

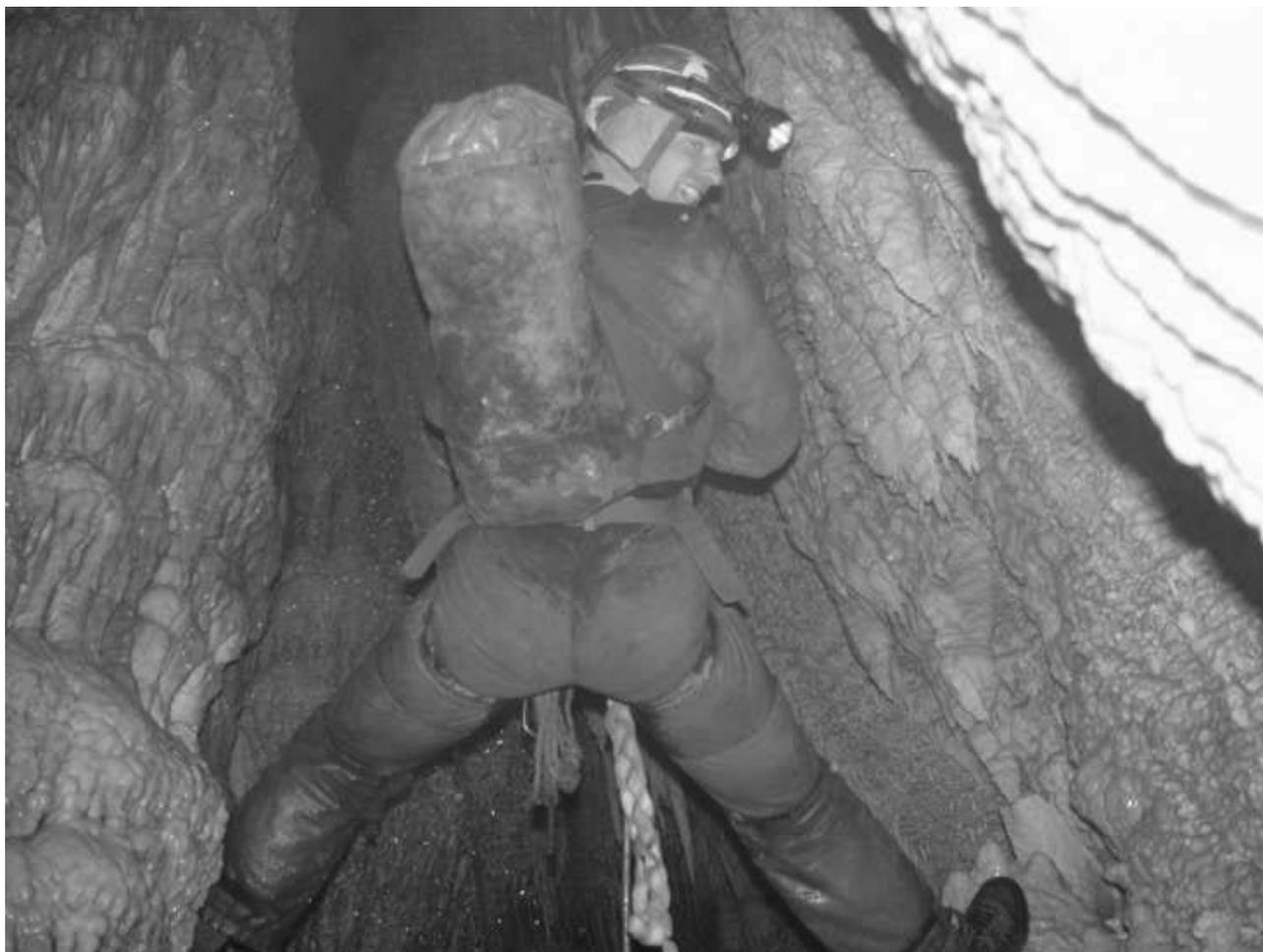


# *Cascade Caver*

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

November & December 2003, Volume 42 No. 11 & 12

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# Cascade Caver

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

## GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$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*.

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Program Chair	Robert Mitchell	(360) 802-5131
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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

November 1-2	Gem State Grotto Halloween Party Contact Jennifer Dorman at idahocaver@gemstategrotto.org
November 21	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
December	Christmas Party, Date and location TBD
December 31	Ballots for Grotto Election Due
January 16	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
February 20	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
July 12-16	NSS Convention, Marquette, MI.

**COVER:** Aaron Stavens descending in Papoose Cave. This photo was taken by Michael McCormack.

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Grotto Finances as of Dec. 31, 2003  
By Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings	
Checking	1096.60
Saving	1460.89
Total Checking/Savings	2557.49

Other Current Assets

Petty Cash	23.00
Total Other Current Other Assets	23.00

Total Current Assets	2580.49
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TOTAL ASSETS	2580.49
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	1592.82
Retained Earnings	797.34
Net Income	190.33
Total Equity	2580.49

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	2580.49
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Papoose Cave - 15 November 2003  
By Dave Decker

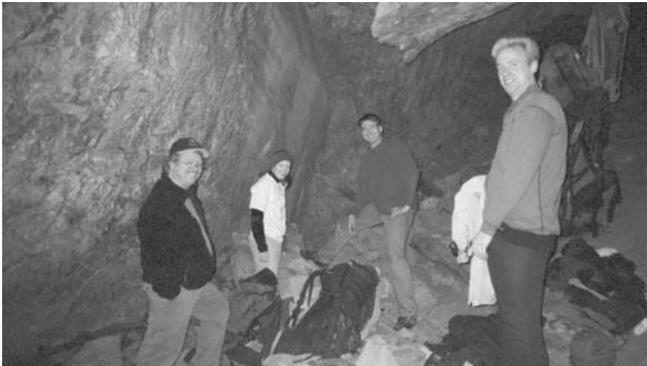
*Excerpt by Michael McCormack, edited by  
Johanna Decker*

Shopping for grub in a small grocery in Riggins Idaho is where I found myself this-morning. I was with a small group I had met up with late last night at the Riverview Motel, a straight board, 16-room motor inn overlooking the Salmon River. Aaron Stavens was weighing the merits of taking Nutter Butter cookies as an in-cave snack while Michael and Nikki McCormack shopped for electric blue Gatorade to stave off their thirst. As we

were departing we ran into Charlie from Boise, we were to meet him at the local diner in a few minutes along with his cadre of cave junkies. After a short breakfast and a quick return to the motel for some extra vertical gear, the four of us piled into Nikki's silver pickup and headed up the mountain. Climbing into the hills above the Salmon River quickly brought us to the snow line and a realization that a four-wheel drive does no good with little tread on the tires. We took our time going up the hill and just before arriving at the parking area we found ourselves sliding slowly toward an unplanned descent to the cave. An excited yell of "OFF THE BRAKES" came from the back, and with a mere eighteen inches between the tires and a thousand foot drop to the creek below, the truck jerked to the left and continued around the corner to a spot beside two other vehicles.

Charlie and his crew had already departed their vehicles for the cave, so we grabbed our gear and amidst gently falling flakes of snow we started down the trail to the entrance. The path started fairly straightforward, gently sloping with about four inches of snow. As we made our way further down the hill into the pines, the trail steepened to the point where you could reach straight out behind you and touch your own footprints. At one point a purple dynamic hand line tied off to a small tree aided the descent of a steep icy section with a 10-foot cliff at the bottom. The rope was full of ice, chilling our hands to the point of pain, so we all decided to keep our gloves on for the hike out. A short traverse along a narrow ledge led to an interesting climb along the trunk of a downed tree, then around the rim of a natural limestone tunnel that slanted down and away from us at a 45-degree angle. Once past this obstacle, a series of railroad tie steps led to a natural amphitheater where several climbing routes were obvious from the pro and quickdraws lining the cracks left by climbers. We slipped and slid the remaining 250 feet or so to the bottom of the ravine,

grabbing small trees and bushes to slow our descent. When we reached the creek bed we could hear running water; a quick glance upstream revealed the lower entrance.



Most of Charlie's group had already entered, only two remained and they disappeared into the culvert that lined the entrance tube within seconds of our arrival. Aaron apparently has a reputation for being slow to kit up so we all checked out the entrance area, took pictures and took care of last minute business while Aaron started to get into his gear. About five minutes later we all started getting dressed, but we had allowed him too much lead time and he actually beat everyone this time! We hung our packs from ceiling pendants to avoid ravage by packrats then one by one slid through the thirteen inch culvert into the Mainline of Papoose. With a call of "off culvert!" we were on our way.

Once past the entrance, there was no crawling or squeezing to be had. The Mainline is a walking-size passage lined with beautiful blue-gray marble and floored by a small stream. As we made our way down the gentle slope we came to a short waterfall drop of about 15 feet which led to a narrow canyon passage. A short scramble to another pitch led to the "40-Foot Water Fall" and a pebble lined dome-pit with a tall canyon leading out from the other side. The metamorphic origins of this passage were evident in the white, yellow and gray fist-size pebbles embedded in the blue limestone matrix that had been elongated by heat and pressure. The stream covered the entire floor at this point and we made every effort to stay out of the water so that it

wouldn't be muddied. The water sluicing through this section of passage had cut the perfect cross section so that the stratigraphy of the passage could be thoroughly enjoyed. At a split in the passage we turned left and made our way down to the Sand Room where we again caught up to Charlie.

A floor of sand and a Swiss cheese like appearance to the walls make this room an ideal meeting and resting area. It had taken us about 50 minutes to get here from the surface, and from this point on we would not see Charlie's group again while in the cave. The Sand Room is a junction where many passages diverge to different parts of the cave and we would be going our separate ways from here. After a short rest, we made our way about 30 feet back into the mainline then started climbing to the top of the canyon where an intersecting passage led back to an upper level of the Sand Room and on to Satori Passage. At this point we could no longer see the walls, they were entirely covered by flowstone, cave coral, stalactites, stalagmites and anything else you could think of, and it only got better! We wound our way down the narrow water-filled passage stepping in each others foot prints to limit the impact our boots would inevitably make on the floor of this beautiful passage. We were looking for a landmark of three soda straw stalactites that had fallen into the stream that would tell us when we needed to start climbing again to make it to Upper Satori Passage. We eventually found them and began our ascent to an even more beautiful part of the cave. The decorations here were just incredible! As we climbed we made our way further down passage until we ran into another intersecting canyon that took off to the right which was Upper Satori. We scrambled, climbed, ducked under and slid over all sorts of obstacles, finally coming to a place where Nikki had a little trouble due to her petite size. Her legs were a little too short to comfortably make a step across that was no problem for me and my long legs. We were able to spot her and she did make it across on her own.

Here a formation that looked like a parrot poked out from the wall, and a waterfall cascaded over a flowstone dam from a side passage. We had made it to the Bluewater Waterfall Room.

We entered the side passage up the small water fall and through a canyon about 18 inches wide lined with pretties to a jewel-encrusted room that had a 20-foot water fall issuing forth from a two-foot wide hole in the ceiling. Behind the waterfall there was a massive flowstone ledge and even more calcite formations. On the right wall of the passage, ribbons of calcite hung down like turkey wattles and the floor was littered with cave popcorn. Our objective was to make it to the top of the waterfall and into the Bluewater Passage. Aaron had been lucky enough to secure a permit allowing us to explore this rarely visited passage, and now we knew why the permit was so hard to get. When we saw that we'd have to climb those beautiful walls we decided to find another way around or fall back to our secondary plan of exploring a different, less fragile part of Papoose. We made our way back into Upper Satori and started to look for a way up that would allow us into the passage we so desperately wanted to see. Aaron and Michael went straight up from where we were while I went down stream, under a ledge, up a boulder and into another very tall passage. This looked promising so I called to the others who had found only dead ends and they made their way to my location. I'll let Michael tell the story from here as Nikki, Aaron and I decided to wait and see if the climb went since it was so exposed. After a quick bite to eat, Aaron joined him.

*Getting to the Bluewater Addition is its own dilemma. It's a pretty serious bit of exposed climbing to the entrance of that passage which is a little muddy and a lot slippery. Starting from the 90 degree turn in Upper Satori to the east you begin your ascent immediately*

*after the passage leading to the Waterfall Room, if you are climbing into pretties, you are climbing too early. You continue at the ceiling level in Upper Satori around the next 90 degree bend that sends the passage south. Right before the passage bends back east, you can see the entrance to Bluewater Addition on your right nearly at ceiling level. Exposure is somewhere between 30-60 feet at this point. I did not find this climb hard, but it was exhilarating.*

*Once I entered the passage (a bit of tricky and exposed work) I looked back and noted that there is a great deal of passage visible that isn't on the map from Pete Crecelius (1997). It's explicitly marked as not surveyed, and in fact may represent a passage of some significance. Since unexplored passage was not on our trip permit, I did not investigate.*

*From the entrance of Bluewater Addition, Aaron and I headed west up the Addition and it began to bear north again. Eventually after passing some dried out formations, muddy formations, and some calcite rafts (it's a bizarre mix up there), we were on top of the Waterfall Room and found survey station BUI marked onto the wall with carbide. In my opinion this is the "Addition" passage and not the Waterfall Room as defined by the permitting system. This opinion seems to be supported by the map. While searching around, I headed forward and exposure immediately jumped from 10 feet to 30 feet as I begin working over the pit.*

*We had to backtrack because we found the climb up on the wall immediately opposite to the survey marker. Aaron and I chimneyed into place on a ledge 10 or so feet from the floor of Bluewater Addition, and then physically positioned over the pit. Moving forward the walls are separated bell like and exposure is now about 40 feet, there is a small ledge that feels a lot like a staging platform, the bolts are right there. Look to the*

*ceiling and you will see where you're supposed to go. The bell closes and then flares again very hourglass like, so the job is to make it into the neck of the hourglass. From this vantage it appears that the bolts will be at foot level eventually.*

*I roped into the bolts with static line and two carabineers. From the ledge I stepped out to the far wall which was three to five feet away. There is a bomber foot hold there. I had to keep my hands on the wall that I just left and look for a foot hold on that wall. There is a small not so bomber niche in the wall two feet under the bolts I remember putting my foot there, it was a huge stretch for me, but somehow I did it. I had set the carabineers into the bolts so that they could be released in stages (forgot to mention this to Aaron before I took off). After the first two moves I had to have the first biner removed, so there was some general hollering, scampering and fear induced heavy breathing at this point (probably mine), as Aaron positioned himself and removed the first biner. Click...*

*I moved forward and up, and eventually I had 50-60 feet of exposure. The waterfall is "visible" (ok I just knew it was there) through the cracks in the floor 40 feet down. You're in a chimney about three feet high that bells out above you and below you. It was at that point that Aaron asked "It's your last chance, remove the last biner or not?" Air above and air below at this point and nothing but arm and leg pressure resisting the gravity. I had no idea how I was going to move up but was convinced I could do it, so I said (after several long seconds of deliberations) to remove the rope.*

*I was looking down, and noticed the biners swing free and pendulum beneath me and the darkness that was most likely the floor below them. That was the point where I got scared.*

*I honestly have no idea how I completed the moves, but the general idea is to position yourself above the three-foot chimney and*

*work your way into the upper part of the hourglass. From there you can simply (its still very exposed) work your way up passage on the ledge to the drop that was rigged at the waterfall. All the rigging there is still in place. There is a small stal with black webbing on the side of the pit and then a very large stal to use as a friction rig point. Phew. I think I sat for 10 minutes recovering. Time for the whole ordeal was about an hour and a half. I would NOT do the move in the reverse. No way, and I'll never do it again on those bolts, and I want dynamic rope. Good news is I had no trouble navigating the cave this time and led through the cave (with Aaron's approval); I guess I can find my way in a borehole.*

After about an hour of waiting, Nikki and I became chilled so we went back to the Waterfall Room to see if we could see the rope coming down. We could hear Michael messing around up there, but the noise from the falling water kept us from understanding anything he was saying. Eventually the rope came down through the hole, and after another



20 minutes of trying to communicate, I went back to the original climb to see if they could hear me better from there. I ran into Aaron coming back down and we went back to the Waterfall Room to try and convince Michael to rappel down. Eventually he understood us and came down the rope; he told us of his harrowing adventure to get into the Bluewater Passage and then convinced us to join him up there. He and Aaron held the rope out of the waterfall while I ascended the 70 to 80 foot dome, enjoying the beautifully decorated walls the entire way up. Nikki came next and had a heart-pounding experience as the main anchor point came loose and she dropped about a foot before the back up anchor caught her. I did a quick inspection and found that the back up was definitely going to hold, so she continued up. When she arrived at the top, we re-rigged the main anchor around the stalagmite that it had been attached to and called for the others to come on up. Michael came next and Aaron last, we re-examined the anchor point and couldn't figure out how the main anchor had come loose. The passage beckoned, so we let it go for the moment and climbed past large breakdown and an eight-foot cliff to a hall filled wall to wall with three-foot high rimstone dams. Although the sides of this passage were absent of any calcite, the rimstone pools and cascades more than made up for it. We continued upstream and must have climbed over at least ten dams before we came to an eight-foot waterfall. Aaron climbed up and reported that we could go no farther without swimming. Since none of us were prepared for this, we decided to call it a day and turn around. On the way back down, a two-foot by three-foot section of wall that had been a solid handhold on the way in collapsed nearly throwing Aaron into the cold pool at his feet. Luckily he was able to step on the newly formed "beach" and avoid a dunking. Back at the waterfall without further incident, Michael, Nikki and I rappelled down into the Waterfall Room, and I found out why you're not supposed to leave your Croll open

while rappelling. While going through the two-foot hole in the ceiling, the rope slid into the Croll and pulled the latch shut, stopping me dead in the waterfall. I quickly broke out my foot loop, attached it to the rope and "climbed" out of my predicament without further problems, but boy didn't I feel like an idiot!

With three of us safely down, Aaron re-rigged the rope for a pull down then joined us at the bottom. Once the rope was wrapped for hauling, we carefully made our way back to where Nikki had had trouble, only to find none of us had seen an easy climb around on the way in. Oh well, so much for our powers of observation. We worked our way back to the Sand Room, enjoying the scenery along the way and then took a much-needed food and water break. The Sand Room also happens to be the stash point for in-cave rescue gear, so there were several buckets there that we could use for seating. We all chose one and had a nice little rest, after which Aaron started repacking his pack. He noticed that he had lost his fleece so he went back into Satori looking for it. About five minutes after he left, I noticed his fleece lying on the floor where he had been messing with his pack! I jammed out after him and found him already on his way back, so we went back to the Sand Room together and the four of us headed on out of the cave.

The hike out was a real pain in the ass. It has snowed a couple more inches while we were in the cave and it was definitely colder, so I kept my caving fleece on instead of changing into the cotton jeans that I'd hiked in with. We had de-rigged all the drops since we were the last ones out of the cave, and I was now carrying a waterlogged 150' rope that must have weighed at least 30 pounds. Add that to the rest of my gear and I had a 50-pound pack to haul up that 1000-foot climb back to the truck! I ended up literally crawling up the tree trunk that had been so fun coming down, and

the hand line seemed to have stretched out to fifty-foot hand over hand. Nikki and I were the first ones back to the truck, as Aaron and Michael wanted to change into dry clothes before they hiked out, so we got the truck started to warm it up and Nikki began putting chains on for the drive down the mountain while I changed into my dry clothes. A few minutes later the other two showed up and we very slowly made our way back to Riggins.

We feared we had missed any chance at dinner since it was now midnight and Riggins is a very small town. Luckily there was a bar open that served pizza so we stopped for some hot chocolate and even hotter pizza, though we had to talk Michael out of ordering the sauerkraut on top! As we sat there eating, Charlie walked in and seemed grateful that he wouldn't have to go back up the mountain looking for us, which was where he had been headed when he saw the truck parked outside.

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## **Fredericksburg Cave, Indiana**

by Eve Proper

I am very pleased and excited to report that on Nov. 9, four months after moving to Indiana, I finally went caving.

Now, before you rush to judgment and say something along the lines of, "Exclusionary old Indy cavers," let me explain that this is more of less entirely my fault. I've been going to meetings (probably the only semester of grad school I'll be able to do so, at least on time), and people have been encouraging me to come on a variety of trips. I had to pass up a TAG trip because it was five days long and I had these pesky classes to go to. That was the big problem, actually – school ends up interfering in all hours of your life, not just the hours you are falling asleep in class. So I've been telling people, "No, really, I promise I do cave."

But on this cold day in November, I actually had time to spare, and it was only a daytrip, so

I found myself speeding south on 65 out of Indianapolis with another local caver. After my cross-country driving overdose, I prefer to leave that up to others if I can, and this caver was excited to take his new truck on his first caving trip.

All told there were 11 people on this trip, which should give you an idea of the kind of cave it was – not vertical or deathly difficult. I had been warned repeatedly that this cave was cold (50 being the locals' idea of a cold cave) and wet and to dress accordingly. If I had followed instructions, I would have been wearing neoprene socks and rubber gloves. I was a bit dubious, but I didn't want to be "told so," so I put on the full Northwest caving kit, which principally includes lots of fleece.

The cave was Fredericksburg Cave in Washington County. It's made out of a substance they call "limestone," not that you can actually see rock anywhere. Given the volumes of mud all over, it makes a lava tube look positively colorful by comparison.

The trip, which took about six hours, can be divided into three parts (reverse if you wish to exit the cave). The first quarter is walking and some crawling. The second quarter is walking in water that is up to one's waist at times. The last half is walking through "suck mud," which is exactly what it sounds like. But all along the way there were formations, ranging from lone soda straws to magnificent columns. Of course, they were all brown.

Having dressed so warmly, I was dying at the beginning of the cave. It was a party in my coveralls, except it was a clambake kind of party and I was the unfortunate clam. The "cold" water actually felt refreshing, even after slogging through it for 10 minutes. Lesson: One layer less in the cave, and at least one more layer outside the cave. But it was worth it to get to the end of the cave and sit and aimlessly stare at the little lake that finishes if off.

It was, in sum, a very nice little cave, and I can already feel myself getting jaded about formations. "Oh, more bacon. That's nice." I wouldn't mind doing without the suck mud, myself, because it makes post-caving laundry even more difficult. (Strolling through the stream removes a surprisingly insufficient amount of the gunk.)

So that's caving in Indiana. For a free sample of mud, come on down any time.

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## Video Review

by Aaron Stavens

*Cave Safe: Enjoying and Protecting the Underground World*

Written and Presented by Andy Sparrow

Third Eye Films Copyright 1992

I am always on the lookout for more caving information, so I pleased when I stumbled across a series of three instructional videos on caving: *Cave Safe: Enjoying and Protecting the Underground World*; *Cave Safe II: Ropes, rigging, ladders, and lifelines*; and *Cave Safe III: SRT and advanced ropework*. The King County Library System has them in active circulation. That is where I procured my set for viewing. I will concentrate on the first in the series in this review. I intend to review the others in the future, but if someone else beats me to it, I certainly will not be offended (hint, hint).

The video is arranged in a logical progression. It takes a "new" caver from the beginning through basic safety rules, equipment selection, planning the trip, leaving information about the trip for callout purposes, getting to the cave, emergency kits, a demonstration of a hypothermia management technique, and (mostly) horizontal movement through the cave. Near the end of the video the cavers are rewarded for their efforts with beautiful cave formations.

Overall I am impressed with the results of Mr. Sparrow's effort. It appears he made a sincere effort cover most of the horizontal, basic caving experience with an emphasis on safety, the potential hazards of caving, and the conservation ethic. The three points I found fault with were the number of lights per person, the bad air test, and, at some points, the sound quality.

Regarding the lights, Mr. Sparrow recommended always carrying a spare light. That is one less than the three sources of light normally recommended today. His emergency kit did include a candle. That could be considered a third source of light. It also might be a simple matter of best practices changing over time. I do not know.

I will admit to a lack of personal experience with bad air and the detection thereof, but my understanding is that the flame test recommended by Mr. Sparrow is simply insufficient. According to *Caving Basics*, a flame will still burn at oxygen levels that are dangerous to humans. So, if your flame is anemic or will not light, something is wrong. If the flame is just fine, things might or might not be all right. That does not give me the desired warm fuzzy.

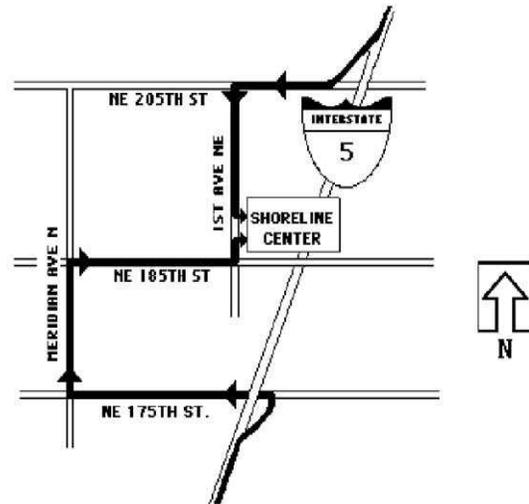
Regarding the sound quality, at a few points in the video there is an annoying swishing sound. It seemed to coincide with scenes in which there was water flow, but I do not know for sure what caused it. The extra noise makes it more challenging to follow the dialogue. However, the noise is a production issue and not a problem with the information Mr. Sparrow is presenting.

In conclusion, if you get the chance and especially if you are not a long-time caver, I'd recommend taking a look at video.

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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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