



[photo by Harold Pruitt]

## THE BRIEF COLLABORATION BETWEEN ALFRED NOBEL AND THOMAS EDISON

or

## THERE IS NO NOBEL PRIZE FOR SPELEOLOGY

Sam Frushour (L) and John Hartman re-enact a technically-correct version of a cartoon from The New Yorker magazine (7 November 1988, p. 154). Antique equipment: Hurcules(tm) 50-cap blasting machine and General Electric Mazda(tm) tungsten-filament lamp. We cheated to preserve the bulb (from Angelo George's garage sale)-- It's actually connected through a triac lamp-dimmer to the lights in the commercial section of Cumberland Caverns, Tennessee.

Cartoon blasting machines are nitroglycerine pumps but real ones are electric generators. The rack-gear plunger spins a flywheel, and closes the circuit when it reaches the bottom of its stroke. The output can light a 115V 100-Watt bulb for one second. Mechanical blasting-machines are being supplanted by compact (but less dramatic) capacitor-discharge electronic types containing dc-dc converters. The machine in the picture weighs 22 pounds (10 kg). We don't recommend this system for cave lighting! Fortunately, product-liability lawsuits were rare in Nobel's day. On the other hand, consider the case of Coyote vs. Acme!

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**SPELEONICS** is published approximately four times per year by the Communication and Electronics Section of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Primary interests include cave radio, underground communication and instrumentation, cave-rescue communications, cave lighting, and cave-related applications of amateur radio. NSS membership is encouraged but not required.

Section membership, which includes four issues of **SPELEONICS**, is \$4.00 in USA/Canada/Mexico, \$6.00 overseas. Send subscriptions to section treasurer Joe Giddens at the address below (make checks payable to **SPELEONICS**). If you have a ham-radio callsign or NSS membership number, please include them when subscribing.

Foreign subscriptions can be paid in U.S. "paper" dollars in the mail; an international money-order may cost as much as the subscription. Many members have sent cash without problems. (No foreign currency, please.)

Editorship rotates among the officers. Volunteers are encouraged to guest-edit or produce an issue. A technical session, followed by election of officers, is an annual event held during the NSS Convention.

Complimentary copies of **SPELEONICS** are mailed to NSS offices and sections, the U.S. Bureau of Mines, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Longwave Club of America.

**Editorial -** As we end our third volume, it is gratifying to note that **Speleionics** has become self-generating-- For the first time we have a backlog of articles from many contributors. We hope to keep the gestation period reasonable by publishing more issues per year if necessary. We are experimenting with new software, hoping to enhance the print quality of future issues.

--Frank Reid

**NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**INFORMAL SPRING MEETINGS.** All **Speleionics** readers, cavers, VLF/LF experimenters, and interested people are invited to our second annual meeting at the **DAYTON HAM-VENTION** (Dayton, Ohio) at 11:00am local time on Saturday, April 29. Place: Seats (!) above main arena (the "big room" containing major manufacturers' displays), South corner behind DARA booth (to right of main entrance), top level. A carbide lamp will mark the spot. Show/tell, trade equipment, share information (including flea-market locations of interesting items) or just say hello. Bring lunch if you wish (recommended); hamfest food is awful!  
:-(\*) Freq: 147.64 MHz, RFI permitting.

Bring cave radios and other electronics to **KENTUCKY SPELEOFEST** (Memorial Day weekend, 26-29 May, near Whitley City, KY). Ian Drummond from Canada plans to attend; we may be able to assemble all the section officers for the first time! See **NSS News** or contact Frank Reid for details. Freq: 146.66 MHz simplex.

"FREEDOM OF THE PRESS BELONGS TO HIM WHO OWNS ONE."  
-- St. Wysiwyg of Gdansk

Diana George, or regular publisher, has been unable to print the last two issues of **SPELEONICS** due to heavy workloads of the primary users of the press. We are presently using facilities of higher cost and lower quality.

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