

# TAG Tour Tales

## 2024 NSS Convention, Tuesday 7/2 Sewanee, TN

### **Volunteer Opportunities at Fine Arts Salon**

Volunteers are needed to monitor the Fine Arts Salon in 4-hour shifts from Monday to Friday. Shifts are from 9 am to 1 pm and 1 pm to 5 pm. Please sign up at the volunteer desk at registration.

### **Additional Volunteer Opportunities**

We have multiple other volunteer opportunities available, including driving golf carts to shuttle people from parking areas to sessions. Please sign up for these roles at the volunteer desk.

### **Registration Information and Hours**

Don't forget to bring your ID to registration. Arm bands for beverages at functions will be issued during registration, and volunteers will need to verify your birth date.

#### Registration Hours:

- Monday through Thursday: 8 AM – 5 PM
- Friday: 8 AM – Noon

## Salon Information

### Salon Award Program

- **Date:** Thursday Night
- **Location:** The Caverns
- **Short Show:** 5:30 PM CT
- **Long Show:** 7:30 PM CT

### Shuttle Buses

- **Departure:** From SAS at 4 PM CT, big white tents (Banquet site)
- **Shuttles:** Three shuttles will run to the venue (20-minute one-way drive), starting at 4 PM CT with multiple cycles.
- **Return:** Long Show ends at 10 PM CT. Shuttles will start runs back to SAS immediately after the show. Please be prompt.

### Driving and Parking

- **Option:** Drive your own car and park at The Caverns for more flexibility.

### Big Room Cave

- **Availability:** Open all day on Thursday for event attendees
- **Details:** A fun, horizontal, commercial cave that is wild and free to explore! Enjoy The Caverns property before the event.

### Time Change Notice

Tuesday's Special Session on Exploring Caves Beyond Public Land will now run from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm instead of 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

## 2024 LUMINARY TALK SCHEDULE

This year, we are proud to showcase three outstanding women cavers as part of our Luminary Talks! Due to some conflicting scheduling information in the Program Guide, we are reiterating the official schedule below for your reference. All talks will take place from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM CT in McCrory Hall Auditorium!

- **WEDNESDAY:** Dr. Hazel Barton
- **THURSDAY:** Emily Davis (Classic)
- **FRIDAY:** Dr. Louise Hose

Don't miss these inspiring presentations!

## **2024 Cave Photography Session**

**Date:** Wednesday, July 3

**Time:** 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

### **Schedule:**

- **2:00 PM** - Eugene Vale & Ed Schultz: Introduction to Section & Session
- **2:10 PM** - Eugene Vale: Introduction to Digital Photography
- **2:45 PM** - Kenneth Ingham: Notes from a Photo Salon Judge
- **3:20 PM** - Hope Brooks: Cave Photography From A Model's Perspective: Thoughts for Models and Photographers Alike

**Business Meeting:** Cave Photography Section Business Meeting immediately following the last presentation.

**Contact:** For more information, contact Eugene Vale at 636-766-7416.

## **Book Signings Schedule**

**Tuesday, July 2**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM:

- Roger Brucker and Carolina Shrewsbury signing "Mama Says, DON'T CAVE. Ergor's Unbelievable Cave Stories."
- John Lamar Cole signing "The Ephemeral Everything."
- Larry Matthews signing "Caves of the South Cumberland Plateau" at the NSS bookstore.

## **Wednesday, July 3**

- 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM: Rick Stanton signing "Aquanaut."

All book signings will be held at Speleobooks except Larry Matthews will be at the NSS bookstore.

## **Longtime Member Recognition**

At the Awards Banquet on Friday evening, we will honor NSS members who have been with us for 50, 60, and 70 years. Longtime members, please visit the NSS store to pick up your veteran's pin, free of charge.

## **TERMINAL SYPHONS UPDATE**

The Terminal Syphons show will start at 8:30pm on Wednesday, not 9pm. If you pre-ordered a 40th Anniversary Terminal Syphons t-shirt or want one before Wednesday contact Albert Ogden. The show will start with the regular Syphons and will end with the caver band, The Cave Rats with the help of the Syphons. The Rats will perform songs by The Clash, The Pretenders, B-52-s, Blondie, the Ramones and other favorites with their great female vocalist. So, stick around for the whole performance. And make sure to dance with our musician brethren in the Muchas Gracious band on Friday night.

## **Donate Your Items to the Convention Auction**

Want to help support the NSS? Every year at the convention, we

hold an auction of items donated by members to raise funds for a cause. Do you have any notable or valuable items for the auction? We'd love it if you would consider donating them! This year, all proceeds will benefit Vertical Bill's Tower.

Auction Details:

- Date: Wednesday evening at the Convention
- Location: NSS Bookstore

How to Donate:

- Bring your items to the NSS Bookstore at the Convention.

Thank you for your support and contributions!

## **Cafeteria Dining Information**

Breakfast:

Days: Monday - Friday

- Time: 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM
- Cost: \$8.00 plus tax
- Payment: Cash or credit

Lunch:

Days: Monday - Friday

- Time: 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
- Cost: \$12.50 plus tax
- Payment: Cash or credit

## **Ice Availability**

Ice is available at the on-campus campground. We deliver in the mornings and early evenings for \$5 per bag. If you have an ice emergency, talk to a staff member, and we'll assist between deliveries.

## **Decon and Gear Cleaning Station Information**

The decon and gear cleaning station will be operational starting

Sunday night.

Decon Hours:

- 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Additional Facilities:

- Water hoses, brushes, and tubs available after hours.
- After hours hot water bath drop-off is also available.

Ensure your gear is clean and ready with our convenient cleaning options!

### **Come and see the NEW Cave Sim**

CaveSim is open for everyone to explore for free just outside Registration. Come join us to see the brand new system, with three levels, over 50 formations, helmet tracking, highly-realistic passage, and a padded floor. We are open from 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday, and 9am-noon on Friday.

### **NSS Writing Workshop Schedule - Thursday, July 4, 2024**

**Co-Chairs:** Jo Schaper and Michael Ray Taylor

**Location:** Simmonds Hall, Room 10 (Map location 25)

#### **10:00 - 10:30 AM**

- Greetings, Introductions, and Cave Writers Sign-Up Sheet

#### **10:30 - 10:55 AM**

- **"SPELEOTHEMS, a Great Little Guide That Took a While"** by Will White
  - Description: Will White, a member of the Karst Waters Board, will describe the road to publication of the new KWI field book

"Speleothems: A Guide to the Speleothem Form and Identification." (Signing at Speleobooks)

**11:00 - 11:25 AM**

- **"Ergor Rubreck's Story Funhouse"** by Roger Brucker
  - Description: Celebrated explorer and cave writer Roger Brucker, under his humorist alter ego Ergor Rubreck, will discuss writing cave humor and his new book "Mamma Says DON'T CAVE." (Signing at Speleobooks)

**11:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

- Open Readings—please sign up with Jo Schaper

**12:00 - 1:15 PM**

- Arts and Letters Salon Members' Lunch and Business Meeting (New members welcome! A new issue of "Illuminations" will be available)

**1:15 - 1:55 PM**

- **"Flash Critique Sessions"** by Schaper and Taylor
  - Alternate: **"Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Writing and Art"** — discussion moderated by Schaper

**2:00 - 2:25 PM**

- **"Ellison's Revisited"** by Bill Steele and Ryan Mauer
  - Description: Steele, an explorer of Ellison's Cave, and cave photographer Ryan Mauer discuss the new republication and expansion of Marion O. Smith's classic 1977 book, "The Exploration and Survey of Ellison's Cave." (Available at Speleobooks)

**2:30 - 2:55 PM**

- **"iPhone to ISBN and Beyond: A Journey to Publication"** by John LaMar Cole
  - Description: Poet, musician, and caver John LaMar Cole describes the path to print for his new collection, "the ephemeral everything." (Signing at Speleobooks)

### **3:00 - 3:55 PM**

- **"Cavers Are Characters"** by Michael Ray Taylor
  - Description: In this hands-on workshop, seasoned cave author Michael Ray Taylor will help participants observe, record, and write artful and engaging character descriptions of their caver friends and colleagues.

### **4:00 PM - ?**

- Open Readings and Closing Thoughts

## **Cuban Caver - New Talk in Cultures of Caving Session - Wed 4pm**

After trying for 4 years, we are lucky that Dr. Jean Robaina's visa to come to his first NSS convention, all the way from his native Cuba, came through. Thank you, NSS, for supporting this effort every time we've reached out. Jean's been an active caver in Cuba for 20 years and is currently president of the Artemisa Province Speleological Committee (part of the famous Sociedad Espeleologica de Cuba), as well as a Geography Professor at Cuba's Universidad de Ciencias Pedagógicas Enrique José Varona. He will give a talk around 4pm in the Cultures of Caving Session, this Wednesday, July 3rd, in Simmonds Hall Rm 567 (the whole session, which has a great line-up, runs 1-5pm). His talk is titled "Sharing Speleological Knowledge: Experiences of Cuba's "Origen" Grotto". Come meet Jean, who will be available for questions right after his talk.

Note that his talk is taking the slot I was originally going to use for my own talk, but Jean's contribution is such a better use of that time.

Hope to see you there, and please help me welcome Jean to convention and the to US.

Maria Alejandra Perez

## **Vertical Training Commission Table**

Visit the Vertical Training Commission (VTC) at the Wood-Alligood Gymnasium on the following dates:

- **Tuesday, 7/2:** 9 am - 5 pm
- **Wednesday, 7/3:** 9 am - 5 pm

We will have copies of the new book "Basic Vertical Techniques" available for sale. Additionally, supplies will be provided for making a set of cowstails for your vertical kit, while supplies last. Cowstails are free, with a suggested \$10 donation. See you there!

## **Vertical Section Contest – Volunteers Needed and Participant Information**

### **Volunteers Needed**

Looking for a volunteer opportunity with the NSS Vertical Section? We need help for the Vertical Contests on Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday. Sign up or just show up!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0944AFAA2FA0FD0-volunteer>

## **Entering the Vertical Contest?**

Planning to participate but short on time? Sign up ahead of time for a time slot, and we'll bump you to the head of the line once you're geared up and signed in!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0944AFAA2FA0FD0-vertical>

## **Stay Connected**

The NSS Vertical Section is active on Facebook! Look for events and information on our FB Page and help us determine new directions for the Section.

## **Safety Reminder**

Protect yourselves from ticks and chiggers. We have received some complaints about their presence on campus. Please remember you are in a wooded area in Southern TN.

## **Vendor Ads**

### **Pigeon Mountain Industries (PMI)**

ANNOUNCING A NEW PRODUCT! We have a limited number of pre-production NEWLY REDESIGNED double chest rollers available for purchase. These are combined with newly redesigned chest harness for rope-walkers. Only 19 available at Convention only.

Don't miss out on an incredible deal at the end of the hallway! Pigeon Mountain Industries (PMI) is here vending spools of rope at unbeatable discounted rates. Static and dynamic ropes available. Hurry down to the end of the hallway and grab your spool today.

## **New NSS Apparel Now Available!**

Visit the NSS Bookstore & Office to discover our latest apparel additions!

We now offer:

- Four new colors of baseball caps
- New black bat logo hoodies

Don't miss out—they're all the rage!

## **Big Sale on Cave Gear!**

Visit the On Rope 1 booth on Vendors Row for a special sale on essential cave gear and PMI pit rope. Don't miss out on these great deals!

## **Cave Legs Kneepads**

Caver Co-op has Cave Legs kneepads. Knee-shin in two sizes and knee only pads.