants will receive a schedule, detailed information sheet and directions as soon as a registration and check is received. If you have any questions please contact:

**Emily Davis**  
PO Box 10  
Schoharie NY 12157-0010  
(518) 295-7978  
emily@speleobooks.com

Please send all applications, with checks made payable to Northeast Region of the NCRC, to **Emily Davis** at the above address in Schoharie.

Please visit the NCRC website at [www.ncrc.info](http://www.ncrc.info) for more information.

**Please note:** If you are interested in attending, click on [www.ncrc.info](http://www.ncrc.info) to download the registration form.