

CASCADE GROTTO



Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

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Cascade Caver

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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.

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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 1st Ave NE in Shoreline. Please see the back cover for directions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18	Cascade Cave Contact Hester Mallonee.
July 24	Iron Curtain Cave B.C. Contact Dick Garnick.
July 24-25	Deer Cave (Trout Lake) contact Claude Koch (see above)
August 7	Papoose Cave, Idaho. Contact Aaron Stavens.
August 20	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
September 17	Grotto Meeting. 7 p.m. Shoreline Community Center
August 2006	NSS Convention Bellingham, WA

COVER: Van Bergen, in his normal caving attire, performs with the Terminal Siphons at the 2004 NSS Convention in Marquette, Michigan The picture was taken by George Cesnik, of the Central Indiana Grotto. Thanks to Michael McCormack for designing this cover.

NSS 2004 Convention

By Michael McCormack

At the July meeting, the Cascade Grotto voted to have me represent the grotto at the 2004 convention in defense of our bid to host the 2006 annual convention. At the time, this seemed like a good idea. Florida was coming on strong with their bid, several people from the Florida congregation were planning on attending and soliciting heavily for the bid. While we had Van and Eve attending and had already done our presentation.

So I bought the tickets while sitting in a negligible cell phone zone in Yellowstone, barely able to hear the travel agent.

July rolls around and Florida was still coming on strong. But on Thursday, July 8th, Florida pulled out of the convention race because of problems with their campsite. Ultimately this was great news, for us, but now I was committed to traveling to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan with little reason to actually go.

Rather than squander the opportunity, I went with the intention of learning everything I could about running a convention in three days. During the three days, I spend time or conversed with the NSS 2004 convention staff, including the chair, Jean Devries, and anyone else who would spend the time to talk to me. Additionally I was able to dash together a couple of Registration Awards for the auction on Wednesday night.

Tuesday was a mad house. It was tough leaving, as work was hitting high gear and I had just gotten back from a previous vacation. I worked up until the last minute and then boarded a plane to Minneapolis, the absolute cheapest destination within 10 hours of Marquette. I arrived in Minneapolis at 10 and proceeded to wait for about an hour and a half for the luggage to finally make it to the

carousel. I arrived at the gate about 20 minutes earlier than expected, but left the airport, a half our later than I had planned.

After getting out of the airport, I began the drive to Marquette. One of the only things that made this whirlwind trip viable was that my parents lived in the middle of Wisconsin. Utilizing their air mattress (and their camping gear for the week), I crashed for a couple of hours before finishing the drive to Marquette.

I had arrived a little late, since I failed to note that Marquette is just on the other side of the Eastern Time zone, but with more than enough time to prepare for the auction. The first thing I noticed was I couldn't find the site of the convention. I literally had no idea, the GPS coordinates I had written down, mapped to the middle of a wilderness area. I called Nikki up on the cell phone with the patchy intermittent cell service of the true "North American Backwoods", and worked out a way to get to the campground where I had guessed that registration would be.

Rule number 1 for a convention, make sure the directions make sense, provide correct GPS coordinates (without typos) and a simple street address... This rule was repeated to me over and over throughout the remainder of the week once people discovered that I was chairing for the 2006 convention.

Once I got onto the right track, I was astounded by the lack of roadside indication. It turns out that the signs were there, however after a downpour earlier in the week, all of the 8X11 pieces of paper stapled to the picket sticks were limp and invisible. Once again, this would prove to be a major complaint for all those attending that wanted to complain about something.

I should point out that this was an exceptionally well run convention, there were few real problems (other than the beer running

out Monday, which I didn't have to deal with...)

Oh yeah and President George W Bush showed up in Marquette, commandeered their vertical gym and screwed up traffic for the day. Turns out this was the first time that a sitting president had visited the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in living memory (OK so someone really old might remember the last time). Jean told me "I planned for Tornadoes Hurricanes and other natural disasters, but none of it prepared me for the President!"

Once I had registered, I headed out to the campus site for the sessions. Since I had arrived at the lunch break, I was able to sit in on the first session that I ran across the "Cave Ballad Listening Session". I spent the next hour thinking to myself: "Man those Duckbusters are just awesome!"

After the session, I had a chance to talk to Hazel Barton, one of the Directors from the BOG, and found out that on Monday they had accepted the Cascade Grotto's bid to host the 2006 NSS convention in Bellingham with me as the Chairman and Van Bergen as the Vice Chairman.

After receiving official word, I headed back to camp to set up and prepare for the auction. Since I was camping alone this year, I decided that I would setup in the Noisy camp with Van. After all I can sleep through an earthquake, so it shouldn't be that big of a deal. Later that night, I was to find out that Noisy meant something different in Michigan.

At the auction, the certificates were met with universal acclaim, and after a slow start at the rest of the auction, bidding for the registration numbers shot through the roof. Dick Blenz bid \$950 to win registration number 1 and Russ Kennedy bid \$500 to win registration number 2. Together they helped get the Convention off to a great start with over \$1,400.



The auction was followed up with the Terminal Siphons playing in the barn. It turned out to be an unfortunate venue. Nearly the entire convention was massed outside of the barn, while the siphons played at the back. The acoustics were so bad, and the volume was so loud that you couldn't stay in the building until you were simply to drunk to care.



That evening I discovered what noisy camp meant in Michigan. Four people standing around a car (including me), yelling "Wake up damnit!" while the rest of the campground ignored them.

The following day, I spent mingling, gathering a list of volunteers and learning what went well and what didn't. Even though I didn't need to politic, I tried to remain engaged with people to be sure I knew what was going on.

Their campground showers had broken down, and now everyone was stuck taking cold showers. Despite how uncomfortable that may sound, in general spirits were up, and not too many people were complaining. Since they couldn't predict this problem, they weren't entirely prepared. The water heater was brand new, and it turns out that the part they needed was not available in the UP. After some scrambling and some jerry rigging, it all worked out.

I stopped in the cafeteria to find out the quality and cost of the food. There I had the closest thing to heart failure all week. I had a salad and some BBQ and paid under \$3.00 for the entire lunch. If only I could get that pricing here!

The sessions were run well and the technical accommodations were first rate. The only thing that would have made it better was auditorium seating, but now I'm just being nit picky.

Thursday night rolled around, and there was no scheduled party. However there is the ever-present unofficial Ramen wrestling. However this year they decided to use Corn instead since the organizers woke up too late to cook the Ramen. There are interesting legal aspects of running a convention that had never occurred to me until I started paying attention...

On Friday the convention sessions were ended with a post mortem of the 2004 convention. The UP convention did not break even, as it fell nearly one hundred people short of their break-even point. It can happen... It all works out in the end. California came 20,000

ahead of their break even point, which led to a significant profit for the NSS even taking into account the \$4000 deficit.

There were a variety of problems accounted for in the post mortem. Directions and Signs were the biggest. Turns out in Michigan, you need permission to post signs along the roadway, permission they were never able to get. So they tried to put the signs up unobtrusively. Health inspectors showed up on Monday unannounced and demanded that they get a campground permit. This could have been bad, but it worked out. Apparently they were going to send the plumbing inspector out for the showers the following Tuesday, to Jean's great amusement.

The president showed up, heh, what are you going to do! Working with the University who was used to handling conventions helped a great deal as their staff was very professional. The showers, things break down. The biggest problem? Volunteers... There weren't enough. Security was unmanned from midnight to eight. Teenagers roamed freely causing trouble (It was suggested that we impound teenagers and charge a fee to release them instead of dogs.) Speaking of dogs, there were no problems with them the entire convention.

Overall their staff struggled to pull off a very well organized and run convention with little to no help. With any luck, our list of volunteers will continue to grow, and we will have the staff to make running our convention a little easier for those involved.

So volunteer now! We are putting on this convention in 2006. Areas that need special attention early are JSS coordinator (do you have kids, and know how to keep them entertained, or want to learn how?), Facilities backup, and writers for the Convention publications including the website. Additionally we will need videographers, and

any warm body willing to work!

Crew Saves Three Stuck in Cave

Taken from the April 27, 2004

TheSpokesman-Review.com

Three Whitworth College students who set out to explore caves in north Spokane County on Sunday ended up having to be rescued from one.

"That's a pretty unique rescue for us because we don't have a lot of caves around here," said Lt. Dan Garner of the Spokane Fire Dept. Kim Allard, 20, Charlie Shepherd, 22, and Rob Lange, 20, ended up having to be pulled from a dark and narrow vertical hole about 35 feet deep, said fire Chief Bob Anderson.

Authorities say Allard lost control of her climbing rope and fell about 20 feet. The crash onto the bottom of the cave left her with a fractured ankle, Anderson said.

Allard was treated at Holy Family Hospital. Shepherd and Lange were not injured but were admitted for observation.

Outside the hospital emergency room, Shepherd said the trio felt fortunate that no one was seriously injured. "We're just glad to be out of there," he said

The rescue occurred west of Highway 395 near the Wandermere Golf Course. Close to 10 fire and rescue vehicles responded to the 900 block of West Hazard Road after 2 p.m.

The narrow cave practically sits in Mike Hendryx's back yard. Hendryx's home is on 40 acres, and he said it's quite common for people to hike on private property through the area. To someone not looking for a cave, the small opening in the ground is barely visible.

"I was sitting in my back yard reading a book when a couple of kids came running up to me and told me to call 911 because some people had fallen in a hole," Hendryx said.

Hazard Road is narrow, and the dirt road that descends to Hendryx's home is even more narrow, as firefighters discovered. "I'll be fine I don't get this thing stuck," said Rob Bault, who drew the unlucky straw of having to drive one of the trucks in and out of the driveway.

But getting the three college students out of the cave was even trickier. Anderson said a specially trained group of emergency rescuers was able to pull all three out of the hole in about an hour. Because of her injuries, it took rescuers 35 minutes to extricate Allard.

"As you can see, there's not a whole lot of room to get down there in the first place," Anderson said. "But these guys are good. It's a technical rescue unit that is designed to handle these kinds of situations," he said.

NCA Regional at China Hat, OR

June 18-20, 2004

By Van Bergen

I drove to Oregon alone, which was fine with me 'cause I had a lot of CD's that I needed to listen to. It was a little strange that no one else from Washington was attending the Northwest Caving Association's annual Regional gathering. Nor was anyone from Idaho or B.C. Only a handful of Utah cavers showed, so this was really an Oregon event. I didn't count, but it seemed like there were at least 20 members from Willamette Valley Grotto, which was fitting because this was also their 30th anniversary party. There were a few from Oregon High Desert Grotto in Bend, which was also fitting because Bend was the closest town.

This was my first time in the area, so the road trip itself was excellent. After turning off I-5 and heading southeast on OR 22, the scenery just kept getting better: a lush river canyon leading up to a pass, pointy snow-capped peaks, a huge burn with an emerald carpet of new growth, a big lava flow, and vast open vistas on the other side of the Cascades. Bend

is in the forest/desert transition zone, and the China Hat campground is just past Bend in the desert direction. But there were still plenty of big trees around - ponderosa, mostly - and it's a really pleasant place to camp; shade, sunny days, chilly nights, and no bugs.

There's a lot of lava in the area, and it's full of holes. Around the campfire Friday night, two trips were being discussed. One was a survey trip with a vertical component, which sounded inviting. But since I'd never been in the area, Dennis Glasby's tourist trip to multiple caves sounded even better. So at the truly civilized hour of 10 am on Saturday morning, I hopped into the car of British native/ Timpanogos Grotto member Peter Hartley to join the caravan. The caravan was a little slow to start, so with WVG guy Keith reading the map we elected to get a head start and beat the dust.

There are a lot of dirt roads in the area, and although we apparently didn't choose the shortest route, we got to Derrick Cave before most of the alleged caravan. The vertical/survey trip was just leaving the same parking area, so I started walking with them just to see where the cave was, until they mentioned that it was a mile away. Keith and Peter headed up the much shorter trail to Derrick, and I waited for Dennis so I could let him know the others were already at the cave. The other Utah guy's wife and kids were also going to Derrick while he was on the vertical/survey trip; since they were geared up and ready to go, we all decided that Dennis would figure out where we went, and we headed for Derrick too.

Derrick Cave is the biggest in the area, and its entrance is truly impressive. While we were admiring the big collapse sink and what to me looked like a 60' tall entrance arch, Dennis and the rest of the trip showed up, so we all headed in. Past a couple of big skylights, the cave continued tall and wide, with a nice flat sandy floor. There was some breakdown here and there, but mostly the cave was a stroll,

and a pleasant way to start the day. When the ceiling got lower and the caving became crawling on breakdown, we turned around, since there was more to see in the area.

Dennis knew a lot of caves nearby, and how to walk right up to all but one of them. He told us all their names, but I should've written them down; there were too many to remember. It was a lot like lava-tubing in the Trout Lake area, but with different vegetation. The only big cave was Derrick, but there were plenty of shorter ones to check out. Some with nasty breakdown to crawl over, some with nice sandy floors, some crawling-only, some with nice walking passage, some with lava decorations. One name I remember is Tree Cave, because access to the entrance sink is by climbing down a big pine tree growing up from the bottom. You step off the edge of the collapsed roof onto the tree's branches, and someone many years ago pounded spike steps into the lower, branchless part of the trunk.

The cave location Dennis wasn't sure about eluded us, but we did find a cave he didn't know about. That one happened to have a soft, flat sand floor – and it was lunch time – and we'd been walking around in the sun off and on – so I took a nap. I woke up to find everyone gone, but I could still hear their voices outside. The flow was mostly scrubby growth punctuated by the occasional big ponderosa, so we could see and hear each other from pretty far. We could also see other cavers who weren't on our original trip but were in the same area. We could also join up with them to check out still more caves.

A couple of the people we ran into took us to a cave that ended at a ledge, looking down on blackness. They thought it was probably a vertical entrance to Derrick, so Peter and I hiked back to Derrick to see if we could see them. Sure enough, after a few hundred feet, we saw their light shining down from the ceiling. Now Derrick has another entrance,

although Dennis was disappointed that we hadn't found a big new cave with only this single vertical entrance. We also ran into someone who knew where the elusive cave was, so we got to check that one out as we were leaving the flow. On the way back to camp, we took a detour to check out South Ice Caves, which were pretty but only had traces of their ice floor.

Around the campfire, plans were being made to visit some lava tubes in Bend proper the next day. I had a long drive and wanted to see some sights along the way. And did I mention my knees were sore? I need to get some of those hard-shell knee pads for lava tubing. I bailed on another day of caving, but said I might stop by Silver Falls State Park to see the waterfalls. The Oregonians said it was indeed pretty but would be very crowded. They suggested visiting Newberry Crater National Volcanic Monument instead, which was great advice. Not only was it spectacular, it was also a short dirt-road trip from China Hat to the back entrance of the Monument. I packed up early Sunday morning, said goodbye to my Oregon hosts, and headed West.

Newberry Volcano is a giant caldera, as big as Crater Lake, but with two smaller lakes instead of one big one. You can hike to a waterfall, walk on an obsidian flow, and drive to an 8,000-foot viewpoint overlooking the lakes. From that lookout, Dennis said you can see from Shasta all the way to Rainier on a clear day. It was a little hazy, so I couldn't see Shasta and I could barely make out Adams, but it was still spectacular. So was the obsidian flow, where my hike was cut short by deep snow. They had just plowed the road to the lookout two days before, so this is a fine time of year to visit the Monument. When I reached the vicinity of Silver Falls around 5 PM, I decided to take the short detour and check it out after all. The crowds should be gone, right? Wrong, the place was still packed; I didn't even stop.

There was no NCA meeting at the Regional, because we didn't have a quorum. I used to think that we could have Regionals on 2-day weekends, because some people might have family plans for the 3 or 4-day holiday weekends. Now I'm not so sure. I had no problem taking Friday off, but I have lots of vacation time. Maybe we'll try a holiday weekend again next year. It didn't matter last year, because apparently a lot of people thought Vancouver Island was too far to travel on Labor Day weekend. Well, y'all missed a great time last year, and y'all missed a great time this year too. The NCA Regional is the perfect excuse for a scenic road trip to see some different caves; I wish more people took advantage of it.

Thanks to WVG for hosting this year's Regional, and to Tom Kline for setting it up. WVG has a campout at China Hat at least once a year. It may be a bit of a drive for Seattleites, but it's a pretty one, and the destination is well worth it.

Beyond the Deep by William Stone and Barbara AmEnde

Book Review by Van Bergen

The subtitle is "The Deadly Descent into the World's Most Treacherous Cave." Sounds too pretentious, but maybe it's not far off the mark. Maybe there are more treacherous caves, but I wouldn't know. Once they get this treacherous, they're great story material, and I'm never going to find out in person which one is the worst. This particular one is the Huatla system in Mexico.

Bill Stone became one of the premier cave divers ever after learning the skill from Sheck Exley. After I read Exley's book Caverns Measureless to Man, in which most of his friends die (and of course he's dead now too), I lost interest in cave diving stories. Caving is supposed to be fun, not funerals. But Stone is still going strong after about 30 years of cave diving. That's a big deal for someone who

pushes the limits in this sport, and Stone sure does that. This book is full of long solo dives in a deep system with exotic equipment and tight squeezes. One of the divers dies during the training leading up to the Huatla expedition, and another one dies on the expedition. The rest of the team keeps going.

The book starts with a description of Stone's dive into the Huatla system sump in 1979. Turned back by dwindling air at the edge of a big breakthrough, he becomes obsessed with going back and continuing on. Since the route to the sump was so difficult, hauling enough air to the dive site was a huge challenge. No problem; Stone invented a rebreather! Now he didn't need to carry so many tanks to the dive site, although the rebreathers themselves were bulky and heavy and needed a lot of testing before the expedition. He didn't get back to Huatla until 1994.

The book devotes a lot of pages to the organization, equipment testing, and other events leading up to the 1994 expedition. We get to know the other members of the team in these pages, and the authors are really good at bringing their teammates to life. AmEnde, Stone's significant other at the time, was a relatively inexperienced diver and a minor player when the team was formed. Some of the team members even objected to having her along. Her transformation into a major player is a key theme of the book.

It's hard to tell who wrote what. There are passages about Stone in the first person that could easily have been written by AmEnde, and vice versa. They wrote the book "with Monte Paulson" and I suspect Paulson did a lot of editing to bring the lead authors' styles together. It really works; this story is more exciting than a fictional thriller.

It's not all about cave diving, either. The Huatla system is huge, with significant vertical obstacles. The sump is only a small

section. The cavers faced big challenges just getting themselves and the gear to the dive site. They camped underground for weeks. Support teams of sherpas came to help, burned out, and left; more came. Although the book will appeal to anyone, it's a special treat for cavers. OK, some of the caving terminology and behavior are toned down for the general audience – but we still know what the authors are talking about. Since the book is not targeted at cavers, it's likely to be available in your local bookstore.

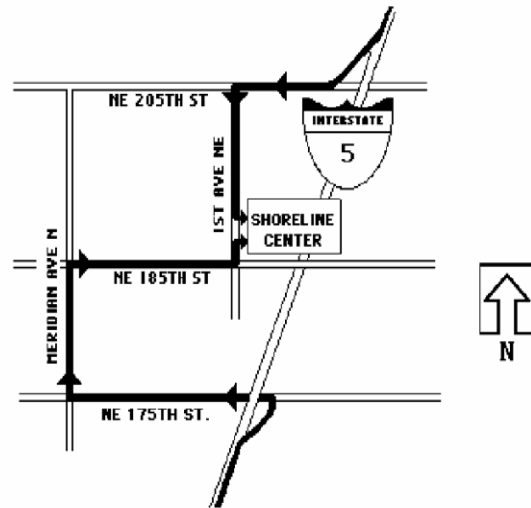
The small group of actual divers on the expedition dwindles as one dies, one becomes exhausted, one loses confidence, and they all start to argue. One of the problems is Stone's obsessive pushing; he's more interested in getting through the sump than in the condition and feelings of his team members. But if he hadn't pushed them, they wouldn't have been there in the first place. That's another strong point of this book: it explores tough emotional issues but doesn't supply easy answers.

The divers start exploring the sump and laying dive line, searching for the way on. While the experienced divers are dropping out, AmEnde is always there, sherping gear and encouraging the team. She's still there when only Stone is left from the original sump dive team. She's ready to dive. The confidence-losing diver agrees to wait in support, and Stone and AmEnde dive the sump. They each cheat death a couple times, on their way to huge discoveries that you have to read about.

The book does have some obvious product placements; the characters refer to their brand-name gear a lot more frequently than you or I would. But that can be forgiven as payback for the ample donations and gear the team received, without which the expedition would not have taken place.

It's a great adventure story that happens to be about caving. I found it difficult to put down.

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, 1st Ave NE in Shoreline. To get to the Community Center from Seattle, take Exit 176 on Interstate 5 (175th 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 185th St. N (the next light). Turn left on 1st 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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