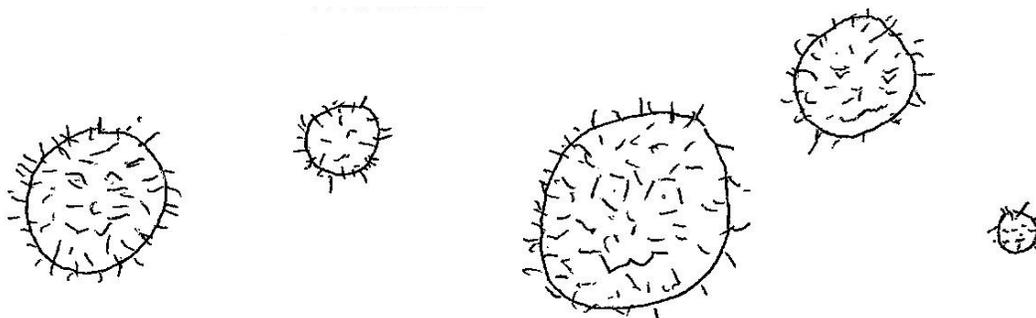




Inside: 101 Dalmatians CAVE

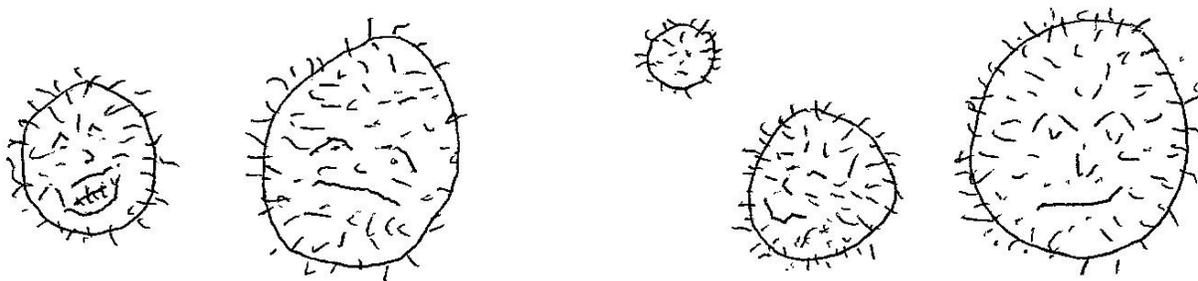
The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$5 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or <caverbill@live.com>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

## CAVE CALENDAR



**"I'm encouraging our NSS members to stand down from caving for a few months "**

**-----Geary Schindel, President, National Speleological Society -----**



## SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bighorn Broeckel

Calendar is voided by the virus until further notice. Be safe. Thank-you (Barbara, Tabitha, and Dave) for submission of newsletter materials. This kind of collaboration makes for a stronger SAG RAG. What happened to Mike S. stands out as a notable story for sure, but we all feel bad that Mike suffered through that experience. We also wish him a speedy and full recovery, and many happy days and good caving adventures to come. It is for each of us to review injury events like this as cautionary in maintaining high levels of diligence in cave safety. Even so, things will happen from time to time. By accident, Mike slipped, fell, and injured/dislocated a shoulder. Some of the pictures showed him holding his arm very still, head bent low from pain. I decided not to publish these photos of Mike as a patient, as they seemed personal. His caving team deserves lots of credit for immediately morphing into his cave rescue team, but most of all Mike should be appreciated for what he was able to do, helping to get himself out of that very narrow, upwards entrance. Of the nominations for the Grotto OTSOAG (One Tough Son of a Gun), envelope please, yes, the award goes to: Mike Stufflebeam! So we start out SAG RAG Volume #39 with a trifecta - cave rescue, cave clean-up, and new cave map. Well OK, let's decrease on the cave rescues. Hang in there everybody, pandemics don't last forever. **BB**

## Shasta Area Grotto - Meeting of the Executive Committee

*Date:* 6 December 2019

*Location:* Broeckel's house

*Present:* Tabitha Viner, Doug Viner, Liz Wolff, Jim Wolff, Melanie Jackson, Steve Hobson, Barbara Stufflebeam, Mike Stufflebeam, Kit McKinley, Judy Broeckel, Bill Broeckel, Dave Smith

Meeting called to order at 7:51pm

*Presiding:* Steve Hobson

Minutes from the 27 September 2019 meeting were accepted as read.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Previous Bank Balance (checking)	\$1017.94
Expenses	0
<u>Deposits (12/6/2019)</u>	<u>80.00</u>
Current checking balance	1097.94
<u>Petty cash</u>	<u>116.00</u>
Total	1213.94

Dues will be due at the next meeting. Still \$5 per family.

### WEBSITE AND E-RAG

There has been no progress on getting the membership application on the website. Steve Hobson will contact Angela Hooker about formatting the document for publication on the website.

### SAG RAG REPORT

Approximately 25 people receive the printed SAG Rags. Articles are needed to fill the next issue, which will be the Nov-Dec issue. Bill will try to get the issue out by end the of year the, possibly with a map from The Marbles.

### LISTSERVE

Nothing to report.

### CORRESPONDENCE

- Dave Smith will submit the IO report.
- One more survey trip is required to finish the Paul Gibson Cave map.
- The NSS conservation expo is at the end of this month; 29-31 December in Huntsville, AL.
- Dave Smith got a request via the website for the location of Forest Glen Cave. LW gave the requester the exact coordinates. Further requests from the same person were forwarded to Brad Rust.
- A scout named Jacob asked Liz Wolff some general cave questions.

### 2020 CALENDAR

Ed: All bets are off for the time being.

continued

- February 28 at Wolff's; caving activity TBD
- March 27 at Broeckel's; caving activity TBD
- April 24 at Dave's in Chico; caving at Wilson Lake
- May 29, Hat Creek camp out – Scouting for convention caves
- June 26 at Stufflebeam's; caving activity TBD
- July 24, Medicine Lake Highlands campout
- August 28 at Wolff's; caving activity TBD
- September 25 at Steve's; preparations for SAR training (10 Oct)
- October 23 at Melanie's; caving activity TBD
- Dec 4 at Broeckel's; cookies, nominations, etc.

#### OLD BUSINESS

- NSS convention 2021 in Weed, CA. Nothing new to report. Liz provided to the group with a provisional list of caves and a list of possible tourist activities. Next steps will involve establishing GPS coordinates for chosen caves, and grotto members signing up to lead cave trips.
- Cave rescue training with SAR went well. SAR split into two teams and the simulation was effective and well-received.
- There were two Pluto's Cave callouts this past year. Bill Broeckel will write a report for the NSS American Caving Accidents (ACA) journal on the callout with which he assisted. Cavers were not called to a second incident wherein a solitary caver fell and hurt an arm. Two deputies and a SAR person walked the individual out of the cave. Melanie Jackson will provide details of the event from the SAR perspective, and Bill will write a report for the ACA.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- There will be a Marbles trip in 2020 on Labor Day weekend (4-9 September). Enough interest was exhibited to be able to employ mules to pack in on the 4<sup>th</sup> and return on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### TRIP REPORTS

- Sand Cave had a 2 x 1' hole that was repaired. The repair is holding and there is no new trash. The Forest Service was notified of the hole and some missing gate bars. The Stufflebeams will write an article on the repair for the SAG Rag.
- Dave Smith went to Tehama County and found something that might be an ice cave.
- Over Labor Day, the Broeckels and Wolffs went to LABE and finished the Maze Cave survey, ending up with a total of 2577'. Exploration for a sink hole detected on an aerial photo was not successful on ground patrol. A new cave was found, however, and Liz and Bill surveyed it to 142.7'

#### NOMINATIONS

- Dave Smith for Secretary
- Steve Hobson for Chairperson
- Melanie Jackson for Treasurer
- Barbara Stufflebeam for Vice Chairperson

There was discussion on setting the term for all offices at two years. The consensus decision was that the change was not needed. Doug Viner thanked the members who have served on the board.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11pm  
Minutes taken by Tabitha Viner

TV

## **Sand Cave Cleanup                    by Barbara Stufflebeam**

On 11/17/19 at 0900 hours, members of the Shasta Area Grotto responded to a report of erosion damage at Sand Cave in Siskiyou County. The following members were present: Steve Hobson, Melanie Jackson, Liz and Jim Wolff, Bill and Judy Broeckel, Mike and Barb Stufflebeam.

Upon arrival, we observed that an area under a cement barrier had eroded and was allowing runoff from the highway to drain directly into the cave. Utilizing the two bags of cement that Steve brought, some chicken wire, and a large amount of water brought by Melanie, the grotto members were able to make repairs and stop the run off from entering the cave.

Upon closer inspection of the cave, we observed that someone had left three old television monitors at the entrance to the cave. Fortunately this illegal dumper had not thrown these items down into the pit of the cave so retrieval and disposal of the televisions was simple.



SAG at Sand Cave Work site. 11-17-19

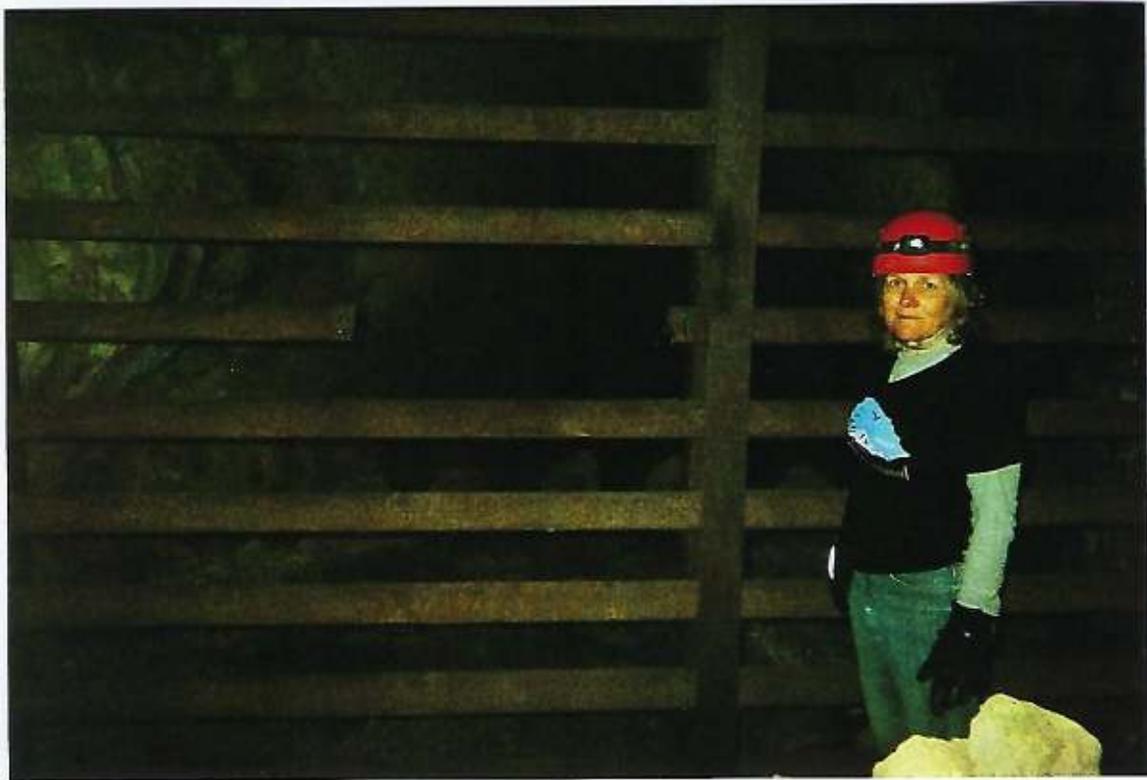
continued

Utilizing a ladder that Steve Hobson brought we descended into the cave. It was noted that several bars had been cut from each gate thus allowing entry into the cave in both directions. An examination of the cuts showed that they were most likely made by a portable cutting torch. No fingerprints were lifted from the scene and no suspects identified. The cut bars were later located near the repair and were left at the location. Photos of the damaged gates were taken and the proper authorities were notified.

The cave was explored in both directions and a fair amount of trash was cleaned up. The trash and television monitors were hauled from the location by Melanie. She assured they would be properly disposed of.

As a side note, this was Mike's first visit to this cave since the late 1970's. In those days the locals referred to this cave as "Caterpillar Cave". This name was given because it was rumored to have been found by a bulldozer driver whose machine fell into it while cutting the highway. No cavers were injured in the repairing and cleanup of this cave.

**BS**



Judy Broeckel at compromised Sand Cave gate. 11-17-19

## Small Group Self Cave Rescue by Barbara Stufflebeam

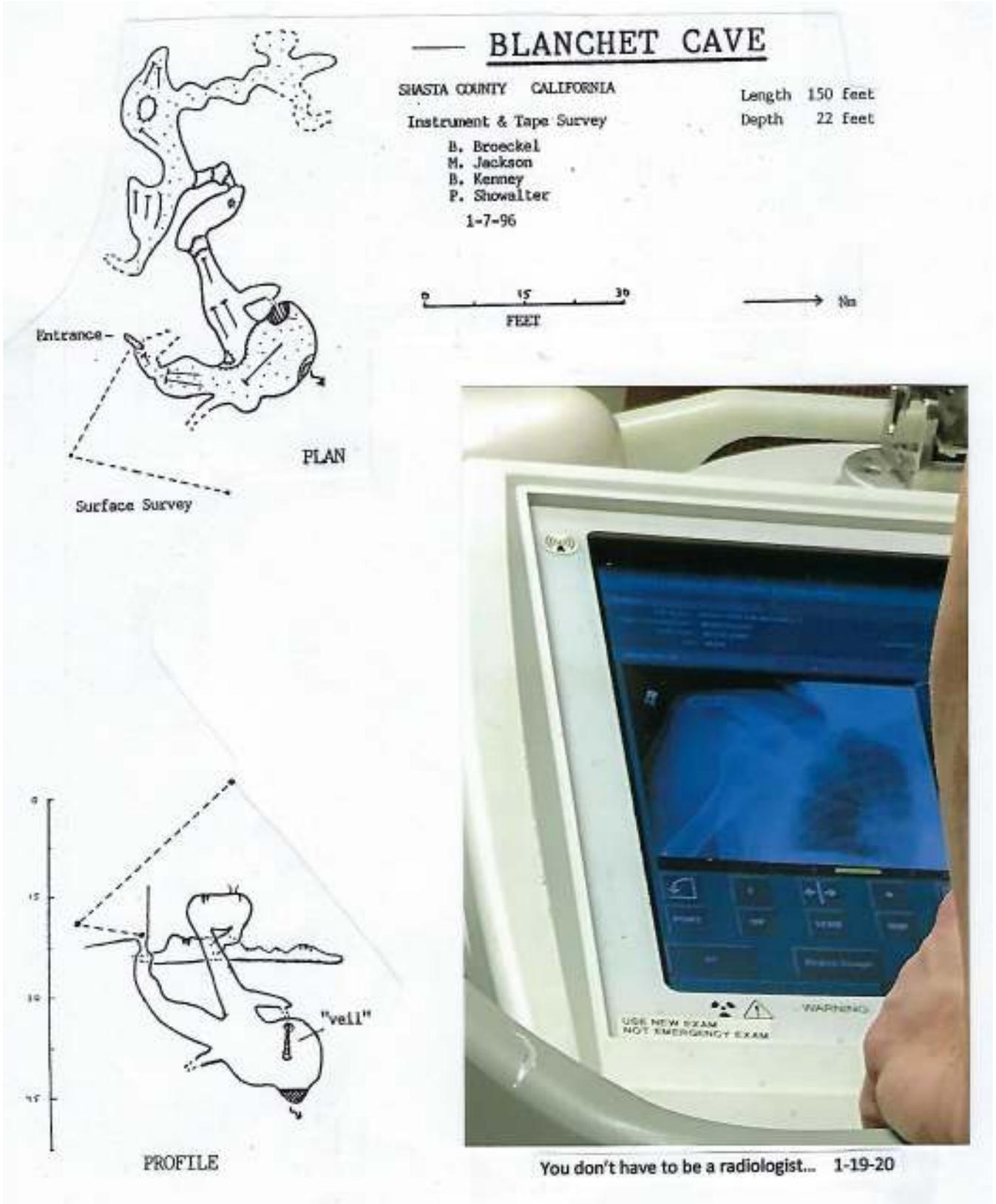
Sunday Jan 19, 2020

We were very much looking forward to taking our friends Bill and Tori on their first 'caving adventure', an easy roadside limestone cave in Shasta County. Our friend and fellow caver, Steve Hobson, had arranged to meet us at 11:00 am near the caves. We had never been to these caves, Boy Scout and Blanchet, and we were looking forward to a fun day discovering new caves. Though it had rained a few days prior, today the skies were clear and cool. A 20 minute drive found Steve waiting for us. Quickly we retrieved our caving gear and donned our coveralls. Getting to Boy Scout Cave required trudging about 100 ft. through vines, thorns and overgrown bushes to a limestone out cropping. The five of us entered Boy Scout Cave where we were joined by Shervon, her 5 year old daughter and a friend. Boy Scout Cave has interesting mud formations and water features. Within the cave a very fast moving river flows carving sinewy caverns and creating smooth hollow shafts of mud and limestone. We crawled around about an hour and a half before exiting Boy Scout for our second cave adventure of the day: Blanchet. At this point Shervon and her group would exit the cave, call it a day and depart. Our group: Steve, Mike, Barbara, Bill and Tori set out to locate nearby Blanchet Cave. The entrance to Blanchet is a small narrow 2x2 opening in the ground and requires a 40 foot down-climb through a narrow, rocky, muddy passage to reach the lower cavern. The same river runs through both caves and is located in a large cavern 40 ft. underground. Of our group Steve, Mike and Tori entered Blanchet. Bill went to the truck to take a much needed break while Barbara investigated some nearby breakdown.

Mike was the first to enter Blanchet, followed by Steve and then Tori. At 40 feet underground the large interior cavern area consisted of packed mud sloping towards the river. Mike eyed a small crawl space on the opposite side of the river. Mike, by nature, is inquisitive and he decided to cross the river to investigate the passage further. As Mike approached the river the mud gave out under him and he lost his footing falling head first into the river striking his shoulder and helmet on the rocks. Later, it would turn out that Mike had dislocated his right shoulder and left a one inch dent in his helmet. Steve immediately went to assist Mike. It would take 30 minutes to move Mike, who was now injured and sopping wet, to an area on the slope where he could sit without sliding back towards the river. It quickly became apparent that Mike had serious injuries, so Steve assessed the situation and came up with a rescue plan. Fortunately for Mike, Steve is a Cave Rescue instructor. Realizing that he would require a sling, rope and harness for Mike's extraction he sent Tori topside to gather the needed items. These items would become critical components of Mike's rescue. Meanwhile topside, Tori gathered the rope, harness and webbing while appraising Bill and Barbara of the rescue. As Tori, Bill and Barbara made their way back to Blanchet, Mike's screams could be heard emanating up from the interior of the cave.

The rescue would take another 2 hours. Bill would down-climb into the cave conveying the requested items. Steve would fit Mike with a sling, harness and rope. Tori and Barbara would create a belay to keep Mike from slipping back down into the cave. To exit the cave Mike would need to climb the 40 foot vertical narrow, rocky, muddy shaft. He would end up doing most of it on his back. Mike at times would stand on Steve's helmet or shoulders as there was no room for assistance except from above or below. Mike's shoulder injury would limit his ability to turn his neck impacting his route finding. It would hinder his navigation of the obstacles that he would have to overcome to exit the cave. Below him, Steve would position Mike's feet on footholds so Mike could push upwards. From above, Bill, would direct Mike's upper body

continued



# BLANCHET CAVE

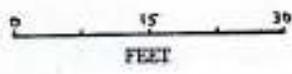
SIESTA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

Instrument & Tape Survey

Length 150 feet

Depth 22 feet

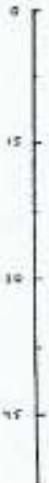
- B. Broeckel
  - M. Jackson
  - B. Kerney
  - P. Showalter
- 1-7-96



Entrance

PLAN

Surface Survey



"well"

PROFILE



You don't have to be a radiologist... 1-19-20

contortions for positioning around rocks and topside Tori and Barbara maintained tension on the rope so that no upward gain would be lost by Mike slipping back into the cave. The progress was slow and painful. At times only an inch or less. Limited cavity space would require Mike to repeatedly lift his injured shoulder and dislocated arm either above his head, or other various positions, to navigate the narrow passage. Thus he removed his arm from the sling. His screams reverberated in the chamber and could be heard top side. Finally, Bill emerged from the cave entrance. A few minutes later the top of Mike's head became visible. He was still about a foot underground. Meanwhile, Bill, while directing Mike to line up his upper body for exit from the cave, grabbed Mike by his caving suit and proceeded to haul him out. Even as he screamed in pain Mike insisted that Bill keep pulling him out. Finally, 2.5 hours after being injured Mike was above ground. (Note: Tori and Barbara successfully belayed Mike for the 2 hours as he was exiting the cave and prevented him from sliding back into it.) Once back at the truck the drive to the hospital would take an additional hour and a half.

Sopping wet and muddy for over 4 hours the diagnosis at the hospital would be a dislocated shoulder. Two weeks later an MRI by his Orthopedic Surgeon would reveal a final diagnosis of a cracked humerus, partly torn rotator cuff and a torn ancillary nerve.

### **My Thoughts on the Cave Rescue**

After giving it a great deal of thought I have come to realize that there were four components that needed to be in play for the small group self-rescue to be successful. If any one of the components had been missing the outcome would not have been as good nor the rescue as swift.

1) Steve Hobson. We had requested the directions to this cave and Steve offered to spend his day caving with us. Steve practices cave rescue with Siskiyou County Search and Rescue; enjoys canyoneering; and is a very experienced caver. During the rescue Steve fashioned the splint and Mike stood on Steve's shoulder and helmet as Steve pushed him upward.

2) Rappelling gear. The day prior we had taught our friends Bill and Tori to rappel and ascend. Not for vertical caving but because in April Bill and Mike would summit Island Peak, Nepal (elevation 20,000+). The summit requires knowledge of ascending and rappelling. The morning of the caving accident Bill inquired as to utilizing his newly developed skills in a vertical cave. At the last minute we tossed in our harnesses, ropes, and other rappelling/ascending gear. The rope and harness proved invaluable in extracting Mike from the cavern 40 feet below ground. Once the rope was fed through the cave entrance Tori and I were responsible to pull Mike out and to prevent him from sliding backwards.

3) Belaying. The previous day I had belayed Bill and Tori as they learned to rappel and ascend. Belaying offers an additional safety level so that climbers don't fall to their death. During the rescue I belayed Mike and kept him from sliding back down the slippery, muddy shaft. Because of the practice the day before I knew to wrap the rope around my hips to present an extra layer of tension. In this manner, Tori and I were able to keep a 200 lb. injured man from sliding downwards.

4) Mike had the grit and determination to lift his dislocated arm above his head (when necessary) and to assist in his self-rescue regardless of pain.

The small group self-rescue took all 5 people (Bill down-climbed the shaft to help and later helped pull Mike out once he came within sight) and lasted 2.5 hours followed by the 1.5 hour drive to the ER.

If one of the above components had been missing we would not have been able to self-rescue. Alternatively the outcome would not have been as good.

continued

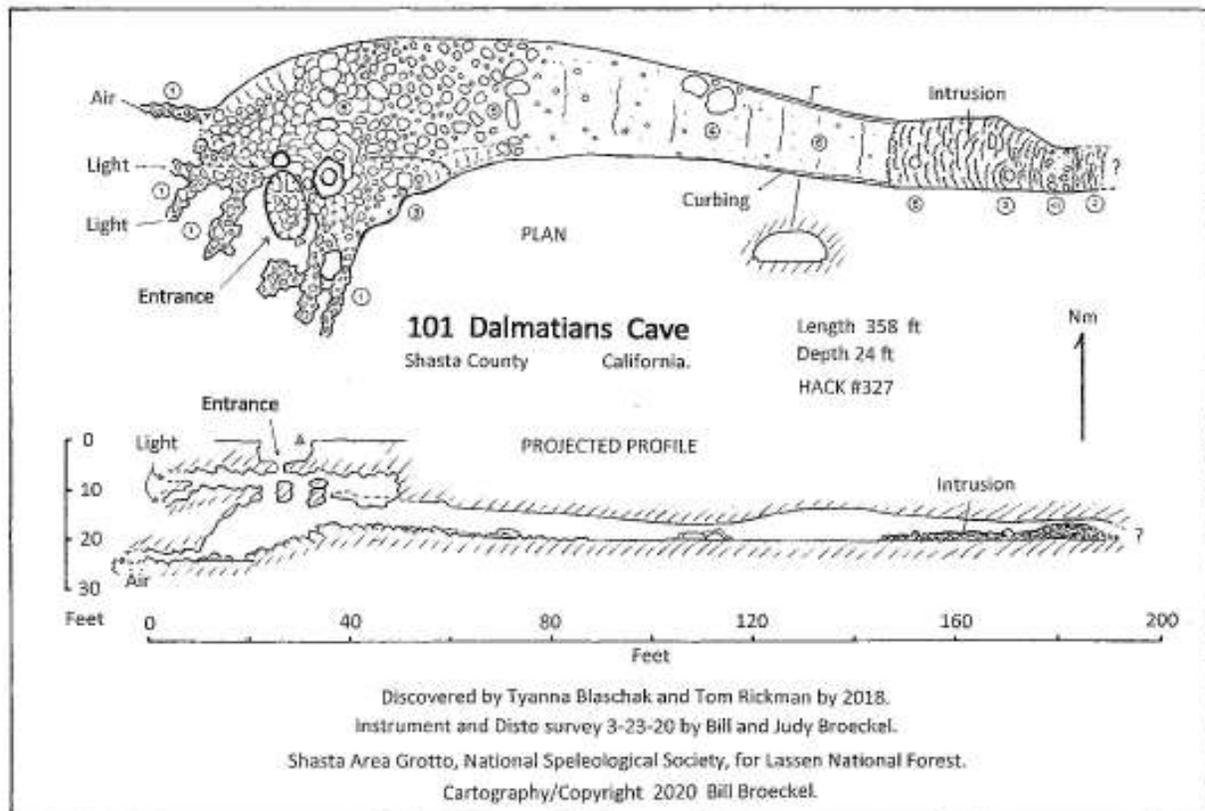
Remember that Mike was sopping wet from falling in the underground river. The cave was about 40 degrees. I would have had to drive 30 minutes to place a call out to area cavers for rescue. The nearest caver was 1 ½ hours away. Next I would have called 911, driven back to the cave parking area, and waited for help while Bill and Tori looked after Mike.

I feel that for whatever reason this incident was meant to happen, but that God in His goodness, made sure we had what we needed for the best outcome.

**BS**

Entrance to Blanchet Cave. 1-19-20





Map: 101 Dalmatians Cave

## 101 Dalmatians Cave by Bighorn Broeckel

A couple years ago, Tom Rickman and Tyanna Blaschak reported a number of Shasta County lava caves in need of survey. One by one, we have been working down the list. However, a series of small caves and a pair of bigger ones in a remote location still needed to be done.

In March we got after that remote pair. We walked right by the large skylight entrances to Cave #67, just didn't see it. But then we came right up on the narrow, inconspicuous entrance to Cave #101. We completed the survey on 101 Dalmatians Cave. From a breakdown complex just inside the entrance, the cave drops down 20 feet into a bona fide lava tube passage that all too soon ends with an intrusion. Total passage length is 358-ft, tied with Grinch 1 Cave for 33<sup>rd</sup> longest cave on the project.

All the dogs could hide in there and Cruella De Vii would never find them. But still probably not a good idea. On our way back we saw Cave #67, looking good, maybe a top ten cave for the area, still needs survey, maybe after Covid 19 dies down. **BB**



Entrance to Blanchet Cave. 1-19-20.  
For more on Blanchet Cave see SAG RAG Vol 15 Num 2, March 1996.

**SAG RAG**  
2916 Deer Mdws Rd  
Yreka CA 96097

**STAMP**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Page 1	COVER: Covid 19 caving cartoon
Page 2	Calendar and Summary
Page 3	Dec Meeting Minutes – T Viner
Page 5	Sand Cave Work Trip – B. Stufflebeam
Page 7	Blanchet Cave Rescue – B. Stufflebeam
Page 11	101 Dalmatians Cave – B. Broeckel

**TO:**