



# *Cascade Caver*

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 \$15.00 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 \$15.00 per year. Subscription via email is \$11.00 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*.

## GROTTO OFFICERS

Chairman	Van Bergen	(360) 779-7837
Vice Chairman	Jim Harp	(425) 745-1010
Sec/Treasurer	Aaron Stavens	(253) 946-3431

## OTHER POSITIONS

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## MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00 pm on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center in the Hamlin room. The Community Center is at 18560 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE in Shoreline. Please see the back cover for directions.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 31 – Sept 1	Newton bottoming trip Aaron Stavens (253) 946-3431 aaron.stavens@nmwco.com
Aug 31- Sept 1	Danger Cave survey trip Michael McCormack at michmcco@microsoft.com
September 7-8	Windy Creek Cave Jerry Tompson (360) 653-7390
September 14-15	Marsh Creek Cave Rob Wall at crvcaver@shaw.ca
September 20	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
September 21	Relocate VICEG Cave Jerry Tompson (360) 653-7390
September 28-29	NCRC Rescue Class Contact Jon McGinnis at j.mcginis@attbi.com
October 21	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center

**COVER:** Bob Brown took this cover photo on a digging trip to 3-Mile Cave. Those pictured are: (Front row left to right) Dick Garnick, Joel Anfinson, Mike Fraley. (Back row left to right) Rose Garnick, Kaley Stavens, Eve Proper, Aaron Stavens. From looking at the lack of smiles I'd say Dick was working them pretty hard.

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## Grotto 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party

### Thank You

By Mark Sherman

Since most of you attended the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party at Trout Lake over the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend I don't have to tell you how much fun it was (if you don't count Eileen's rescue at Dynamited that is).

I would like to take a moment and thank all of the people who worked so hard to put it on. Thanks to Stuart and Glennis Monson for putting the whole thing together. I'm sorry that Glennis was sick and had to stay home. We missed not having her there.

Thanks to Jon and Julie McGinnis for organizing the meals (the food was great) and for putting on the auction. Thanks to Aaron Stavens for reserving the campsite and taking care of the money (he swears that it all made it to the grotto bank account).

A big thanks to everyone that helped out on the rescue, especially Jon, who took control of the situation. We are very fortunate that everything turned out ok.

I'm sure I'm leaving out some people who worked equally hard and I apologize. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who was able to make it down to Trout Lake. I got a chance to see some friends that I hadn't seen in years and hopefully made some new ones and that's the main reason for the party. Let's not wait another 50 years before we do that again.

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## Cascade Grotto Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2002

By Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

Attendance: Aaron & Kaylee Stavens, Robert Mitchell, John Morrison (Robert's friend), Stuart Monson, Debbie Lermond (new member), Larry Backstrom, Michael & Nikki McCormack, Eve Proper, Dick Garnick, Mike Fraley, Jim Harp, Mark Sherman, Jon Crouch, Jessica Peters, Richard Watson, Mindy (Richard's friend), Stu Adler, Lisa Danielski, Caleb Schaber, Jon McGinnis, Erin Robert, Roger Cole, Dave Hopf, Van Bergen, Eileen Bergen

Old Business: Jim asked for a Treasurer's report on the grotto's 50<sup>th</sup>. The Treasurer has not yet had

a chance to process the funds and did not have a complete report. The Treasurer did say that the grotto brought in, before expenses, \$125.80 from nails and the raffle.

Aaron reported there was a production problem with the reprints of Caves of Washington. The pages of the books stuck together. Xandon and CopyMax have volunteered to print them again at no charge to the grotto. Several copies have already been distributed. Those copies will be replaced.

New Business: Van announced that the grotto will vote on NCA bylaw changes at the next meeting.

Roger Cole presented Aaron with a Suunto compass for use on Cave Ridge. Thank you, Roger!

Roger Cole donated his complete set of vertical gear to the grotto. A motion to keep the vertical gear for use at vertical practices and to give Roger a free year's membership was made, seconded, and passed. Thank you again, Roger! Jon McGinnis is holding the gear for the grotto.

Special Presentation: Van was scheduled to demonstrate his haul system. Unfortunately he was late to the meeting. Jim postponed the demonstration until a later meeting. Van & Eileen did eventually show up. Eileen is healing and gives many thanks to all of those who helped her get out of the cave after her accident. Various individuals, including Eileen, gave reports on the Dynamited accident. If you haven't already, please send Jon McGinnis any information you have on the accident in Dynamited.

The meeting adjourned to Spiro's for pizza and refreshing beverages.

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## Cascade Grotto Meeting Minutes

August 16, 2002

By Mark Sherman (subbing for Aaron)

Attendance: Van and Eileen Bergen, Danny Miller, Steve Sprague, Jon Crouch, Katie Coughlin, Mike Fraley, Dick Garnick and Mark Sherman.

The late starting session was lightly attended, as a large portion of the regular attendees was off at Papoose Cave. We started with a discussion of limestone deposits on the Olympic Peninsula. Danny had his copy of Danner's book on

limestone resources in W. Washington to help with the discussion.

Van brought up the subject of the NCRC rescue class that will be held at Trout Lake at the end of September.

I handed out copies of the reprint of *Caves of Washington*. If you haven't received your copy, contact Aaron Stavens.

We postponed the discussion of the NCA bylaws change until we have a larger attendance.

Mike Fraley has offered to take over the Cascade Grotto website and bring it up to date.

Danny Miller talked about some of his research on Cave Ridge. Hopefully he will have an article for the *Caver* in a couple of months.

Jon Crouch mentioned that he would be heading back home to the UK for a couple of months starting in December. He offered to take people caving with him there in the Yorkshire Dales if anyone is interested in coming over. He will be sending out an announcement with more details.

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## **BCCR Small Party Self-Rescue Workshop**

By Aaron Stavens

For the three days before Regional this year (May 22–24, 2002) Phil Whitfield and his crew from British Columbia Cave Rescue came down to Boise to give a workshop on small party self-rescue. I was impressed. Phil and his assistants appeared knowledgeable. Phil in particular was an effective speaker. They had obviously been working on the course for a while and had clear goals. The days were packed with information and hands-on training.

The first evening was at Nola Morris' house. My little group arrived near the end of the barbecue, but before the class started. The instructional part of the evening consisted of introductions, a review of the workshop's goals and the goals of the students, and a gear sufficiency/safety check. Following that, we retired to Nola's basement. There we split into small groups and learned or reviewed various knots and their application. I particularly like the Load Releasing hitch and the

Garda hitch. Perhaps we'll have a write-up on those in a future issue of the *Cascade Caver*.

The second day was held at Table Rock. The group was split into two. The first group, the one I was in, spent its time on rope. Phil and his assistants checked our vertical proficiency and helped tune our climbing systems. They also demonstrated and had us practice various pick-off techniques. One of my personal favorites from that section was the demonstration of an Extended French Prusik used to rappel down a rope under tension. I'll also be modifying my Frog climbing system. The safety tether from my harness to the upper ascender is a touch too long. I'll also be experimenting with the moving the Croll higher on my chest. That should help maintain a more upright position while climbing.

The second group worked on anchor systems. About mid-day the groups switched and my group had its chance at anchor systems. We covered multi-directional, load-sharing, and self-equalizing anchors. We set up anchors using rocks, bushes, and whatever else was available. Of particular interest to me were the webbing wraps (wrap 3, pull 2) around an anchor point. We use them here in our rigging and it's described in *On Rope*, but I'd wondered about the water knot used to tie the ends of the webbing together. It's not particularly a strong knot. It's not intrinsically unsafe, but still one of the weaker knots I know of. However, Don of the BCCR demonstrated that the load is taken by friction on the anchor point. If everything is working correctly, the knot takes *none* of the load on the anchor. Very cool! Another anchor system of interest involved laying the main line by multiple inadequate anchor points. Then each anchor point is attached to the main line using a prusik. The prusiks are then adjusted such that the load will be shared among all of the anchors. Working together in that way, some really scary looking anchors can be turned into a bomber, multi-point anchor system. I'd heard it described before by Jon Panches, but I was skeptical. Here I had a chance to see it and I am now a believer. The instructors also touched on the use of chocks, cams, and other devices used to anchor in cracks in the rock. That's one point I don't feel was covered adequately. I would have liked more instruction and practice with those devices.

After both groups finished their practice, the groups merged and the BCCR guys demonstrated

various mechanical advantage haul systems. Once finished with the demonstration we split into small groups to practice putting them together ourselves. I'd seen the basic systems before so I stood back to let other people practice.

Day three was held at Smith's Crack on the way to the Regional. There we split into groups and did a mock small party self-rescue. Our particular victim had "hurt" his arm, but was otherwise in good shape. He was able to help extricate himself with our guidance and assistance. I am continually surprised by how the simple becomes complex when a limb becomes less useful. The short upclimb was our most interesting challenge. The victim was able to climb out, but we had him on belay in case he fell while climbing. With his bandaged arm, there was a real risk he could have slipped and fallen. With Dixie's guidance, he made it out just fine.

Following the mock rescue and as the last topic of the workshop, Rob Wall covered first aid. His fundamental message was "Here is some basic stuff. However, there is no way we can adequately cover this topic here. You should really get as much first-aid/medical training as you can from organizations that offer such training and be safe out there." After that we packed up and headed for the Regional.

My overall impression of the workshop was very positive. I've had some exposure to many of the things covered in the workshop, but I learned some new things, had a chance to practice old things, and the course was information-packed and well structured. If you get a chance to take such a course from the BCCR or something similar, I urge you to do so.

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## **Dynamited Cave Trip Report**

By Danny Miller

As part of the July 4th weekend camping and caving trip to the Trout Lake/Mount Adams area, Aaron Stavens, Eve Proper, Danny Miller and Cele Wolman went on a vertical expedition to Dynamited Cave, the regions most vertical cave. I believe it ended up being the only vertical caving done that weekend by the group.

Dynamited has an interesting history. It was discovered in 1958, and in December of that same year dynamited closed by vandals. Shortly after, it

was dug out and re-opened. It seems to me that the purpose of our expedition was mostly to go to someplace that was difficult to get to. Halliday in "Caves of Washington" said that as of his writing (1963) only 1 person had been to this particular place in the cave, so that was all we needed to know to choose our destination for the day. Naturally, many, many people have been there since then, but still, it sounded like a fun destination, so we started out bright and early Friday morning. OK, we PLANNED to start out bright and early but none of us seemed to be really big morning people, so we ended up geared up and ready to go at the crack of 11:30. Realizing that this might make it difficult to make it back by 6:00 (BBQ time) Aaron had the foresight to tell the gang not to worry until 8:00PM.

First, the goal of the expedition: Aaron wanted to get to the third story, called the Attic Passage. The challenge being: how do you get up into a hole in the ceiling when you're not prepared to rock climb, and then once you've made it to the 2nd floor, how do you do it again to get to the third floor?

So here's how it went. After entering the small opening onto a large pile of breakdown, you follow the tube for a while until you get to a very annoying 15-foot drop. I say annoying because if the drop was any shorter, you would just down climb and be done with it, and if it was any larger, you would so obviously need a rope that you wouldn't think twice about spending a half an hour rigging a rope for the drop... but with the drop just as it is, with a down climb just slightly too difficult to get down safely without a rope, you find yourself frustrated and saying "if only this was 5 feet smaller we wouldn't have to go to all this trouble!" Eve had down climbed it before, and did so again successfully without a rope, but Cele and I weren't as brave or experienced (take your pick), so we of course did the safe thing and rigged it. At the bottom of the drop, the cave goes in both directions, forward some more and backwards underneath the passage you've just been through. The backtracking passage is an easy horizontal passage that leads to beautiful formations called sandcastles. The forward passage is much more difficult with several unique vertical challenges but doesn't lead to anything interesting in particular. Guess which way we went. Forward, of course! Because it's there...

So after another horizontal trek and a neat small waterfall-like drop, we came to the first big drop, about a 30' cliff, the bottom 15' being an overhang. Here the cave gets interesting... When you get to the edge of the cliff, if you look up and behind you, you'll see there's a 2nd floor above where you've just been walking, but there's no good way to get up there without a difficult rock climb up the walls, which we were not prepared for. After you rappel down to the large chamber below you, you also have a few choices. The horizontal passage continues to places unknown (well, unknown to me) and there is another 2nd floor passage up in the ceiling that you can't climb up to, and out of sight down that passage is a 3rd story passage in the upper passage's ceiling that's even harder to get to. But the problem is how do you get up there? Well, Aaron had a solution. Once you rappel down the 30' drop, it's too late, so you have to prepare before you go down. About 20 feet past the drop, on the same level as you, is a natural lava bridge (more like a meatball) that is connected to the upper passage, so if you can throw a rope off the cliff far enough to make it over the bridge, you'll be able to climb up that rope onto the bridge once you're down and walk over to the upper passage. Then you rig a rope to the same place and simply drop it off the cliff and rappel down to the chamber, and then climb up rope #2 to the bridge. There were a couple of good bolts in the floor, but we backed them up with 2 chocks in some cracks just to make sure. There were, we were surprised to see, 4 new shiny silver bolts stuck to the walls by some previous cavers, but they were very ugly and stood out so much you could see them from 50 feet away, and just out of principle to protest the way they ruined the natural beauty of the cave, we didn't use them. (Too bad I forgot my bolt cutters).

It only took Cele two tries to throw the rope over the bridge, and we rigged both ropes, and rappelled down the cliff in a total time of about an hour. At this point we knew we were running out of time and probably wouldn't make it into the attic passage, but we were determined to go as far as we could, even though it meant going to a lot of time and trouble to get into the ceiling only to turn immediately around and come back. This was going to be a game of tag, basically. So up we jumared to the meatball/bridge, and here comes the trickiest part of all. To get to the 2nd floor passage you have to walk along a ledge that's narrow, slimy and tilted along the edge of the 30'

cliff. This is definitely the scariest part. We stayed clipped into the rope as we did the traverse so we wouldn't fall all the way down, but it would still mean swinging like Tarzan into the wall so we were very careful here not to slip. Then we walked along the middle passage and saw our goal... the attic passage entrance about 20 feet above our heads. This wall looked like an easier rock climb than the others, but it was a big traverse and still beyond our abilities. The floor of the attic passage entrance had a knob in it that it looked like you could throw a lasso around (if you were a superhero) but without a big long pole (and we couldn't see any lying around) we seemed basically stuck. And sure enough, time was up and it was time to turn back.

Determined to accomplish something tangible I looked around for formations, and sure enough, since this area was hard to get to, there were some interesting delicate speleothems that hadn't been disturbed yet... some bulbous mini-stalagmites and white colourings. However, I can't say it's worth the trouble coming all this way just to see them.

Now for the trip back, since we brought the end of the rope we had climbed with us along the traverse of the ledge, we could tie it down and give a secure safety line for going back along the traverse, and then the people left up above could give just enough slack so you could then rappel down, and we'd pull the rope back up. Thus it would take a while, but everybody but the last person would be in complete safety. We voted Aaron to be the last person to bring the rope with him (since this was his idea after all) and he kindly accepted our nomination. Aaron did a very good job of making sure everybody was comfortable with moving along, every step of the way. The funniest moment came when he caught me breathing hard just before crossing the ledge, and thinking I was nervous asked me "Is everything OK?" To which my reply was "Wow, look at the cool steam I can make with my breath!"

So we all safely traversed the ledge, rappelled off the bridge and climbed back up the neighboring rope to the top of the cliff again. Basically, it took about an hour to move 20 feet. Then we hiked back to the first small drop, and I went up the rope first (and struggled with the lip for a while) and set up a rope ladder to make it easier for the rest of us. Eve just free climbed.

Aaron is of course looking for any opportunity to go back and give it another try... either with a pole or a lasso. And what happens if you make it all the way into the attic? There's not much to see, but you will have the satisfaction of knowing you made it to the attic.

There was one injury during the trip... I tore the skin between my thumb and first finger (but we had a first aid kit and bandaged it up fine). I'll name four activities we actually did that day, and you try and guess which one I was doing when I hurt myself:

- a) while rappelling down a cliff I swung into the rock crushing my hand behind the rope.
- b) while jumaring up the rope on the way back, I got my hand stuck trying to get past the overhang at the top
- c) while traversing along a dangerous ledge, I started slipping and smashed my hand into the rock in a desperate attempt to hold on and not fall.
- d) while carrying a sack of clothing across a parking lot I grabbed it by the metal latch and it slipped out of my hand.

If you guessed (d), you're right! But I think (c) would make a better story...

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## **Digging in Three Mile Creek Cave**

By Aaron Stavens

When I was a kid, I dug holes in my parents' back yard all the time. I think it was an indicator of future caving activities. One time I thought I was really on to something. One of the flowerbeds was on a slope next to the lawn. "Hey!" I thought to myself, "I can get underground really fast by digging into the hillside and under the lawn." I dug down about a foot or so and started into the hillside. I made it somewhere between two and three feet back with about one foot of dirt and sod over my head. When my father looked in on my project, he was impressed. I had made quite a bit of progress. He put a stop to it immediately. He did that a lot on my little digging projects. I'm glad he was looking out for me. Otherwise, I probably wouldn't be here today to tell you about Dick Garnick's little digging project. Thanks, Dad.

On July 21, 2002, a little before 9:00 AM, Eve Proper, my daughter Kaylee, and I met Dick Garnick, Rose Garnick, Rose's son Joel, and Mike Fraley at the Sedro Woolley ranger station. We waited around about 45 minutes for our

perennially tardy (like I can complain) grotto chairman, Van Bergen. We finally decided he wasn't coming and headed out.

Our target for the day was Three-Mile Creek cave, a limestone cave outside of Concrete. According to references cited by Dick the cave used to be substantially larger than its present day size. Over time and not far from the entrance a sink has been feeding dirt and other debris into the cave. Our task was to dig out a side passage.

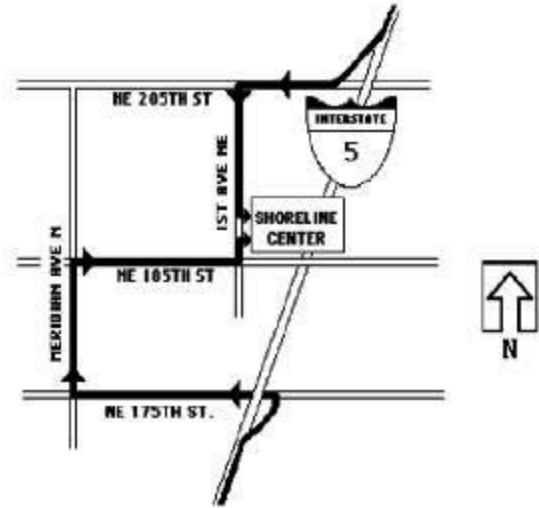
Dick had promised the cave was no more than 100' off the road and was true to his word. The cave entrance itself is walk-in. Admittedly, I saw no formations to speak of, but the limestone that makes up the cave has the usual dissolved look that indicates the limestone is good for cave formation. After a quick tour of the cave, Mike went to work in the low side passage, while the rest of us acted as a bucket brigade to move Mike's diggings out into more spacious areas of the cave. When Mike tired, the person (Dick I think) at the front of the brigade moved forward to relieve him, and a fresh person took up the rear. So it went throughout the day. As the face person tired, the line moved forward to continue the work. About mid-day, Kaylee, who had declined our invitations to dig and set herself up at the entrance with a Game Boy and a book, alerted us to the sound of a horn. Bob Brown had arrived from Elbe to help with the dig. He took up the rear position and distributed the emerging dirt under a handy boulder. By 3:00 PM, the participants were getting tired and the joy—Hey, I had a good time—of lying on damp dirt was waning. We stopped work, took some photos, and headed out for pizza.

The passage started at 1 to 1.5 feet high. The dirt we dug in was loamy and extremely easy digging. Through our efforts the passage floor lowered 3 to 4 feet. I felt good about our progress. We really moved some dirt! We weren't quite able to stand up in the resulting enlarged passage, but another day of digging and the face should be practically a pleasant place to work. This was my first experience digging in a cave so I don't have anything to compare to. However, if you are interested in a little digging yourself, I'd recommend getting in touch with Dick. There is still plenty of digging left in the cave. I can't imagine digging could get much easier unless someone else does it for you.

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The Cascade Grotto meets at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center. The Community Center is located at 18560, 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE in Shoreline. To get to the Community Center from Seattle, take Exit 176 on Interstate 5 (175<sup>th</sup> St. N) and turn left at the light at the bottom of the off ramp. At the next traffic light (Meridian Ave. N) turn right. Turn right at 185<sup>th</sup> St. N (the next light). Turn left on 1<sup>st</sup> NE, which again is the next light. The Community Center is on the right. Don't get confused with the Senior Center, which is on the end of the building. Enter the building on the southwest corner and find the Hamlin Room.

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