



# Cascade Caver

The Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society



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# Cascade Caver

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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 66623, Seattle, WA 98166. 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 58<sup>th</sup> Ave. W. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please notify Dana Poss of any upcoming trips. Contact Jennifer Dorman at idahocaver@gemstategrotto.com for any Gem State Grotto trips. Contact Claude Koch at claudekoch@uswest.net for any Willamette Valley Grotto trips.

May 11	Lake Cave Cleanup - Eve Proper (proper@drizzle.com)
May 19	Senger's Talus Cave survey class - Mark Sherman
May 22-24	Cave Rescue Workshop in Boise - Nola Morris, Gem State Grotto
May 25-27	Northwest Regional in Shoshone, Idaho - Jennifer Dorman and Chris Anderson
June 6-9	Ely, Nevada caves, Gem State Grotto - Jennifer Dorman
June 15-16	China Hat Caves, WVG - George DeSaegher
June 24-28	NSS National Convention Camden, Maine
July 3-7	Cascade Grotto 50th anniversary party - Dana Poss (dana_d28@hotmail.com)
July 4-7	Bighorn/Horsethief Caves, Gem State Grotto - Jennifer Dorman
August 3-4	Papoose Cave, Gem State Grotto - Jennifer Dorman

## COVER

Diane Pierce prepares to fall backwards on the Tyrolean at the Gem State Grotto Succor Creek trip, April 27-28. Photo by Eve Proper.

# Cascade Grotto March 15 Regular Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

## Attendance:

Jim Harp, Julie McGinnis, Aaron Stavens, Beatrice Wolbaum, Jon Crouch, Robert Mitchell, Stuart Monson, Glennis Monson, Stephanie Taylor, Aspen Miller, Dana Poss, Eve Proper, Michael Wittenbrink, Tish Korbly, Roger Cole, Chris Wittenbrink, Mark Sherman, Chris Perdue and other members of Boy Scout Troupe 594, Steve Sprague, Jeff McClelland, Diane Pierce, John Benson, Pamela Lehman, Susan Armbruster, Jon McGinnis, Erin Robert

## Old Business:

1. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday is the date of the grotto's anniversary party. Aaron Stavens will reserve the Peterson Prairie group campsite for that time period.
2. Steve Sprague is in contact with Rod Crawford about the grotto's maps and cave rumors file. Steve is still working on it.

## New Business:

1. The Treasurer had no report to make. The treasurer will make the quarterly report in the Cascade Caver.
2. Dana asked the group if sending out an email reminder one week before a trip is appropriate advance notice. Yes.
3. Aaron Stavens, Julie McGinnis, and Jon McGinnis reported that the new cave information sign test in New Cave didn't go as well as expected. First, the old sign had deteriorated to a point that it had to be removed before the new sign could be put on. Better tools than pocket knives would have made that job easier. Second, the System 3 epoxy isn't sticky enough. Jon knows of some resin he thinks will work.
4. A few members complained that they are not getting messages from the grotto list server. Aaron Stavens will check the list server's bounce list.
5. Mark Sherman has been contacted by Project Underground. Project Underground's general goal is to educate speakers so they can go out and educate the public about caves. If you are interested, contact Mark Sherman for more information.
6. Steve Sprague will ask Rod Crawford to do a presentation at a grotto meeting.

Roger Cole presented a slide show on his trip to Carlsbad Caverns and the surrounding area. Thank you, Roger! After the presentation we adjourned to Theo's for post-meeting refreshments. ❖

# Cascade Grotto April 19 Regular Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

## Attendance:

Aaron Stavens, Eve Proper, Mark Sherman, Dana Poss, Stuart Monson, Glennis Monson, Steve Sprague, Jim Harp, Doug Knapp (new member), DeeAnn Wolf, Jon McGinnis, Erin Robert, Van Bergen, Rod Crawford, Robert Mitchell, Dave Klinger, Doug Knapp, Lisa Danielski (new member), Caleb Schaber (new member), Dick Garnick, Rose Garnick, Tish Korbly, Katie Coughlin (new member)

## Old Business:

1. Stuart needs help tracking down old members of the grotto. Mark Sherman volunteered to take on the task.
2. We need an announcement of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in the *NSS News* and the *Cavers Digest*. Tish Korbly volunteered to take on the task.
3. Van Bergen received a total of eight responses to his caving interest survey. "Cave Exploration" was at the top of the list. "Caving Sex" was also near the top of the respondents' interests. However, eight responses is not statistically significant. For more information, see Van.

## New Business:

1. Should the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration be financed via registration fees or donations? The donation model was preferred.
2. Some members are receiving quite a lot of spam emails and would like to see the grotto move away from using Yahoo! Groups to host the grotto's list server. No decision was made but Robert Mitchell is going to look into a list server resource he knows about.
3. Steve Sprague is wondering if we should switch to an email only exchange newsletter format. Printing and mailing the exchange newsletters are a significant expense and a fair amount of work for the newsletter editors. One concern about an electronic exchange is how does the grotto archive the exchange newsletters? Caleb Schaber suggested he might be able to help with archiving. The discussion on that and other concerns was postponed to allow time for Rod Crawford's presentation.

## Trips:

- Lake Cave cleanup on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. Contact: Eve Proper.
- Grotto's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. Contact: Glennis Monson.
- Vertical practice on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> for those wanting some practice before going on the Succor Creek trip. Contact: Jon & Julie McGinnis

Rod Crawford gave a presentation on Senger's Talus cave. Thank you Rod!

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# A visit to Devalt's Cave in Rockcastle County, KY

By Van Bergen

When my company made me return to Ohio for a week in mid-March, I was able to stay over an extra weekend. That was just enough time for a Sunday in Kentucky. My son Brendan was just starting his Spring Break and wanted to go too. I'd made some phone calls during the week, so I knew there would be people at the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve on Sunday. We decided to drive down Saturday evening so we wouldn't have to get up too early on Sunday. Since we didn't have any camping gear, we headed for the Super 8. After checking in, we ran over to the Preserve to see what was happening. There are cavers to be found there most every given weekend.

We passed by the caretaker's house because it looked pretty dark. There was no one at the shelter house in the main campground, which seemed strange; normally, that's where the party would be. But there was a fire and a party at the cabin across the dam. Around 10 PM, another caver stopped by and asked if we wanted to accompany some Scouts into Great Saltpetre Cave. We did the standard tour, with the cavers almost outnumbering the Scouts. The cave was mined for saltpetre during the War of 1812 and the Civil War, and was a show cave in the 1940's. Although it's been heavily "modified" by mining and later by installation of a stage and a dance floor, it's still huge and beautiful. The Howdy Party and Campground Party at the 2001 NSS Convention were both held in this cave.

Back at the campfire, we had to figure out where we would go the next day. The others had been there a couple of days and had already visited most of the easily-accessible caves. Then they mentioned Devalt's, which didn't sound familiar - until they described its location. I realized they were talking about a cave that a local resident had told me about at an Open House at the Preserve two or three years ago. Shortly after that, I rode around with one of the old-time cavers while he tried in vain to find the landowner. Then I moved away, wondering if anyone but the locals would ever "find" that cave. As it turned out, my friend had persisted and finally tracked down the landowner, who refused permission. But then he had discovered that the entrance was actually on someone else's land, and got permission from the real owner.

The old-timer who had "unlocked" access to the cave couldn't go the next day because he had to lead a Scout trip. One of the other guys had been inside the cave, but only once, and not very far. We weren't 100 percent sure we could find the cave, but it was just too tempting to pass up. I wanted to visit some of the other cavers the next day, so we said we'd meet back at the Preserve the next morning, and Brendan and I headed back to the Super 8.

We stopped at the caver-hangout restaurant for breakfast on Sunday. A bunch of Ohio cavers, whom I hadn't seen for almost a year, were at one of the big round tables. They didn't see us come in, so we sneaked up on them and

went "boo!" They were just finishing up, so we squeezed a couple of chairs in and talked for a while. They soon got their check and left, on their way to a survey expedition. Brendan and I settled down for a great big tasty Kentucky breakfast with plenty of grits. When we got back to the Preserve, I stopped by the caretaker's house to visit and show off some Washington photos. He and his house guests were headed off to explore another recently rediscovered cave a few miles away. It was time to head for the underground, where the hills are all hollow.

It wasn't that hard to find our cave. After saying hello to the landowner and parking the cars, we followed the stream up the valley. The woods were beautiful: wide open, some early buds, no snakes/ticks/chiggers/briars/etc. At a place that looked familiar, the six of us fanned out and started up the hillside. Pretty soon, there it was - a slippery, leaf-covered slope down into a good-size entrance chamber. We pushed a few short leads before heading off in the obvious direction, through mostly big walking passage with a couple of climb-ups. There wasn't supposed to be a big cave in this area. The locals obviously knew about it; we found a big cache of candles in the entrance room, and there was a lot of graffiti. Most of it was historical, as far back as the early 1900's. There was some modern graffiti and trash, but it wasn't too bad.

Soon we came to the end of the walking passage. I didn't want it to be over that soon, so I started into a tight crawl that looked like the only way on. It doubled back on itself, and the rest of the gang got to listen to me grunting and cursing for a while - especially after it pinched out and I had to back out through the hairpin turn. Fortunately, one of the guys said there was a lower level, under the breakdown back at the entrance passage. He remembered it as a grim water crawl, but what the heck, that's better than nothing. So we poked around the breakdown until we found a way down.

Where was this grim crawl? All we found was huge borehole in three directions! We split up and started walking. Brendan and I strolled down a massive straight tunnel for a while, then stopped for a snack. He walked around a corner into a big room, and said, "Hey, there's a ladder in here!" I yelled to not climb it, assuming that any ladder in a cave is suspect. When I finally got off my butt and caught up with him, the log ladder didn't look too bad after all. He was resting on a rock up on the right wall, so I checked a lead on the left wall. About that time, two of the other guys came by; one checked out the ladder, pronounced it sound, and climbed up. I told Brendan I guessed it would've been OK for him too; he said he was going to climb it anyway, if I didn't.

There was a maze of hands-and-knees crawls at the top of the ladder. We split up to check them out. Several of them just came around to each other, and we ended up in the

same passage after a while. It was easy crawling on a sandy floor. Pretty soon it opened up into walking passage again, and just kept going and going. There was a little water in places, but nothing to worry about. Until we got to the place where the water filled the passage from wall to wall for about 50 feet. The walking passage continued on the other side, on into darkness. It seemed like we could walk all the way through the mountain. I started into the water, and right away it was obvious that it was going to be at least chest deep, maybe worse. It was scummy, too. I was about crotch deep, turned around to see who else was coming, and no one was. So neither was I. There's still a big black void there for some brave soul to check out. Maybe it really does go all the way through the mountain.

We headed back to the big junction and found the other two guys. They had poked around in the other direction and found some nice formations. Soon we were back outside, and then back at the cars. I wanted to stop back by the Preserve, 'cause it's one of my favorite places in the whole wide world. But the cave was bigger than we expected, and it was time to head for Dayton. Brendan had to work the next day, and I had a plane to catch. Everybody had a great time. Two of the guys were new cavers; it was only the third trip for one of them. They're both obviously ready for more. We left many a lead unchecked. This was one of those truly cosmic trips: a cave that I'd heard about years ago, that cavers are just starting to get to know, and that I got to see on an "extra" day at the end of a business trip. Maybe they'll fly me back again one of these days and I'll get to cross the water and see where it goes. ... ❖

## Ape Cave cleanup short on trash, long on fun

By Aaron Stevens

On April 6, Eve Proper lead Larry McTigue, Lloyd Stevens, Diane Pierce, Alix Marcoux, and I on a clean up run through Ape Cave. We met at Jack's Restaurant and after a hearty breakfast we were off.

We had to park in the Trail of Two Forests parking lot because the road wasn't yet plowed and the gate was still locked. The hike to the cave was about three-quarters of a mile over anywhere from 4 inches to 1 foot of snow. Fortunately, the weather cooperated nicely with no rain. It wasn't a bad day for a hike.

Ape Cave is huge! Because it is so heavily traveled by the public, I don't visit it very often. However, once in the cave, I had to marvel yet again at just how wide and tall the passage is in various places. Because of the daunting size of the cave, the crew elected to do the clean up run in the down tube passage. It's a little shorter with less breakdown than the up tube passage.

We were almost immediately struck by just how *little* trash there was in the cave. We found a few cans and

bottles, and there was glass here and there but it was nothing like the vandalized party central we had expected. We felt short-changed. It was a nice problem to have. We finally hit pay dirt near the end of the cave. There it splits into an upper and a lower passage. Both get progressively lower as you move toward the back. The lower passage was sandy and wet. We couldn't see any real trash problem and no one wanted to belly crawl in the puddles so Lloyd, Eve, and I forged ahead in the upper passage while Larry picked up glass bits before the split. That's where we found the bulk of the glass we retrieved from the cave.

All told, we brought a little over ten pounds of glass and assorted other small items out of the cave. It's not a huge volume of trash, but, given the tidy state of the cave, that's actually a pretty good haul. Either someone else is taking care of the cave or the public is treating the cave better. It certainly isn't for lack of visitation. We ran into at least four other parties while traveling to, in, and from the cave.

Thank you, Eve, for organizing the clean up. And thanks to all who participated. Many hands make for light work. ❖

## Vote for NSS officers

This is a friendly reminder to find that NSS Board Election ballot you tossed into the pile on your desk, the dash of your truck, or the kitchen table and VOTE! Make your voices heard by helping to determine the next folks to fill the five open Board of Governor seats for the NSS.

Ballots must be RECEIVED BY MAY 10, 2002 to be valid so don't delay!

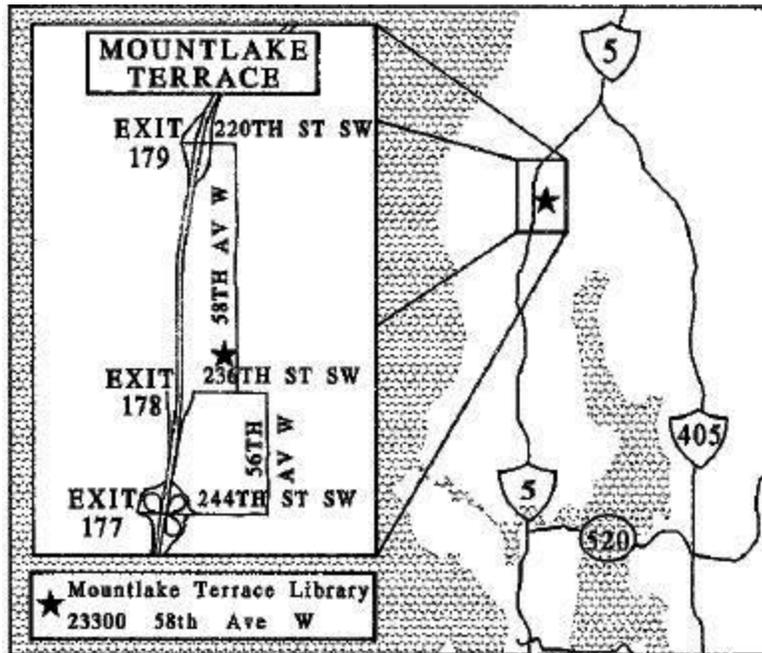
By the way, it's never too early to start thinking about the future! If you are interested in running for the Board in 2003 or learning more about the Board, what they do, or the responsibilities of serving as a Director, or you know someone who would make a good candidate to represent your region, please contact me and I'd be happy to call and discuss this opportunity to give something back to the NSS and our fellow members.

I personally contact all individuals whose names are submitted for consideration. Please take the time to think about folks you know who would make good additions to the Board and do some persuasive arm bending around the next campfire! It would be great to have representation from all of the regions of the U.S.!

Thank you for taking the time to consider candidacy and DON'T FORGET TO VOTE! Each one of you is an important part of the NSS and what it represents!

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## 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 58<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE (this turns into 56<sup>th</sup> Ave. W at the county line). Turn left on 236<sup>th</sup> then right on 58<sup>th</sup> Ave. W. Go north three blocks.

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

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