



# *Cascade Caver*

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

April & May 2003, Volume 42 No. 4 & 5

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# Cascade Caver

ISSN 0008-7211

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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

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## MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00 p.m. 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

June 15	Iron Curtain cave. Contact Dick Garnick
June 20	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
June 21	Windy Creek Cave. Contact Jerry Thompson
July 4-6	Papoose Cave, Idaho
July 11-13	Willamette Valley Grotto (WVG) campout
July 18	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
July 19	Cave Ridge (Newton or Lookout Cave). Contact Michael McCormack.
August 4-8	NSS Convention, Porterville, CA
August 15	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
Aug. 30-Sept. 1	NCA Regional Vancouver Island.
Sept. 19	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
September 19-22	Western Regional hosted by WVG Elk Lake OR

**COVER:** Eve Proper took this photo of Roger Cole, Kaylee and Aaron Stavens, Hester Mallonee and Van Bergen as they prepare to clean up Ape Cave. Please see the story on page 22.

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## April 18, 2003 Grotto Meeting Minutes

By Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

Attendance: Eve Proper, Aaron Stavens, Nikki & Michael McCormack, Glennis & Stuart Monson, Mike Fraley, Rose & Dick Garnick, Hester Mallonée, Jim Harp, Steve Sprague, Jon Crouch, Diane Pierce, Andrea & Mark Gunther, Tish Korbly

### Committee Reports:

*Treasurer's Report:* As of March 31<sup>st</sup> the grotto accounts hold a total of \$2,706.57.

*Conservation Committee:* Hester Mallonée has agreed to take over the position.

*Trip Coordinator:* Eve Proper is leaving for grad school and will be vacating the position. Michael McCormack would like to see the excellent job Eve has done continued. Please contact him if you are interested.

*Newsletter Editor:* Currently Mark Sherman and Eve Proper are sharing the responsibilities for Newsletter Editor. Again, Eve is leaving us and will be vacating the position. Mark will certainly miss Eve's help. Please see Mark or Michael if you are interested in helping out with the grotto's newsletter.

*Library Inventory Project:* There is an ongoing project to organize the library and make the contents known to the membership so the library's materials are more accessible. Stuart Monson has provided Michael with a list of items that are supposed to be in the library. Michael would like to see the list published on the grotto's web site.

*Vertical Committee:* Michael is still looking for a Vertical Chairman since Jon McGinnis vacated the post. Michael will do the job, but he would really prefer that someone else take the position

*Cave Rescue Committee:* There will be an NCRC self rescue training seminar May 31-June 1. See Dave McElmurry for more information.

### Old Business:

1. Michael McCormack brought up the idea of purchasing a shelter for the grotto's use

at this year's NSS convention. He found a 10'x10' sun shelter for \$199. The attendee's thought the price rather steep for such a small shelter. Renting or building a shelter was also discussed. Michael will research the possibilities further.

2. Steve Sprague will own creating a banner for the grotto. Jim Harp volunteered that he has large, stick-on, red letters we can use to make the banner. Someone suggested red lettering on a black background might look good.

### New Business:

1. Hester Mallonée is our liaison with Oregon Caves.
2. If others are interested, Michael McCormack is interested in setting up a caravan to this year's NSS convention. See him for more information.

### Trip Reports:

Aaron Stavens, Kaylee Stavens, Eve Proper, Hester Mallonée, Roger Cole, and Van Bergen visited Ape Cave with the Forest Service to clean up the party room. The paint is difficult if not impossible to remove completely from the lava, but the party room does look significantly better.

Mark Sherman, with Steve Sprague there for moral support, gave a presentation on caving to the Boy Scouts.

Dick Garnick visited a new, but already abandoned, limestone quarry where he found some excellent tubeworm fossils.

Eve Proper and others have been going out for conditioning hikes in preparation for the caving season and Cave Ridge in particular.

### Upcoming Trips:

Dick Garnick is willing to lead another digging trip to Three-Mile Creek. He'll probably go next Sunday, but could do another trip as well.

Aaron Stavens reported that there is enough interest in a Papoose trip to make a trip worthwhile, but the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend doesn't seem to be a good choice for most people. He will work on an alternate date.

Presentations:

Steve brought a SKED for a patient packaging demonstration, but there was nobody to do the demonstration. It will have to wait for another time.

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### Correction to March Cascade Caver Article "Caver Reports" compares coveralls.

By Van Bergen

In the March Cascade Caver, there's a problem with the cave suit descriptions. My positive comments about the Meander suit applied to the "Helix" suit made by Meander for IMO. I don't know anything about the Meander "Criou" PVC suit that Michael dissed; I didn't make the distinction in my original note because I forgot that Meander even made a PVC suit.

I've never heard anything but praise for the Helix, from a variety of hard-core cavers. It's tough, has nice features, fits well, is competitively priced, and comes in a variety of sizes.

Criou = bad (per Michael);  
Helix = good (per me and others, albeit not other grotto members).

Also, that Meander PVC suit was not formerly made by TSA. Petzl was the company that bought out TSA.

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### NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue 9/28/02 – 9/29/02 Trout Lake by Van Bergen

John Punches is the National and Pacific Northwest Region Coordinator for the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC), and he lives in Oregon. A few years ago, he came up to Trout Lake to put on a small-party vertical rescue class, but too few cavers with sufficient vertical skills showed up. Instead, John gave a personal class to Aaron Stavens and Jon & Julie McGinnis, and they became the only rescue-trained cavers in Washington. Then last year several Grotto members attended the British Columbia Cave Rescue small-party rescue class in Idaho. But we still didn't have a large enough group of trained people to do a full-scale rescue.

When I moved here in 2000, I was surprised to find so few trained rescuers – and no cave rescue organization or plan. Then I found out how few caves and cavers there were here. Coming from an area with lots of caves, lots more cavers, and so lots of cave rescues, that was kind of a letdown, but it seemed logical at the time. Jon and I talked about it from time to time, especially about the fact that Seattle Mountain Rescue would handle any cave rescues in King County. We didn't think any of the Seattle Mountain Rescue people had any caving experience, and that they'd be hard pressed to function in a cave. But there didn't seem to be any interest within the Grotto for more rescue training, so we let it drop.

Then over 4<sup>th</sup> of July Weekend last year, Eileen tumbled down the breakdown in Dynamited Cave, and suddenly we had a rescue on our hands. Fortunately, there were lots of people there. Unfortunately, none of them had rescue training, at least not the kind of litter handling that would be necessary. Fortunately, sufficient cool heads and Robert Mitchell's first-responder training kept Eileen stabilized pending the start of the "amateur" rescue effort. I headed out of the cave to get

my haul system out of the car and fortunately (again) ran into Jon on the way into the cave; he said he'd get the rescue team together.

Jon's team of "amateurs" turned pro really fast. Eileen was out of the cave so fast that I started thinking, "OK, maybe we don't need more training after all." But the overall effect was an increase in interest, so Aaron contacted John Punches again and arranged for him to do an official NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue class. Jon took over the class coordination and registration, and he invited members of Seattle Mountain Rescue.

Orientation to Cave Rescue is a weekend class. There is normally classroom instruction and some hands-on practice on Saturday, then a mock rescue in a cave on Sunday. When I took the class in Kentucky a few years ago, about half the participants were from local government agencies: rescue squads, fire departments, and sheriff's offices. They are the legal authority at rescues, and in Kentucky they get called out to caves pretty frequently. The Trout Lake paramedics were invited to the Punches class, but they had other training scheduled for that weekend. However, two members of Seattle Mountain Rescue did attend.

So did quite a few veterans of Eileen's rescue, and this time everyone was vertically competent. There were about 15 class members, plus John Punches and his assistant. Instead of a classroom, we had Trout Lake Creek campground. Fortunately, the weather cooperated. Punches led us through the usual Orientation topics: Gear Check, Introduction to the NCRC, Travel to the Cave, Cave Environment, (OK, since we were all cavers we pretty much skimmed over those last two), Common Injuries, Hypothermia, Personal Equipment, Rescue Equipment, Patient Packaging, Extrication, Evacuation & Litter Handling, Cave Search, Underground Communications, Cave Rescue Management, and Rescue Timeline.

Patient Packaging and Litter Handling were accompanied by hands-on practice. We handled the litter through the campground, then drove to Deadhorse and handled it there too. We even pried a volunteer out of a hole in the ground outside Deadhorse. Saturday's session was pretty standard for an Orientation class.

The Sunday mock rescue at Orientation is usually held in an easy horizontal cave. Vertical mock rescues usually don't happen until the final day of the weeklong NCRC Level 1 class. But Saturday night in Trout Lake, Punches checked out everyone's vertical abilities and decided that we were ready for more than the usual Orientation mock rescue. He originally had planned for a small group of people to haul a litter up the first drop in Dynamited, and for the bulk of the class to do the litter handling from the top of that drop to the entrance.

But when we entered Dynamited on Sunday morning, Punches had everyone descend the first drop and travel all the way to the second drop. Then the advance party descended the second drop, to find our "patient" (Erin Robert) at the bottom. I had worked with Army field phone communications in my prior NCRC classes, and we didn't have them this time, so I was happy to work on the litter-handling team. I got to watch the rigging team set up the haul system this time, too. The haul up the second drop required lots of backup anchors in the floor cracks; the room looked like a spider web. The Seattle Mountain Rescue guys were right at home in the cave from the start, and their rigging expertise transferred to the cave environment immediately.

Because of the small class and the multiple rigged drops, the litter handling team was small. 9 people. That meant six handling the litter, and two in front ready to grab it as it was passed forward. That meant that as soon as the back pair let go they immediately had to run around to the front to be ready to grab it

again. I told Punches I didn't think we had enough people, and that we should wait for some of the advance team to ascend to the top of the drop and join the litter team. He said, "You have plenty of people. Get moving!" I was supposedly the team leader, although I had not participated in a complete litter extraction before – not even my wife's! I scouted ahead for what I hoped would be a good route, and the team kept moving toward my light. And I couldn't believe how fast they moved over that relentless Dynamited breakdown.

So Punches was right – we did have plenty of people. The fact that they were all strong cavers helped. Punches' point was that you never stop and wait, you always keep the patient moving toward the entrance. This team was moving so fast that Erin started getting a little seasick, so we had to stop and let her out. The litter packaging team had her laced tightly into the litter, so it was either let her out, or turn her upside down so she could barf without choking. Mark Sherman volunteered to take her place, but Wendel Pound made a good point: We proved that we could move the patient quickly, but the small team was getting worn out from the pace and there was no sense risking a fatigue-caused real injury on the remaining breakdown. So we walked the short distance to the first drop, let Punches berate us for not carrying the litter all the way, and then laced Mark into place.

When we hauled Eileen up the first drop a few months earlier, we had an aluminum ladder to serve as a railroad bed. This time, all we had was the free hang and the sharp lip. The litter got stuck hard at the top of the drop. Punches showed us how to get it loose and up & over – by kicking it. This made Mark really happy. But it worked, and we completed a successful mock rescue - with two vertical hauls - in less time than it would normally take an Orientation class to do a simple horizontal mock rescue.

Punches had to speed up his debriefing outside when it started to hail on us. Everyone was tired but happy. And confident. And we had a couple new cavers – the Seattle Mountain Rescue guys. Dave McElmurry really caught the bug too; he dove headfirst into organizing us into a team, conducting a practice session, and arranging for Punches to do a small-party rescue class at the end of May. I strongly encourage anyone to take the next Punches class – either the small-party class in May, or a future Orientation class. It'll make you a better, safer caver. And who knows, maybe someday you'll have to help carry someone out of a cave. My wife, for instance?

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## Ape Cave Cleanup– April 13, 2003

By Roger Cole

Six energetic cavers met for breakfast at Jack's Store in Cougar on a soggy April morning. They were Aaron and Kaylee Stavens, Eve Proper, Van Bergen, Hester Mallonee and I. We talked about the rain and the task before us and then headed to the Trail of Two Forests to meet friendly Ranger Lisa Walker of the Mt. St. Helen's National Volcanic Monument staff. She works for Jim Nieland but claims only a limited knowledge of caves. Ranger Lisa let us through the gate and we drove the rest of the way to Ape Cave. There was no snow. We felt privileged as we passed a number of people walking up the road.

We packed two firefighter bladder packs, two Coleman propane lanterns, and a box of brand new wire brushes in addition to our personal gear. We entered the cave and walked downslope to the lower end of the cave. There were few other people in the cave.

We assisted each other up to the party room on the upper level and surveyed the damage. At first it didn't look too bad and we concentrated on picking up tiny pieces of broken beer bottles. Ranger Lisa crawled a

little farther in and reported that there was lot of spray paint to deal with. That's when the work got serious. We realized we had our work cut out for us. At first we couldn't get the bladder bags to spray and dipped water from small pools. Basically we took wire brushes to the walls, added as much water as we could apply and scrubbed like mad. Trying to scrub spray paint off rough lava is not easy.

We spent about three hours working a 30 foot long section of tube, all six of us, including Ranger Lisa. Kaylee divided her time between Game Boy and scrubbing. Mostly the paint was white and orange and when we got done, it looked a LOT better. It is impossible to obliterate all traces of spray paint on lava. But we made a huge difference. We even talked about how we could prevent future cave users from decorating the walls with their names.

Eventually we accomplished all we could and decided to head out. My headlamp had gone dead and I stepped into a deep hole leaving the upper section. I went down to my armpits and knocked my helmet off, but was unhurt. Rather than fiddle with my lamp, I followed Ranger Lisa with the Coleman lantern. We had been in about 4 ½ hours. On the way home, we stopped for a leisurely dinner in Cougar. Did you know that Ape Cave is the second deepest in Washington? Newton is 600' and Ape is 598'. We will probably have to clean Ape Cave again, but for now, it looks pretty good. Thanks to all for their hard work.

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## How to Tell if you're a Caver

by Eve Proper

Think carefully about the following statements. If you agree with ten or more, you're probably a caver. Seek relief underground immediately.

I am extraordinarily pale, even in summer.

I have facial hair.

On some occasions, I think nothing of eating lunch without washing my hands after rubbing my hands in dirt, using the bathroom, and sweating profusely.

I don't care what time I get done with the hike, since I'm carrying a headlamp anyway.

I think it's a beautiful day out – much too nice to spend above ground.

There are strange bruises on my legs.

God didn't mean for human beings to get up too early in the morning.

A really hot member of the opposite sex looks even better in a harness

Dressing up means putting on my newest T-shirt and the good fleece.

Monty Python is funny.

My favorite store in Seattle is REI, even though it doesn't really have a big enough selection of equipment to meet my needs.

After every outdoor outing, I crave pizza and beer.

My car has a bat bumper sticker.

When asked to name the four-letter "L" word, I say "lava."

The phrase "on rope" sets my heart beating a little faster.

Forget Paris, I want to see Lechuguilla.

My day job is in engineering.

I've been known to watch Star Trek.

When a new acquaintance asks about my hobbies, I cough and mumble something unintelligible.

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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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