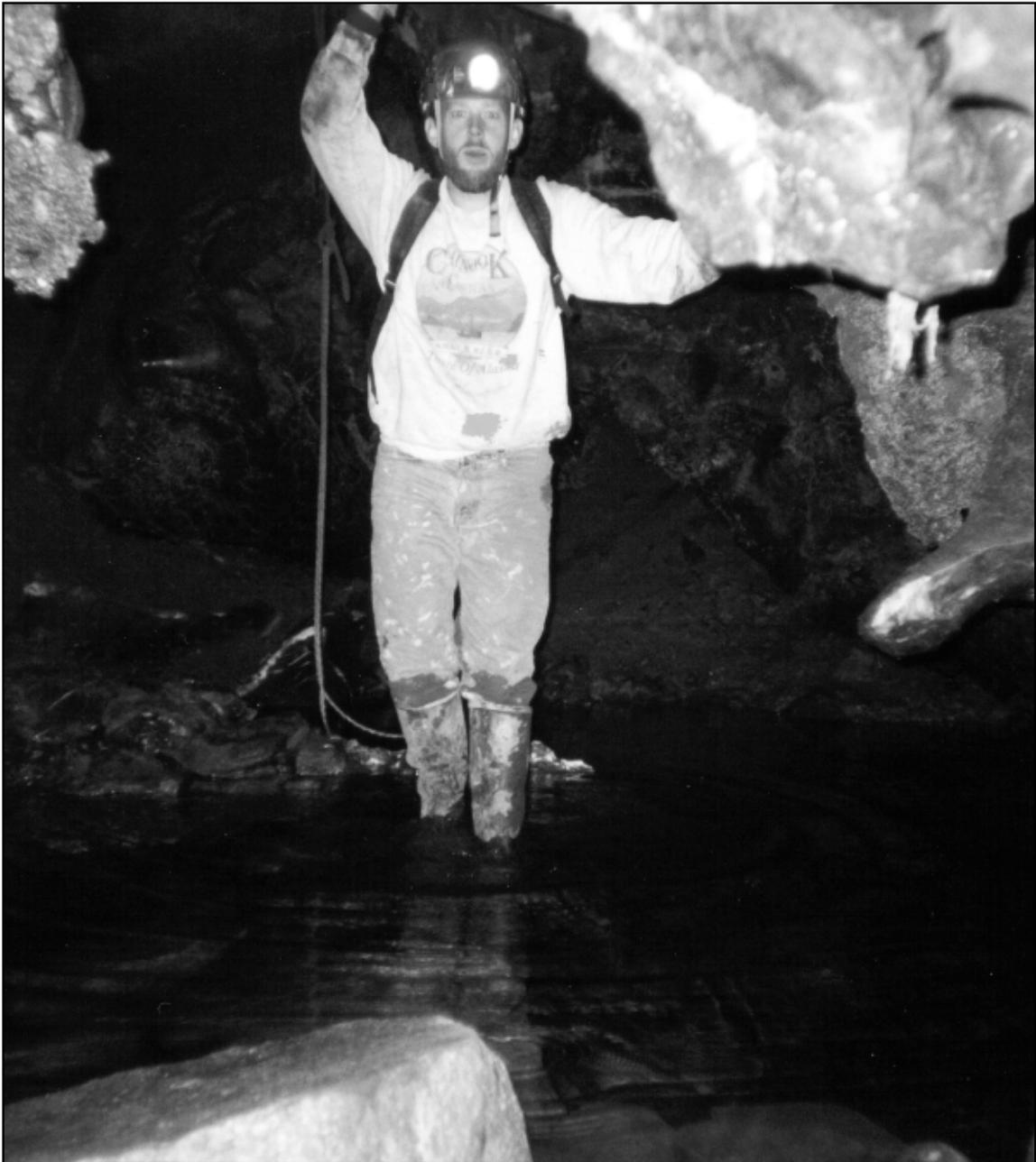




Cascade Caver

The Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society



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GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$15 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is free to regular members. Membership for each additional family member is \$2 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$15 per year. Subscription via email is \$11 per year.

GROTTO ADDRESS

Cascade Grotto; P.O. Box 345; Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0345. This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

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MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7 p.m. on the third Friday of each month at the Mountlake Terrace Public Library, 23300 58th Ave. W. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

COVER

Rick Gould navigates the pool at Iron Curtain with trepidation and wading boots. Photo by Van Bergen.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please notify Mike Fraley at (425) 227-4793 of any upcoming trips.

December 8	Christmas Party at Lake Stickney Community Center
New Year's Eve	New Year's Eve party and ski trip hosted by the Gem State Grotto
January 5	Cave Ridge Hiking Trip
January 19	Concrete trip
Memorial Day	Northwest Regional in Shoshone, Idaho; Cascade Grotto's 50th anniversary celebration

Cascade Grotto October 19 Regular Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Aaron Stavens, Eve Proper, Lloyd Stevens, Larry Christian, Roger Cole, Pat Shaw, Mark Sherman, Jim Harp, Steve Sprague, Van Bergen, Jon McGinnis, Julie McGinnis, Cameron McGinnis, Erin Robert, Jeff McClellan, Paul Lindgren, Stuart Monson, Wendel Pound, Faye Heslop

Business:

1. Julie McGinnis put together grotto information handouts for the IMAX event. Samples were passed around the room.
2. The grotto voted unanimously to buy a one year, two million dollar liability insurance policy for \$350. This is not medical insurance for grotto members. The policy will cover the grotto and its members against liability claims from non-grotto members. The grotto needs this policy in order to perform the vertical demonstrations for the Pacific Science Center. Contact Jon McGinnis for specific information.
3. Aaron Stavens noted that the grotto operated at a profit the past year. However, had we published the full complement of Cascade Cavers, the publishing costs would have put us in the red. Jon McGinnis reiterated the need for someone to chair a fund-raising committee. Anyone interested should contact Jon McGinnis.
4. Jon McGinnis reported that work on the grotto t-shirts has been postponed while the grotto is preparing for the IMAX event.
5. Eve Proper has graciously volunteered to help out with editing the Cascade Caver.
6. Jon McGinnis will be putting up the Idaho cavers visiting for the second IMAX weekend.
7. Jim Harp has secured the Lake Stickney Community Center on December 8th for the grotto holiday party.
8. Aaron Stavens passed around a get well card for Brandon Rondel. Aaron recently found out that Brandon has just come out of a coma following a motorcycle accident.
9. Jim made a motion to charge new members a one-time, \$20 new member fee in addition to regular membership dues. Also, as part of the same motion, Jim moved that the new fee be made part of the grotto bylaws. The motion passed with one dissenting vote. [Secretary's Note: The grotto bylaws cannot be changed without 30 days notice of the proposed change to the grotto membership. For that reason, this motion is null and void.]
10. Due to rising production costs, the D.C. Grotto would like to terminate its newsletter exchange with all but local grottos. The Cascade Grotto decided to allow the exchange to expire.
11. Van Bergen found a web site with explicit information on Washington State Caves. Van is contacting the web site's owner in an effort to have him remove the sensitive information.

Special Presentation:

Pat Shaw traveled from Vancouver B.C. to describe some of his cave diving projects in B.C. The Canadians are also making great strides in the use of toilet plungers for low-impact, vertical caving. (You had to be there. ☺) ❖

Cascade Grotto November 16 Regular Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Aaron Stavens, Jeff McClelland, Erin Robert, Julie McGinnis, Mark Sherman, Van Bergen, Jim Harp, Stuart Monson, Glennis Monson (new member), Dick Garnick, Trapper Robbins, Eve Proper, Larry Christian, Steve Sprague

Old Business:

1. Van reported that he had more contact with Matt of Matt's Cave Page. Matt has been involved in caving community in the past so he is aware of some of the conservation issues. Matt hasn't had much call for placing cave locations on his web site so he does not have plans at this time to do so. However, Matt did *not* state that he would *not* put cave locations on his web site in the future. There is not much else to do at this time.
2. Van, in particular, and others deserve our thanks for orchestrating the IMAX event. Michael Ray Taylor said our grotto put on the best public display of all the events he had seen. For those who do not already know, the Pacific Science Center donated \$500.00 to the Cascade Grotto for our involvement with the IMAX event.

New Business:

1. Julie McGinnis passed around thank you cards for various individuals who helped make the IMAX event possible. We will be including travel reimbursements of \$50 each for Larry King and Dave Kesner with their thank you cards.
2. Aaron Stavens will send offers to the other grottos to convert our current paper newsletter exchanges to electronic exchanges.
3. The grotto voted unanimously to buy a ham for the grotto's Holiday party. Julie volunteered cook the ham.
4. The grotto Holiday party will be held at the Lake Stickney Community Center starting at 6:00 PM. Attendees are encouraged to bring items for a Chinese auction as a grotto fund-raiser.
5. Dick Garnick reported that the damage to Iron Curtain Cave was not nearly as bad as the original posting indicated. Unfortunately, B.C. has no cave protection laws. Even though the vandals were caught the penalties are so minor that criminal charges are unlikely to be filed. However, Dick hopes this event will prompt B.C. to enact a cave protection law.

Upcoming Trips:

- The grotto Holiday party is on December 8th. Details will be posted to the grotto's list server.
- The grotto has been invited to attend the Gem State Grotto's New Year's Eve party. Anyone interested should contact Aaron Stavens or Jennifer Dorman (Gem State Grotto).
- December 1st is a trip to rappel from the Exit 38 train trestle. Contact Aaron Stavens or Jon McGinnis for more information.
- January 5th is a winter trip up Cave Ridge. Contact Aaron Stavens for more information.

Special Presentation:

Van brought several videos for viewing at the meeting. IMHO, "We're Cavers & We're Rescuers" was absolutely hilarious.

The attendees adjourned to Sorrelli's Pizza. ❖

Joint NCA/Rocky Mountain Regional Report

By Van Bergen

Regional was in Utah this year, but I can always use an excuse to go to Utah. I spent a lot of time there when I lived in Colorado in the '70s and '80s, and I missed the redrock canyons.

Larry McTigue was looking for a rider, but he had more vacation time left and was planning on side trips and caving on the way there and again on the way back. He had to get to the Regional early too, since it had been his idea to combine the two regional meets and he had to help out. I ended up going with Jon McGinnis. That was good; my little Toyota was just big enough for two people plus gear. Mark Sherman also decided to leave at the same time, but he did have extra vacation time so he took his own car. He ended up touring more of Utah and a little of Colorado after the Regional.

We left on Thursday morning, bound for Boise. It was a nice trip, especially since I had never been that way before. The Umatilla bunkers and nerve-gas incinerators were a high point. We stopped at Jon's parents' place in Ontario for a wonderful dinner, then headed for Jim Hathorn's in Boise. Jim had graciously set up a big tent in his back yard for traveling cavers. He also fed us a big breakfast on Saturday morning. Several Gem State cavers showed up on Thursday night and again for breakfast on Friday.

On the way to Utah on Friday, we passed through the town of Soda Springs, Idaho, and saw a sign for the "world's only man-made geyser." It was an old water well that struck pressurized water. They capped it, then put in a valve and a timer; every hour, it goes off like Old Faithful. It was surrounded by a massive orange travertine deposit. It was an unexpected treat.

Next stop was Minnetonka Caverns, on Forest Service land near Bear Lake. It was way up a side canyon, and there were only a handful of other tourists there. It was a beautiful show cave, with unusual speleogenesis and formations. It looked like it was formed mostly by faulting, and had some huge rooms. Another unexpected treat.

By the time we got to Utah, it was dark. The Regional campground was in an alpine meadow in far northeastern Utah, just a little south of Flaming Gorge - which we missed because it was dark. We also missed the turnoff to the campground. When we realized that, we turned around, and pulled in right behind a car with Colorado plates and a bat sticker - so we just followed it to the campground. We found lots of Colorado and Utah cavers, and most of the Idaho cavers that we had just had breakfast with that same morning. Attendance was 114. There was no one from Oregon.

After checking in, we looked around for flat spots to camp. The public campground wasn't reserved just for cavers, and the best spot we found was right next to some oversized non-caver RV's. It wasn't a good spot after all; at the crack of dawn the generators started up, the hunters roared off on their four-wheelers, and their kids and dogs started their day-long racket. On Saturday night, someone asked what time we were getting up the next morning, and Jon said "Generator time." Good thing I had my ear plugs.

Upon our arrival, we had all signed up for a trip to Whiterocks Cave. When we read the guidebook description of the killer hike to the cave - shades of Cave Ridge - we crossed our names off and signed up for Big Brush Cave instead. That was a good move; Big Brush was a fine cave, close to the campground, and not too hard to get to. Jon and Mark and I all went, and so did Jennifer Dorman and a friend of hers from Idaho who had just started caving. Our trip leader was Jim Olsen, the maintainer of Cavers' Digest and the organizer of the Regional. His assistant was Hazel Barton. Hazel and Jim had recently been engaged; they were married a few weeks later in a cave in Colorado. I had met them both at the NSS Convention a month earlier, so I knew this Regional was going to be a fun event.

Instead of formations, Big Brush had logs. Lots of logs, big logs, wedged into every nook and cranny and way up in the ceiling. It takes so much water in the spring that the huge entrance is completely underwater. No one has ever pushed the far reaches, because the rotting vegetation has created bad air. There were some nice pools and lots of chimneying and short climbs. There was also an exposed traverse that I declined to do, knowing that the group was just going to come back the same way shortly. Hazel said that her motto was that it's OK to wimp out, because then you live to wimp another day. After the brave traversers came back, we tried to find a second entrance, but it was blocked by logs.

Pat Shaw had come down from British Columbia and ridden to Utah with Larry McTigue. I wanted to see how well my new nylon cave suit, plus my fleece long johns, would work in a cold cave. On the way out, I flopped into a pool to get intentionally soaked. I got a little wetter than I'd planned, but the experiment was a success; I was toasty warm the rest of the way out. Jennifer's friend from Boise, on one of his first cave trips, was forced to lead. He didn't get us lost once.

We got back to camp just in time for a fine spaghetti dinner put on Hal & Lu Smith from Utah, and a short but excellent 3-D slide show by Jim Olsen. Then it was time for the Rocky Mountain Region's annual meeting, which meant tequila time for the rest of us. I hung out for a while with Mike Backe and

his wife from Boise. Since there was a burn ban in effect, they had the campground's only "campfire" - a bucket full of big candles, followed by some little sticks. It seemed like the party wound down pretty fast for a caver gathering; I guess everyone had good cave trips that day.

The next morning, Jon and the Idaho contingent went to Dinosaur to look at the bones. Mark and I went to Sheep Creek Cave, on a trip led by Ralph Powers from Utah. I had seen several of Ralph's posts on the NSS discussion board, and he was just as interesting a character in person. He couldn't hear very well, but he got us into this great cave anyway. It was up a classic Utah red-rock canyon; one of my favorite landscapes, and one in which I never expected to see a limestone cave. The cave was up on the canyon wall. The cave had two entrances, both gated, although someone had breached the gate. This irritated the Utah cavers who had installed it. The cave is so visible from the road that it really needs a gate.

Ralph led us to a pit that several descended to see the stream below. Apparently streams in caves are a rare treat in Utah. On our way again, Ralph got temporarily confused, but thanks to the guidebook description of a corkscrew chimney, someone found the way on. Near the back of the cave was another rappel into a huge room with a sandy floor. Ralph's assistant trip leader, Eric, couldn't hear or speak at all. They had been using sign language to communicate. When Eric descended, he let out a blood-curdling scream. Most of us thought something horrible had happened, but one of the Utah cavers said, "It's OK, that's how Eric says, 'Off Rope!'"

Bob Stucklen, one of the Colorado cavers, had a good camera and a case full of slave units. He spent a lot of time setting up shots. One of his earlier photos is on the cover of the last *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*, so maybe we'll be famous someday.

Back at camp, we attended the Northwest Caving Association annual meeting. Here's the official report: Several of the grottos were not represented or were not known to be active. Of eight active grottos in the region, five were represented at the meeting: Cascade, Gem State, Glacier (by proxy), and

two Utah grottos. That was enough for a quorum. Larry McTigue was elected to a second term as chair. Jennifer Dorman was elected Secretary-Treasurer. Larry abolished the office of vice-chair, and combined the offices of Secretary and Treasurer into one position. Shoshone, Idaho was selected as the site of next year's Northwest Regional, to be held on Memorial Day weekend. A bylaw change was approved to eliminate the requirement that grottos be dropped from membership in the Region if they fail to submit a report for two consecutive years. Sam Lair volunteered to start a regional discussion group, and he has since set up ncacavers@yahoo.com.

Mark took off on Monday morning for several more days of Western sightseeing. Jon and I headed back, planning to look for fossils in southwestern Wyoming. First we went back up Sheep Creek Canyon so Jon could see the cave entrances. We were also treated to four bighorns grazing in a campground along the road, then to Flaming Gorge in daylight. Once in Wyoming, we discovered that all of the digs were on private land, so all we could do was look for fossil rocks along the back roads. We stopped at Fossil Butte National Monument, which has some truly amazing fossils on display. It was another unexpected treat; they even had bat fossils. Then it was on to Boise, where we took advantage of Jim Hathorn's big tent for another good night's sleep. Along the way, we had seen what appeared to be limestone in several of the southeastern Idaho mountain ranges.

To break up the day-long drive from Boise to Seattle, Jon suggested a side trip to Hell's Canyon, which was pretty impressive. Jon had grown up in that region and knew where all the cool stuff was. The scenery was beautiful; we passed through a pretty little town in a magic valley and saw some more limestone in far-away mountain ranges.

The Colorado and Utah cavers voted to have next year's Rocky Mountain Regional in the Bighorns of Wyoming. It will be on Labor Day again, and will be well worth the trip. You don't have to be from the Rocky Mountain Region to attend. Of course I'm looking forward to the Northwest Caving Association meet in Idaho - it'll be only half as far as Utah. Memorial Day 2002 - mark your calendars. ❖

Iron Curtain Trip Report

By Eve Proper

We stared in disbelief at the entrance to Iron Curtain cave. Aside from Dick Garnick, who was our leader, none of us had been here before, and the rock-studded concrete door looked unnecessary thorough. It looked more like the work of paranoid hobbits than B.C. cavers.

We had the key, though, and Dick managed to undo the first two locks with a minimum of fumbling. All we had to do now was lift the 100-pound door. Easier said than done: After several fruitless tries, we had just sent a runner back to call the keymaster when Rick Gould unexpectedly pried it loose. Dick headed down first to unlock the next entrance, and Rick, Rose and Joel Garnick, Lloyd Stevens, Patrick Smith and I followed one by one.

After a short crawl, we found ourselves in a small antechamber. Ahead of us was a pool of water only a foot or two deep. Our relief was almost palpable; Dick had scared us with a story of the time the water was so high some cavers stripped down and crossed naked. We were relieved to face only damp toes.

We had been told that Iron Curtain was one of the most formation-rich caves in the Northwest, and this limestone cavern didn't disappoint. From soda straws to bacon, we marveled at the speleothems as we walked, crawled and climbed. Dick knows the cave like the back of his hand, and

he made sure we didn't miss any points of interest — and that we did miss falling into any of the pools of cold water that we encountered. Cave divers had done some exploration, he said, but they had not plumbed all the cave's depths.

The high point of the trip was the Iron Curtain itself. We found comfortable perches while people took turns climbing down a chimney to view it from another vantage point. We all agreed this had been well worth the long line at customs. (Canadian customs officials were amused, however, when Van tried to present his credit card as a valid form of ID.)

Our return was uneventful, although we agreed that the rugged door needed a good cleaning to remove the dirt that had stuck it so solidly shut. After thanking Dick and Rose for their hospitality in Bellingham, we headed back to Seattle, all eager to see more Canadian limestone. Little did we know how glad we would be later to have seen Iron Curtain when we did.

When we later heard the initial reports of vandals going to extreme lengths to bust into the cave, he heard that extensive damage had resulted. It turns out that the worst damage was to the gate (which didn't seem so paranoid after all). Despite the fact that local cavers had a pretty good idea who the vandals were, there was no way to prosecute — highlighting the need for cave protection laws in Canada. ❖

Vote now for 2002 Grotto officers

Chairman

Van Bergen Write-in _____

Vice-Chairman

Jim Harp Write-in _____

Secretary/Treasurer

Aaron Stavens Write-in _____

If more than one member of your household is a voting member, you may copy this form for their use. If you are not a voting member of Grotto, please don't vote.

Please mail your completed ballot by Dec. 31 to:
Cascade Grotto
P.O. Box 66623
Seattle, WA 98166

IMAX "Journey Into Amazing Caves"

By Van Bergen

About a year ago, the NSS asked grottos to participate in the opening of *Journey into Amazing Caves* at their local IMAX theaters. They wanted us to provide educational exhibits and demonstrations of caving equipment and techniques. The idea was to reinforce the film's conservation theme, and to provide additional information to any curious moviegoers who might want to know more. The film wasn't scheduled to open in Seattle until early 2002, but by mid-summer the opening was moved up to October!

Our contact at Pacific Science Center was Brittany Friesner, and when the opening date was set she started serious planning. By early September we had a pretty good idea of what was expected. Unfortunately, the Space Needle rappel didn't materialize, but there was still plenty to do. Most grottos had been asked to participate in one grand opening event, but we were asked to participate in four.

First up was the media preview on Oct. 9. Even though it was a weekday, about 15 people showed up in caving gear. The fact that PSC was allowing us to rappel off the roof of the theater was a big draw; we had scouted out the rigging the week before, and Jon had fabricated two padded wooden edge protectors. After rappelling off the roof, we mingled with the reporters and helped usher them into the theater.

The grand opening of the film was on Saturday, Oct. 20, and we had another good turnout of about 20 people. Many showed up early to help Jon rig the roof and to help set up our indoor displays. Xandon Frogget made up some beautiful posters. Mark Sherman provided a ton of display material, Jon made a knot-tying-practice device and printed out pictures, Julie made handouts, and I brought a frame to hang vertical gear – or a person in vertical gear. We had lots of wall space, and we filled it with cave pictures, maps, posters, and conservation messages. We had tables with literature and caving gear, and PSC provided equipment to show videos we borrowed from the NSS. PSC wanted "cave scientists" to speak, so Mark Sherman asked Dr. John Buchanan and Donna Hensley to come from Eastern Washington University for the grand opening. They gave slide-show talks on Central American caves and bats, respectively. Donna brought live bats, including a flying fox. A highlight of the day was

Wendel Pound's on-rope proposal to Faye Heslop.

The best was yet to come: Explorers' Weekend, Nov. 3 and 4. We were there for *Journey into Amazing Caves*, and the Explorer's Club was there for *Shackleton*. I didn't see that many Explorers, but once again there were a lot of cavers. By

this time PSC had enlarged about a dozen of our cave photos and had them on display in the lobby. The stars of the film, Nancy Aulenbach and Dr. Hazel Barton, flew in to sign books and mingle with the crowd. So did Michael Ray Taylor, author of several books on caving and the National Geographic companion book for the film. Mike suggested a private showing of some slides about the making of the film, Brittany lined up a room for us at PSC, and we had a slide show and pizza party with Mike and Nancy. Then Mike said he'd like to go see some music and maybe have "one beer" so we took him to Pioneer Square. Rumor has it that certain grotto members kept him partying until the bars closed.



Sarah Gould (center) enjoyed meeting Nancy Aulenbach and Michael Ray Taylor. The next day was even a bigger thrill as she got to meet Hazel Barton. Photo by Rick Gould.

We had all the same displays back again for Explorers' Weekend, with one notable addition: the Squeeze Box! That turned out to be the most

popular exhibit at PSC. Lines of people – mostly kids, but a surprising number of adults – waited their turn to try it out. We only had to take it apart a couple of times to free stuck people. The presenters were Dave Kesner from Idaho (3-D slide show) and Larry King from Oregon (impact of rock climbing on lava tubes). We had a lot of visitors at the display tables, and spent a lot of time hanging off the theater wall. PSC presented the grotto with a \$500 check for our efforts, which was a surprise because we thought they were doing us a favor by letting us rappel off their roof for four whole days! In Cincinnati, where the museum/theater was a co-producer of the film, the grotto only to climb and rappel one day. Later Mike Taylor said that we put on the best public-awareness show that he saw at all the openings he attended. Not bad for one of the smallest grottos to participate in an IMAX opening. Thanks to everyone who turned out. ❖

Editor's Note: And thanks to Van for all his hard work on this project! Lots of people put in time and effort, but he went the extra mile and coordinated everything.

Announcing the Cave Ridge Exploration Project

By Aaron Stavens

My desire to find and explore new cave passage has been growing. I believe Cave Ridge is the place to satisfy that desire and its time for me to start talking about my plans. For these plans to reach fruition I am going to need your help.

First you might ask, "Why Cave Ridge?" There are multiple reasons. One, Cave Ridge is close. Compared to Trout Lake or British Columbia, Cave Ridge is just a hop, skip, and a jump away. Two, hey, who am I kidding, I like vertical caves. And three, Cave Ridge has caves. What better place to find new passage than in known caves? I *know* there is virgin passage on Cave Ridge. I've seen it through frustratingly tight spaces. Spaces that are currently too tight to squeeze my body. In looking around Cave Ridge there are blowing sinkholes and small caves that seem to exchange an awful lot of air compared to their known size. Further, in a conversation with Larry McTigue, Larry mentioned multiple leads in Newton. I was shocked. Cave Ridge has been explored since the 1960s. Why are there still unexplored leads? My best guess is that Cave Ridge is a bit of a grunt. Therefore, when the leads started to peter out the desire to do the work waned.

"Aha!" you say, "Cave Ridge is hard to get to." Well it is and it isn't. If you go up with very little gear it is really kind of nice. On the other hand, if you are carrying a full pack it is quite strenuous. I cannot make the trip any less steep but I can make the load anybody has to carry lighter. I intend to place one or more locked metal boxes on the top of the ridge. In those boxes we can cache group gear such as tents, stoves, fuel, ropes, food, etc.... If the gear is already on the ridge, then we won't have to carry it up will we? The metal will keep out the small, gnawing animals and the locks will prevent the gear from taking a casual stroll. Determined thieves and vandals would still be able get into the boxes but I am hoping the remoteness of the site will prevent that from happening. I have already purchased a Coleman camp stove and a four person tent for storage and use on the ridge. The design of the metal boxes is under way and construction will be completed sometime before or during the Spring. If anyone has access to a sheet metal brake or a shear I could really use those machines. Something that would accept a sheet of metal four feet wide would be ideal.

"O.K.," you say, "so you get some people up on the ridge. What exactly are you going to do up there?" I see several possibilities. Some are more work than others.

1. There is a lead at the bottom of Newton cave that is positively begging for attention. I think that one is a high priority goal. However, because the lead is deep in Newton it probably should not be attempted until late in

the summer when the cave is dryer. The probability of success will be much higher.

2. Newton, in general, should be gone over thoroughly. Anyplace we can stuff a body should be thoroughly stuffed.
3. The known bottom of Newton is a big shaft that simply ends in a pile of boulders. It can't just end. That is where the water goes now. We should poke around down there and move boulders out of the way. I'd be willing to bet there is a constriction under there that precipitated the boulder choke. All we have to do is uncover it.
4. Danger Cave is a rinky-dink little cave that moves enough air to blow open its entrance during the winter. Where is all of that air coming from? There is another entrance right on the other side of the hill. Perhaps the wind is simply blowing in one entrance and out the other. On the other hand, maybe there's more passage under all those rocks at the bottom. That's what the January 5th trip is all about. If the back entrance is sealed with snow and the front entrance is blown open, then that air is coming from inside the cave and there must be more passage within.
5. Although I have not seen them I understand there are high leads in Cascade. Those should be reached and explored.
6. There is a sink I pass every time on the way up the ridge. In the spring there is still snow in the sink. On one side the snow has been melted away indicating air flow. There be cave there! A dig is in order.

"So, what can I do?" you ask?" There is plenty to do up there. There's enough to keep us busy for years to come. The work is varied. There is a general need for cavers and a need for specialized skills such as vertical, rock climbing, digging, and mapping. Starting this summer, I would like to run regular trips with the purpose of furthering the exploration of Cave Ridge. Anyone with the skills and desire to help out is more than welcome. If you don't have a particular skill and I do, I'd be happy to teach you what I know. If I don't have a skill and you do, it would be really great if you could help out and teach others what you know. I'm hoping to see many people on the ridge this summer and summers to come.

If you have anything that you would like to contribute to the CRXP, you can contact me via snail mail at 4401 S. 301st Dr., Auburn, WA 98001; via email at aarons.stavens@nmwco.com or via phone at 253-946-3431. Information and resources that could be useful to the project are quite welcome.

With this article the Cave Ridge Exploration Project (CRXP) is born! ❖

National Convention Report

By Van Bergen

The 2001 Convention at Great Saltpeter Cave Preserve in Mt. Vernon, Ky. was hosted by my old Ohio grottos (Greater Cincinnati and Dayton Underground), so it was really special for me. It was also the second year that I played with the Terminal Syphons at the Wednesday night campground party. But it was 12 whole days; I arrived early to help out, and stayed late to visit and sightsee, so a detailed report would be too long. Here, instead, are the “highlights.”

I can't believe how great it was. The best part was knowing that it was my friends who pulled it off. IFOs (Idiots from Ohio) and BGG (Bluegrass Grotto, Lexington, KY - another co-host) – rocked! Great parties, guidebook, food, hospitality, smooth registration, cool sessions, clean porta-potties, and caves everywhere. It couldn't have been better. My only regrets are the chiggers, insufficient time to do everything and talk to everyone, and the fact that I failed to return the convention chair's pitcher, which was still across the dam, half full of margaritas, when the water came up. The creek flooded on the last Saturday night, stranding many campers and the borrowed pitcher with my margaritas.

Highlights for me:

- Eating like a king at the Sinking Cove Breakfast Club - great food, even though I was scarfing it down in a hurry
- Pushing phenomenal quantities of beer at the killer Howdy Party, and watching everyone have a blast with the best Howdy Party band in a long time
- Playing rock 'n roll in the cave with the lights out – best

gig I ever played, in 30-plus years as a musician – being in the Terminal Syphons adds a huge new dimension to Conventions for me

- Colin Gatland's multi-projector slide show for the NSS 60th Anniversary, especially those old pictures; nice sound track, too
- Watching the micro-blasting-rod guy's impromptu but impressive demo, blowing up some hefty rocks over by the Sinks parking area, only to be bummed when he said the technique doesn't work on lava rocks (too many air pockets that absorb the blast)
- Going caving with my son for the first time in four years
- Trying to sober up real fast on Saturday night when someone told Jerry that their friends might be lost in Goochland, a flood-prone cave; starting to wake up the sober cavers for a potential rescue, then having the lost group come back
- Meeting Michael Queen just hanging around the shelter house, and realizing that he is one of the original Lechuguilla scientists (check out the Lech issue of the Journal of Cave and Karst Studies)
- Being bummed that I couldn't arrange the right timing to get underground with my fellow NW cavers from Idaho, then being relieved when they got to go caving with Lee Florea and Kim and Kenny – Sam Lair and Jennifer Dorman were my nearest neighbors who actually made it to Convention
- Checking out Cumberland Falls, and hiking to overlooks and to Yahoo Falls in Big South Fork, on my way out. ❖

Climbing Banned in Hidden Forest Cave

By Larry King, Oregon High Desert Grotto

Last summer the Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District decided to “authorize” (after the fact) the installation of large numbers of bolted sport climbing anchors in Hidden Forest Cave.

Thanks to the many cavers who wrote the agency to protest this plan, public comment letters were two-to-one in favor of removing the bolted climbing equipment. Noting that the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation hold Hidden Forest Cave in high regard as a spiritual site, the agency reversed its decision and will “eliminate climbing and bolted routes,” citing the National Historic Preservation Act {36 CFR 800.49(a)(4)} and Executive Order 13007 for Indian Sacred Sites.

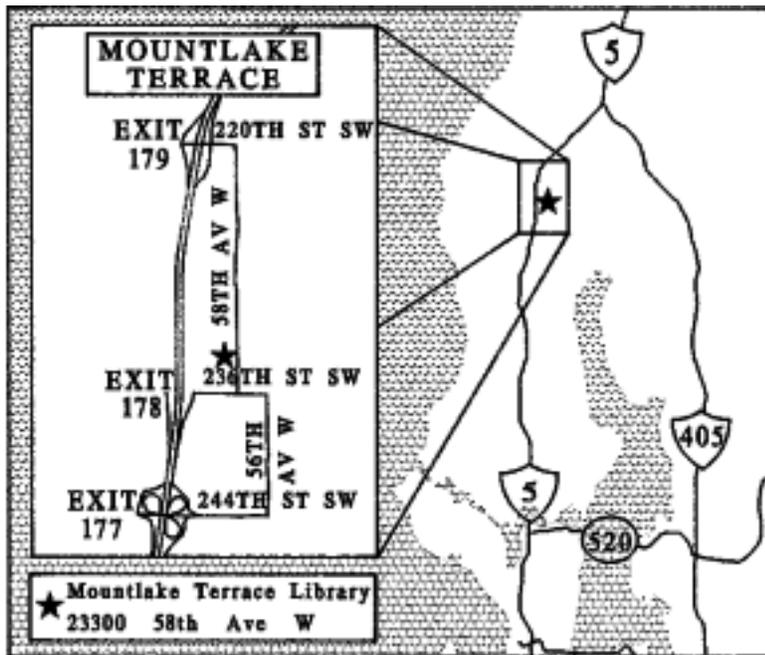
As noted previously, Hidden Forest Cave contains faint prehistoric pictographs that have been damaged by rock climbers. The “No Climbing” sign at the cave's rock art panel has been torn down 30 times since 1997. In 1992-1993 local climbers installed approximately 160 bolted sport climbing

anchors at the cave's entrance, extending about 80 ft. into the cave.

The Forest Service decision has been appealed by the Access Fund, a Colorado-based climbers advocacy group. Their appeal requests a reversal of the decision “for arbitrarily and capriciously (1) failing to support its findings on sacred sites, and (2) discriminating against climbers.” At an informal deposition on 10/1/2001, the Access Fund indicated it will pursue its appeal at the regional administrative level. A decision is expected by early 2002.

You can read local newspaper articles on this topic in the *Bend Bulletin* (at www.bendbulletin.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=5415) and the *Eugene Register-Guard* at (www.registerguard.com/news/20011025/8c.od.caveclimbing.1025.html). ❖

Meetings and Directions



The Cascade Grotto meets at 7 p.m. on the third Friday of each month at the Mountlake Terrace Public Library, 23300 58th Ave. W.

To get to the Library from the east side, take Bothell Way to Ballinger Way. Head north on Ballinger and take a right on 19th Ave. NE (this turns into 56th Ave. W at the county line). Turn left on 236th then right on 58th Ave. W. Go north three blocks.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings.

Cascade Caver
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