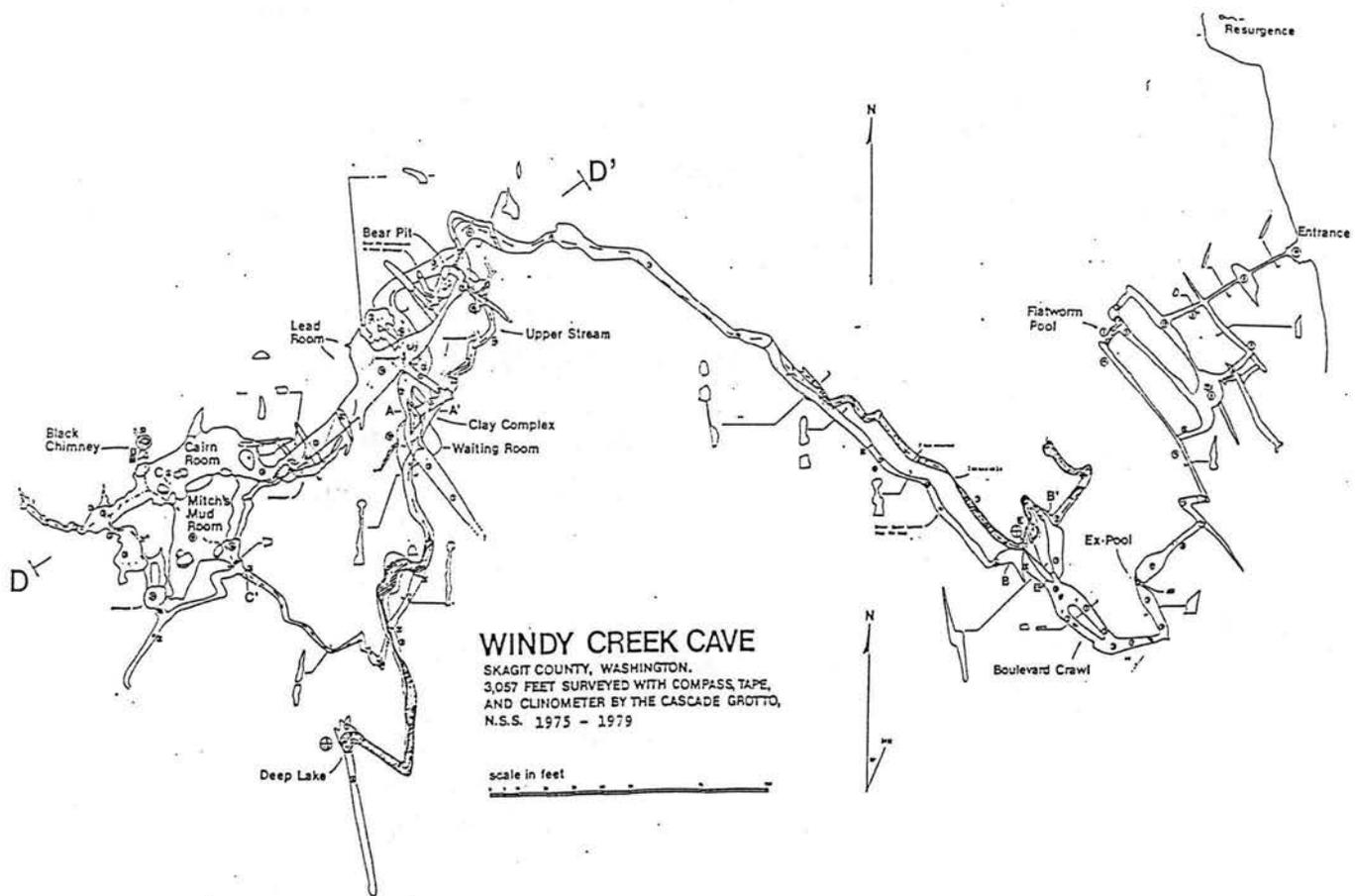


Cascade Caver

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

September & October 1995, Volume 34 No. 6&7



Cascade Caver

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All material to be published, subscription requests, renewals, address changes, and exchange publications should be sent to the Grotto address.

GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$10.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is free to regular members. Membership for each additional family member is \$2.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$10.00 per year.

GROTTO ADDRESS

Cascade Grotto; P.O. Box 75663; Seattle, WA 98125-0663. This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

GROTTO OFFICERS

Chairman Paul Ostby (206) 823-5107
Vice Chairman Tom Strong (206) 938-3957
Sec./Treasurer Bruce Nagata (206) 706-0339

OTHER POSITIONS

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Regional Rep. Ben Tompkins (206) 546-8025
Editors Paul Ostby (206) 823-5107
Mark Sherman (206) 524-8780
Steve Sprague (360) 387-3162

MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the University of Washington, Room 6, in the

basement of Johnson Hall. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 17 Grotto Meeting 7:00
Nomination of 1996 officers
November 20 Vertical Practice 6:00
Vertical Club in Redmond
November 18 VICEG's 25th Anniversary
Party
Victoria, BC
December 15 Grotto Christmas Party 7:00
Paul and Katrina Ostby's
January 1 Ballots must be returned
(please vote before you start
to party)
January 19 Grotto Meeting 7:00
February 16 Grotto Meeting 7:00
March 15 NSS BOG Reception (in place
of the regular grotto meeting.
This is being held at Tom
Strong's House.
March 16 NSS Board of Governor's
Meeting

COVER

This month's cover is a reprint of the 1979 map of Windy Creek Cave

New Editors (again)

by Mark Sherman

As you might have noticed, the *Caver* has a little bit of a different look to it. Larry McTigue had to step down as the editor and in a moment of weakness, I along with Paul Ostby and Steve Sprague "volunteered" to give it a try. We will be alternating issues hoping that will allow us to do a decent job on each issue and will keep us from getting too burned out. Please send any articles to the Grotto PO Box or email them to either:

Paul Ostby -
74003.470@compuserve.com
Steve Sprague -
74362.2051@compuserve.com
Mark Sherman - mas@tc.fluke.com

It's been over 5 years since I last edited the *Caver* and with getting all the articles by email or on a disk it's so much easier. Now we just have to find a way to keep the articles coming in.

Seattle to Host NSS BOG Meeting

by Mark Sherman

The Cascade Grotto, Puget Sound and the Fourth Corner Grottos will be hosting the Spring 1996 NSS Board of Governor's meeting. Our bid was presented to the BOG at the NSS Convention this last July by Tom Strong, and was accepted. The date for the event was then set for the weekend of March 15-17, 1996. So far, we are

just in the planning stages for hosting this event.

For those that have never been to a BOG meeting, a typical BOG weekend consists of the following:

- A Friday night reception to meet with the NSS officers and BOG members.
- The BOG meeting on Saturday from roughly 9 - 5 then a dinner with another reception and possible program following.
- On Sunday there are caving or other sightseeing activities set up for the BOG members and other visitors.

Tom Strong (who was just re-elected to the BOG) has offered to host the Friday night reception at his house and now that we have a real date to work with, we are trying to settle on a hall where we can host the meeting and the dinner.

Some of the other items that we will be needing are:

- People to pick up the BOG members at SeaTac airport.
- Places for people to stay for the weekend.
- Suggestions for someone who can cater a dinner.
- Ideas for a short (20-30 minute) program on Saturday evening.
- People to act as tour guides for various activities on Sunday.

If anyone is interested in helping Tom and myself with any of these or the hundreds of other items needed to pull this thing off, please give us a call.

This will be an excellent opportunity for the local cavers to meet and talk with the officers of the NSS and to observe the workings of that organization. We're going to need your help to show them that there are people out here in Washington that have an interest in caves and caving and that the issues and concerns of Western cavers need to be addressed.

Vertical Practice - Nov. 20th

There will be another Vertical Night at the Vertical Club in Redmond. Karl Steinke is arranging for Grotto members to be admitted. Karl will be arriving there after 6:00 so show up anytime between then and 9:00. The cost to get in will be \$5.00 (half price) and you can rent shoes and/or harnesses there for an additional \$5.00 (bring your own if you have them).

Please see the map for the location of the Vertical Club.

VICEG's 25th Annual Meeting/Party

VICEG will be having it's twentyfifth annual general meeting (party!) on November 18th. It will held in Victoria. There is lots of floor and tent space available plus pick up and drop off at the ferry terminals. If anyone is interested in attending or would like more details, please contact Graham Heslop at (604) 595-3259.

Christmas Party

This year's Grotto Christmas party will be held at Paul and Katrina Ostby's house on Friday evening, December 15th from 7:00 to 11:00. This is a potluck, with Paul and Katrina providing a turkey and hot spiced cider. Please see the map for directions.

Paul & Katrina Ostby's house
8220 N.E. 122nd Place
Kirkland, WA 98034

Evolution in the Absence of Light

by Mike Fraley

One of my classes here at the UW is Biological Anthropology. While my professor (David P. Tracer) was talking about Evolution and Natural Selection and genes and all that stuff, I started wondering how cave organisms could possibly evolve without skin pigmentation. I e-mailed him and asked him that question, and for those of you who are interested, here is the response he gave me.

Mike,

Great question. There have been two proposals that I'm aware of to explain this phenomenon. One revolves around the concept of "somatic budget". Basically organisms have a pool of energy reserves that they can partition for different uses including growth and reproduction, and within "growth" to different organ systems. Given that energy nearly always seems to be a scarce resource in nature, it is

advantageous to organisms to use their budgets wisely - that is, to devote the minimum amount possible to growth of various systems and the rest to reproduction. If there is a cost to synthesizing melanin pigment, which there undoubtedly is, then organisms living in an environment where melanin gives no advantage would do best to forgo its production and channel their energy into other systems or perhaps reproduction. So if there is variability among organisms in melanin production (which again there undoubtedly is) then all else being equal "synthesizers" should be at a disadvantage relative to organisms who don't synthesize it and instead channel energy into characteristics that have true utility.

An alternative explanation, and one that is by no means as accepted as the first, was proposed by C. Loring Brace at UMichigan and is called "probable mutation effect". Brace argues that mutations, most of which impair protein production or function, occur all the time albeit at a slow rate. Many of these are not seen because they are at least somewhat harmful, and are selected out. However Brace argues that when selection for maintenance of a particular character is relaxed, that gives opportunity for mutations to creep in and be maintained. So he argues that the lack of pigmentation in cave dwelling creatures is the result of mutations which impaired pigment production (incidentally, this type of mutation is for some reason one of the most common in animals) and because there was no advantage or disadvantage to them (neither selection for or against

them), they were just perpetuated on. Again this theory is not well regarded but it's interesting nonetheless.

Windy Creek Cave Trip Report - September 9, 1995

by Mark Sherman

I'm rather embarrassed to say this, but after caving for 20 years here in the Northwest, I had never made it to Windy Creek Cave. There was always something going on whenever there was a trip scheduled. When I was cleaning up a bunch of mail at home, I found a copy of the Caver and saw that Gerry Thompson was going to lead a trip to the cave on September 9th (about 10 days away). I immediately marked the date on the calendar so my wife couldn't schedule me for something else and got hold of Gerry to see if the trip was still going.

Lane Holdcroft and I met Gerry & Richard Walters, Mike Jones (4th Corner Grotto), and Dave Eck from Oregon, near Concrete where we all piled into Gerry's van and headed up the road. The road is all on Crown Pacific Land and they have it gated twice, only one of which we were able to get the combination for.

It took us a little over 2 hours to make the hike to the cave. Since Gerry was the only member of the party to have been there before, he gave everyone a guided tour, pointing out all the large sinks and the other small caves in the area.

For those that haven't been there before, the cave is quiet extensive (by Washington standards) with over 3,000 feet of passage. We attempted to sign in at the register, but couldn't open the stupid box. (We brought it out of the cave on our return and finally managed to get it open. We were the first group to have signed it since 9/93, which means either nobody has been there, they didn't bother to sign in or they couldn't open the container either.) After the mud bath at the Ex-Pool and then the Boulevard Crawl the majority of the passage follows a pretty little stream, with the passage varying in width from about one to three feet.

We spent a little over an hour getting back to the Cairn Room. Dave, Lane and I then took turns snapping pictures while Gerry would lead the others out on a short little tour towards the Bear Pit. After about 30 or 40 minutes we started back out.

It took about 45 minutes to get back out with the only mishap being Gerry sticking his head in the mud at the Ex-Pool. He goes through it on his back and he wasn't going quite straight, so he got stuck. He then had to remove his helmet and he promptly planted his head right in the mud. After getting out, we had a little bite to eat and then headed back toward the car.

One of the real highlights of the trip (besides seeing a nice cave and meeting some interesting people) was seeing a big ol' black bear running down the hillside about 200 feet in front of us as we walked down the road. It was just the start of hunting season for grouse

and bear so he was probably a little nervous.

Nylon Highway Announcements

by Jeff Power

(As many of you may know, I am the new editor of the Nylon Highway. There are 2 new items I am incorporating into the Highway as regular features.

- A) Vertical Events calendar
- B) Classified ad section (Vertical gear & Vertical related things)

So I need everyone to send me a list of *any* vertical events that may be taking place from 15-Dec-95 onward. This can be things like Bridge day, the annual TAG fall cave in, Scheduled cave trips that have vertical in them, grotto vertical training/practice sessions, even VS BOG meetings.

The other thing I need are classified ads, buying, selling, vertical gear requests for donations, whatever, as long as its vertically oriented. (Commercial ads are encouraged as well, contact me for details). They will be free this issue to establish the item, Then beginning with No.42 will cost \$5.00/ad (No Personals !).

The deadline for No.41 is November 15, 1995 and as always, be on the lookout for articles !!!

Thanks a lot, with your help, the Nylon Highway will be great!

1995 NSS Convention

by Dick Garnick

Today is my first day back from the NSS Convention and tripping around Virginia. I visited (4) commercial caves and (1) private cave. I met up with Jeff Wheeler and Dawn Kiss (from Puget Sound Grotto), Dave & Peggy Kesner (from Gem State Grotto in Idaho) and one other Idaho caver for a trip into New River Cave. The cave has 6 or 7 miles of passage (more than all the limestone caves in Washington combined) and big rooms and formations. We went most of the way to the back of the cave to the waterfall. A great trip.

Tom Strong rode back to Washington DC with me. We visited Dixie Caverns, Grand Cavern, and Shenandoah Cavern on Saturday on the drive north.

As usual the Howdy Party on Monday night got a BIG rain with lightning hitting real close. Had dinner at the closing banquet with Rob Stitt, Bill Halliday, Ed Crawford and his wife.

The convention was good but I thought the programming at the Pendleton convention was better. Because there was a lack of caving at Pendleton, I think people were more into the programs.

Caving on the Internet

by Lane Holdcroft

The internet has a lot of caving information available using the World Wide Web. Usually you would use a WWW graphical browser like "netscape" or "mosaic". If you only have text available from your internet service provider, try "lynx".

Sherry's page referenced below links to about 100 different sites around the world. Locally, Rob's site is very interesting with a large number of caving song lyrics among many other things. The NSS site is fairly new.

Rob Stitt's home page: <http://www.halcyon.com/samara/stitt/welcome.html>

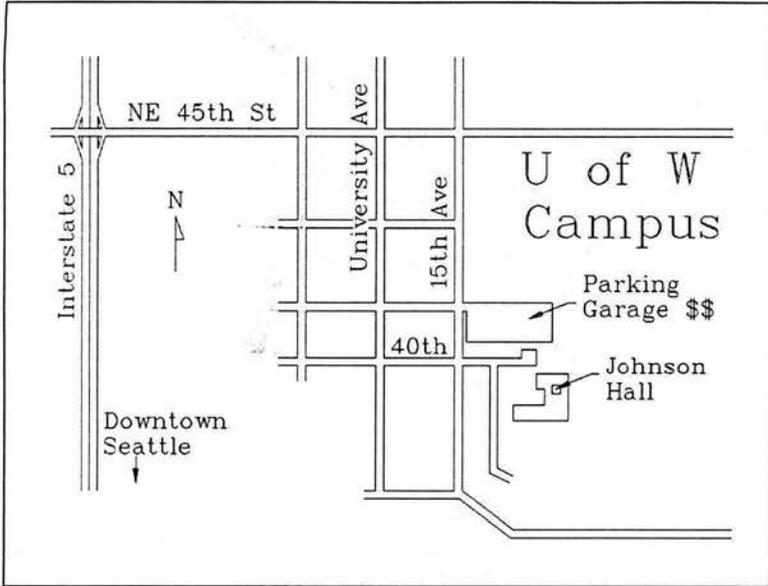
Sherry Mayo's extensive caving links: <http://rschp2.anu.edu.au:8080/cave/cavelink.html>

NSS site: <http://www.caves.org/~nss>

There is also the "Cavers Digest" which is an E-mail newlist. It's sort of like a caving newsgroup except that all of the info is received via E-mail. About 10 pages of text are sent every couple of days. It takes some time to read but there's a lot of good information.

For users of the cavers-digest there is a special help file available from the list server to explain how the newlist works. To get this file send the request to: listproc@speleology.cs.yale.edu

On the first line of the body (not the subject line), type "help cavers-digest" (without the quotes). (If you want to know about the list server in general, just send the command "help" to the same address).



The Cascade Grotto meets at 7:00 pm on the third Friday of each month in room 006 in the basement of Johnson Hall on the University of Washington campus.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings

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Paid to 99/99

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