

THE CASCADE CAVER

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COMING EVENTS

Monday, August 9, 1965 Regulat Meeting, 8P.M.
Dr. Hallidays, 1117-36th East
Seattle, Washington
Numerous Field Trips Contact Field Trip Chairman
Luurt Niewhenhuis, EAst 2-3251

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NATIONWIDE CAVING MEET AT CAVE RIDGE by Bill Halliday

By delightful coincidence, part of the Oregon Grotto came up the same weekend that a Montana contingent got leave from ROTC camp at Fort Lewis and brought some friends along. As a result, on July 25th, cavers from Washington, Oregon, California, Montana, Florida, Virginia and Tennessee made the long tedious climb to Cave Ridge.

By and large, it was a fun afternoon. Groups worked out in Hellhole, Newton and Cascade Caves. Vern Frese's ascenders are becoming increasingly popular. I had my first look at Cascade Cave, and found it to hairy for the kids - Don Dilley had made it sound like a beginner's cave.

The only real accomplishment was the mapping of Cascade Cave by the Oregon group, who say they found only 500 feet of passage. Their map isn't back yet, however, so Luurt, Don & Co. will have to stew with impatience for a while yet. As I write, they're back up at the cave hunting for more passage.

The 40-foot "chimney" between cement block silos at Vern Frese's plant is becoming an increasingly popular practice area. Let's have some night practice when the sun starts setting earlier. And some qualified instructors in rappelling!

HISTOPLASMOSIS AND SPELUNKING

by William R. Halliday, M.D. Fellow, American College
of Chest Physicians

The June, 1965 CAVALIER CAVER, published by the University of Virginia Grotto, includes a 9-page book review of Sweany, Henry C. 1960. Histoplasmosis. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois, 538 pp. The reviewer is Warren P. Brown, D.C. (chiropractic), editor of the CAVALIER CAVER.

On the basis of Dr. Sweany's book, Brown reaches a conclusion that seems to differ from the concepts of most authorities on the subject: he feels that histoplasmosis "does not present a considerable threat to the spelunker".

Conversations with Dr. Sweany, Dr. Michael Furcolow and other contributors to Dr. Sweany's book - and a rereading of the book itself - lead me to conclude that Brown has misinterpreted the book, one section of which specifically discusses several spelean epidemics of histoplasmosis.

FURTHERMORE, DR. SWEANY'S BOOK, IN THE INTEREST OF SPACE, NECESSARILY IS FAR FROM A COMPLETE EVALUATION OF SPELEAN HISTOPLASMOSIS. It does not, for example, include the famous outbreak at Rocky Comfort Cave, Arkansas which first centered attention on this problem. Cavers can readily refer to this epidemic through my atricle in NSS Bulletin 11, p. 28, written just before "Cave Sickness" at Rocky Comfort Cave was proven to be histoplasmosis. My article Medical Hazards to Cave Explorers in the June 1958 GP Magazine is a later summary, but a bit out of date because of subsequent reports of sporadic cases in other American caves. A great deal of pertinent information is readily available. Brown is way off in saying that "(1) the subject is relatively new and material is limited; (2) a more complete study than is found in the reference could be obtained only with difficulty and would be superfluous;".

Brown at least implies that it is not worth taking precautions against histoplasmosis in caves. I am not going to speak for the parts of the world where virtually every spelunker gets histo, usually sooner rather than later. In caving in the United States, however, data accumulated to date strongly indicates that taking precautions against stirring up dust in caves in regions of histoplasmosis endemnicity is very worthwhile - and that an occasional case is to be expected despite all caution.

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