



**DEAD DOG DISPATCH**  
**TRI-STATE GROTTO**

**GREAT WHITE WAY, NORMAN CAVE**

**VOL. #26**

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**OCT**

**2011**

**#121**



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JERRY BOWEN, TREASURER  
 TRI-STATE GROTTTO of the NSS  
 17817 STONE VALLEY CR.  
 HAGERSTOWN, MD 21740  
 301-790-0476

E-MAIL: [bookmaker-jb@myactv.net](mailto:bookmaker-jb@myactv.net)

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For **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION** contact:

BOB BENNETT, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR  
 TRI-STATE GROTTTO of the NSS  
 464 HUCKLEBERRY DR.  
 GERRARDSTOWN, WV 25420-0211  
 304-579-4304

E-MAIL: [gimpycaver@comcast.net](mailto:gimpycaver@comcast.net)

All material for inclusion in the **DEAD DOG DISPATCH** must be sent to the **EDITOR** NO LATER THAN THE **25<sup>TH</sup>** OF EACH MONTH.

\*\*\* The photo on the cover was taken by Jeff Jahn in the Great White Way in Norman Cave, Greenbrier Co, WV.

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\*\*\*\* Don't forget, the **JONES QUARRY BOOKLET** is **STILL** available at a reasonable price **\$6.00**. If you don't have it in your library, then **YOU MUST GET IT**. It is **PACKED** with info about the **QUARRY**, the **CAVE**, the **INDIAN BONES**, and of course the **MAP!** If you are interested in purchasing the **BOOKLET**, contact **BOB BENNETT** [304-579-4304(H) or 304-725-3481 ext 491(W)](E-MAIL at [gimpycaver@comcast.net](mailto:gimpycaver@comcast.net) or **JUDY FISHER** [304-258-4974(H) or 304-258-1822(W)](E-MAIL at [jcf@access.mountain.net](mailto:jcf@access.mountain.net))

**WE NEED EVERYONE TO KEEP THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR AN OPEN POSITION. WE STILL NEED SOMEONE FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:**

**PROGRAM CHAIR**  
**MEMBER at LARGE**

**PLEASE GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**



**TRI-STATE GROTTTO MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

**FULL MEMBERSHIP ----- \$10.00 (Must be NSS)**  
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# CAVING EVENTS

Keep It Coming!

## 2011

- OCT 6-10 ----- Fall TAG Cave-In
- OCT 10 ----- COLUMBUS DAY
- OCT 12 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm – Annual Auction
- Oct 14-16 ---- Fall VAR – RASS Field Station
- OCT 15 ----- Bridge Day
- OCT 15 ----- Baker Field House work day – see Brent
- OCT 22 ----- Mystic Cave – see Bob
- OCT 31 ----- All Hallow Eve (HALLOWEEN)
- NOV 6 ----- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS
- NOV 8 ----- Election Day
- NOV 9 ----- TSG Grotto meeting – 7pm – Nominations
- NOV 11 ----- VETERAN’S DAY
- NOV 12 ----- Sadie Hawkin’s Day
- NOV 24 ----- THANKSGIVING DAY**
- NOV 25 ----- BLACK FRIDAY
- DEC 14 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm – Elections
- DEC 17 ----- Annual TSG Xmas Celebration – 6pm
- DEC 18 ----- Xmas caving
- DEC 22 ----- WINTER SOLSTICE**
- DEC 24 ----- XMAS EVE**
- DEC 25 ----- XMAS DAY**
- DEC 31 ----- NEW YEAR’S EVE**

## 2012

- JAN 1 ----- NEW YEARS DAY
- JAN 11 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm
- JAN 16 ----- MARTIN MUTHER KING DAY
- FEB 2 ----- GROUND HOG DAY
- FEB 8 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm
- FEB 20 ----- PRESIDENT’S DAY
- MAY 12 ----- Heritage Day (Adam Stephen Day)
- JUN 25-30 --- NSS Convention, Lewisburg, WV

### \*\*\*\*\* CAVE BUCKS \*\*\*\*\*

CAVE BUCKS is a voluntary donation for cave purchases. The money is collected at each monthly meeting and sent to the organization of choice. The money SHOULD NEVER be kept past the week it is collected.

Month of September----- \$8.00

TOTAL TO DATE: --- \$5047.00

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## WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

- Tri-State Grotto ----- [www.tristategrotto.net/](http://www.tristategrotto.net/)
- VAR ----- [www.varegion.org/](http://www.varegion.org/)
- NSS ----- [www.caves.org/](http://www.caves.org/)
- NSS Convention 2010 ----- <http://www.ics2009.us/>
- OTR ----- [www.otr.org/](http://www.otr.org/)
- MAR ----- [www.caves.org/region/mar/](http://www.caves.org/region/mar/)
- WVCC ----- [www.wvcc.net/](http://www.wvcc.net/)
- Andy Celmer ----- [www.tristategrotto.net/Andy/](http://www.tristategrotto.net/Andy/)
- Bob’s Web Site ----- [www.tristategrotto.net/Bob/](http://www.tristategrotto.net/Bob/)
- Ehren Gieske ----- [www.tristategrotto.net/Ehren/](http://www.tristategrotto.net/Ehren/)
- Jerry’s Cave Web Site ----- <http://www.caves.org/member/jerry/>
- Vitas Eidukevicius ----- [www.tristategrotto.net/Vitas/](http://www.tristategrotto.net/Vitas/)
- David Hackley’s Web Site ----- <http://s180.photobucket.com/albums/x307/clearsig/>
- Todd Roberts ----- [http://s63.photobucket.com/albums/h143/Todd\\_05/](http://s63.photobucket.com/albums/h143/Todd_05/)
- Bob Gulden ----- [www.caverbob.com/home.htm/](http://www.caverbob.com/home.htm/)
- Rock Climbing Knots Friction ----- [www.chockstone.org/TechTips/prusik.htm#Bachman/](http://www.chockstone.org/TechTips/prusik.htm#Bachman/)
- Tri-State Grotto MySpace ----- [www.myspace.com/tristategrotto/](http://www.myspace.com/tristategrotto/)
- Animated Knots by Grog ----- [www.animatedknots.com/](http://www.animatedknots.com/)
- White Nose Syndrome ----- <http://www.caves.org/grotto/dcg/wns-notice-to-cavers.pdf>
- WV Caver ----- <http://wvcaver.speleo.us>
- WNS ----- <http://www.caves.org/WNS/WNS%20Info.htm>
- Containment Procedures ----- <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenosemessage.html/>
- Crystal Grottoes Caverns ----- [www.crystalgrottoescaverns.com](http://www.crystalgrottoescaverns.com)

## GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MONTH OF OCTOBER

Bob Denton, Margaret Hanson, Brandi Mason, Wendy Reeves, Craig Stihler

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

# Adam Stephen Dig

## The New Bracket

8-13-11

By John Di Carlo, NSS 25744

Martinsburg, WV – Tri-State Grotto started this dig by sending Nathan Roser down the hole. He didn't find any water down there this time. Nathan sent up a few buckets. It was slow going. Jeff Marcum took the Wacker down and the two of them hammered away at the wall. This is the first time we had two people down in the hole at the same time.



Todd Zimmerman installed a new bracket with a clevis hitch to hang the pulley on. Todd had made the bracket at home and brought it with him. Thanks to Todd it made things a lot safer. The pulley had been hanging on several nails.



The buckets were being pulled up and hauled out bucket brigade style. Then they were dumped beside the house on the hillside. We kept it up until we broke for lunch. At this point we had hauled up 74 buckets of dirt.



Keith Hammersla, curator of the Adam Stephen House, provided lunch. As always it was a winner. We had rolls, a meat platter, a fixings platter, two fruit platters, hot dogs, chips, cheese puffs and dessert.

We lost a few people after lunch. Those of us who were left went back to the dig. Todd Zimmerman and Nathan Roser went down into the hole. They resumed digging on the right wall. With the Wacker they ate up the wall. They had all the tan sandy dirt pulled down, hauled up and out. That left the floor as the going location. Todd said he felt that the passage goes down and under the “straight ahead wall”.



Some of the things that were pulled out were: a soft ball size rock of something interesting, Several pieces of what looks like pieces of iron and a two inch crystal that was really nice.

Our helpers were: Jeff Marcum, Keith Hammersla, Jack Brawner, Dan Mosser, Bob Bennett, Mary Lynn Collis, Todd M. Zimmerman, Brent Jefferson, Nathan Roser, Russell Linton, Paulette Bennett and John Di Carlo.

Jerry Downs of Crystal Grottoes Caverns loaned the Wacker to us. We removed 122 buckets of dirt. 12 people volunteered 80 hours of labor. The value of the donated hours, equipment and items equal \$1,720.00

# Pitting in TAG

*Terry McClanathan NSS 12103*

If you are a vertical caver approaching senior discount, there comes a time when you reach a point where new deep pits start getting scarce. I guess I've been there for a while because I collected my 500th hundred footer ten years ago and since then have only added fifty more. Number 550 was a high dome in Memorial Day Cave bolted by Aaron Moses, Peter Johnson, and Abby Hohn over the past year. They christened it Lubyanka Dome and taped it at 213 feet. Rick Royer, Aaron, and I surveyed a lead at the top of it in a 36 hour camp trip in September. That was only my third new hundred footer for the year.

It should come as no surprise that 80% of the hundred footers on my list are in TAG. Last year at the TAG-Fall-Cave-In it was announced that the South East Cave Conservancy had just obtained a lease on the multi-thousand acre hunting club referred to as Jacob Mountain located in Jackson County, Ala. This property is home to many deep caves and pits. Visitation through a permit system would now be possible during non-hunting season months. I had been to many of the caves and pits over the years, but there were two rather obscure hundred footers which I'd not been to. So when I asked Andy Zellner, a long time TAG caving friend, if he'd be willing to put together a significant vertical weekend for me centered around Jacob Mountain, and he agreed; the trip was on.

A significant vertical weekend requires that I do a minimum 800 vertical feet in new-to-me pits. Within the past decade Marion O. Smith has treated me to several such trips, but it seems even he is running out of new things in Tennessee. Jackson County, Alabama, however, is the most pit-rich county in the U. S., and though my Jackson County pit list is voluminous, I've mostly concentrated on hundred footers and deep caves containing hundred footers. I know the county has at least a thousand sub-hundred footers I've never visited. At least a few had to be on the Jacob Mountain preserve. Andy, who lives near Atlanta, rents a caving house right outside the gaping entrance to Montague Cave, which is itself just beside Russell Cave National Monument in northeastern Jackson County. After a Friday night (Sept 16<sup>th</sup>) solo drive from Maryland I arrived at Andy's around 6AM and grabbed a couple hours sleep. Brian Killingbeck, another old friend, who in recent years has relocated from Indiana to Chattanooga, and who is the property manager for the Jacob Mountain Cave Preserve, would be joining us for the day.

Brian and I left our vehicles at the designated camping area for Jacob Mountain and piled into Andy's truck. The preserve is immense and our first target cave was in one of the far comers. Andy's Nissan clawed its way up some pretty intense logging roads for about a mile, where we parked and then hiked about another mile. Fortunately we had already picked up most of the 500' elevation gain while jostling around in Andy's truck.

Grahm Cove Cave is a five pit multi-drop with about 2000 feet of traverse to a depth of 300'. The big draw is there is virtually no crawling. A walking stream passage lead to the first drop of 56'. This was really the beginning of a deep down-cutting canyon. There followed a stairstep series of shallow pits and down climbs to a 41 foot pit. At the top of this pit Andy sent Brian and me on to the bottom. He said the original Torode map indicated that somewhere high in the canyon there should be a 103 foot pit. He had not been successful in finding this on a previous trip and was pretty sure it had only ever been done by Bill Torode, who is famous in Alabama for his daring traverses. Andy thought it might be worthwhile spending a little time on this trip trying to locate the deeper pit. Of course, I started thinking, if he were successful; it would mean a bonus hundred footer. Now what was wrong with that?



Brian is a lot faster than I and we got separated enroute to the last pit. I made a wrong turn, ending up doing a big loop back to where I started. More careful on the second attempt, I caught up with Brian about 500 feet further on at the lip of the last pit, an 86 footer, which Andy warned might be a bit drippy. The previous week parts of TAG received about 8 inches of rain from a hurricane remnant, so thinking any multi-drop would be wet, I opted for my PVC suit. So far the cave had not been very wet at all, and I was getting rather warm, so the rappel and climb in the light waterfall were really quite refreshing.

Back at the top of the 41 foot pit, Andy informed us that he had indeed found the deep drop, but it would involve an exposed chimney out over parts of the canyon. He rigged two of the ropes Brian and I had brought up from the bottom cave as traverse lines and thus established a less daunting route to the 103. The long drop was down a canyon which we thought would connect at the bottom to one of the other pits, but if there was a connection, it was not obvious. The drop was not especially nice, though it wasn't bad either, and it was a new hundred footer for the three of us. The five pits to the bottom, plus the 103, totaled 318' of pits for the cave: a good start to the weekend.

Next Andy drove to a parking area about a mile away but at the valley floor. A two mile hike from here would allow us to pick up both of the other hundred footers in the preserve which I had not been to. The only drawback was that the 500' elevation gain was all in the first half mile up a steep, partly overgrown trail which left my 62 year old lungs wheezing. Thirty year old Brian and forty year old Andy didn't seem to be affected by this malaise. The steep trail kind of intersected a horizontal logging road which ran along a mountain bench. This entire area was a recent clear cut, so parts of the road were covered by invading blackberry briar patches which we carefully threaded our way through. It was nearly dark when we finally reached Hurt Tree Pit. This was a short 500' long multi-drop with 4 pits to a total depth of a bit over 300'. Essentially Hurt Tree was just a continuous rift which just kept getting deeper. The entrance consisted of a ledgy 142' drop, followed in short order by drops of 20 and 60 feet. A crawl of about one hundred feet leads to stooping passage ending at the top of an 83 foot pit. Andy said this pit had been raging the last time he'd been there. Today it was not much more than a couple of spigots worth. Both Andy and Brian had been to the bottom on previous trips and didn't really want to get wet, so only I went down. Even though the water was pretty low, I was still thoroughly soaked by the time I got back up. We exited the cave to complete darkness.

The hour was advancing and we still had a two mile hike back to Andy's truck, but since we were already up on the mountain and had passed Wee Willie Well (the other hundred footer) on the way, we thought we might as well drop it. Though it was only about a hundred feet from our logging road, it was in a dense clear cut of blackberry and "hurt tree" brambles. I don't think I'd ever seen a "hurt tree" before. Some folks think they are young honey locust, which do have long thorns, but a "hurt tree" is a totally different plant. It seems to grow only finger thin to about two inches in diameter (at least that's the largest I saw). The stem (trunk) and branches are completely covered in needle-sharp spines up to more than an inch long. The spines appear to be somewhat barbed on the end and when brushed against, start working their way into your flesh, producing a festering wound. I don't know what they really are, and I've never seen anything like them, but the nickname "hurt tree" certainly seems appropriate.

Brian had been to Wee Willie Well the winter before when the clear cut wasn't quite as impenetrable, and had obtained dead-on GPS coordinates. Good thing for Andy and I, or otherwise we would probably never have found the tiny entrance. Brian had stopped at a certain spot on the road, pointed, and said the entrance was just one hundred feet in that direction. We were staring at a solid wall of the worst bramble tangle I think I've ever encountered. You couldn't even pick a spot to start into this mess. We had to literally thrash our way through ten foot high blackberry thorns, which actually seemed friendly when

compared to the "hurt trees". Those we did our best to avoid. There were times when all we could do was just stand there trying to determine if there was any direction at all which would allow us to advance forward. Our progress was slow and painfully measured foot by foot. It took us a full half hour to batter and thrash our way the hundred feet from the logging road to the pit. I'm no fan of technology, but without the GPS and Brian's up-to-date point, I think we'd have written the attempt off as hopeless. Brian wisely chose to wait up on the road. Getting to Wee Willie Well is not an experience that needs to be repeated. The entrance to Wee Willie was tight and awkward, but once in the pit, the drop was free and actually pretty decent. That completed our efforts for the day. Between Gramh Cove, Hurt Tree, and Wee Willie Well, the total for the day was 734 vertical feet. It was past midnight when we got back to Andy's truck. Brian had some things to do around Chattanooga early next morning so he left us. Andy and I prepared some food and turned in around 2 A. M.

Sunday's agenda was easier, though it did entail two hikes, each of which boasted a 500' elevation gain. First Andy took me to Dible Well which was still on the Jacob Mountain Preserve, but several miles from the camping area. The half mile trek was steep, but, mercifully, brambleless. The pit was a spacious, well decorated free drop of 88'. In fact it may be one of the nicest sub-hundred footers I've ever done. Next we relocated and trudged(well, I trudged and Andy walked) up a very steep hillside for yet another 500 vertical feet to a 500' deep cave called Nice Warm Cave. Andy said the cave used to consist of just the entrance pits with a tight airblower at the bottom. Determined digging efforts by Indiana cavers over the past few years had pushed the cave deep. I only bounced the entrance pit which was really two drops of 45 and 65 feet. While I did this, Andy checked out a nearby shallow pit with air. We then hiked a short distance to an old pit called Erics Pit which was 67' deep.

It was only early afternoon, so I still had a few hours before my planned departure time of 4-5 PM. Andy wanted to check on the damage done by a spring tornado to a small preserve which he manages for the SECC located about half an hour from his house at Montague. The flagged trails were pretty much obliterated by the storm. The entire mountain side was a wreck. The downed trees created a nightmare for hiking (flailing). Andy was hoping to get the trails cleared for the upcoming TAG Fall- Cave-In, but after seeing the magnitude of the damage he opted for just reflagging around the blockages. Clearing the trails was going to take a lot of caver-power. Fortunately the three pits he was taking me to were all low on the mountain and close together.

Horse Skull Cave has historical significance with authentic Civil War era signatures I entered via a 30' rappel while Andy down climbed the main entrance. We toured a few hundred feet admiring the elegance of some of the old signatures. The pity was that there were also some more recent and less elegant signatures of the spray-paint variety. The other two pits on the preserve were a bit further uphill and consisted of a 43' pit called High Hole and a 65' pit called Jacks Hole. Jacks Hole dropped into a large canyon which was profusely decorated with massive columns, flowstones, stalagmites and tites, and draperies; not to mention many smaller formations of delicate form and striking color. It reminded me of a miniature version of Ogle Cave in New Mexico. It was very nice and I enjoyed a leisurely gawking hour tour.

When we got off the hillside it was 5PM and time for me to head north on the interstate. Total vertical for the two days was 1134' in new-to-me pits. I had a great time and managed to add #'s 551, 552, and 553 to my hundred foot pit list. It's been a while since I've gotten three new hundred footers in one weekend. Many thanks to Brian Killingbeck for granting me a permit to cave at Jacob Mountain on such short notice. And a special appreciation to Andy Zellner for his unfailing guide service.



# CAVIN CALENDAR

## OCTOBER 9TH - NOVEMBER 19TH



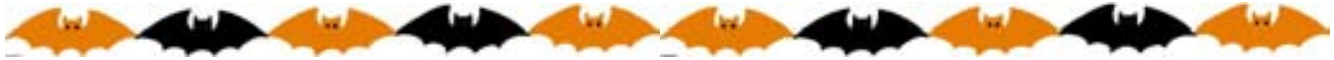
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Oct 9</i> FALL TAG CAVE-IN	<i>Oct 10</i> FALL TAG CAVE-IN COLUMBUS DAY	<i>Oct 11</i>	<i>Oct 12</i>  Meeting 7pm Annual Auction	<i>Oct 13</i>	<i>Oct 14</i> FALL VAR RASS Field House	<i>Oct 15</i> FALL VAR RASS Field House Bridge Day
<i>Oct 16</i> FALL VAR RASS Field House	<i>Oct 17</i>	<i>Oct 18</i>	<i>Oct 19</i>	<i>Oct 20</i>	<i>Oct 21</i>	<i>Oct 22</i> Mystic Cave - see Bob
<i>Oct 23</i>	<i>Oct 24</i>	<i>Oct 25</i>	<i>Oct 26</i>	<i>Oct 27</i>	<i>Oct 28</i>	<i>Oct 29</i>
<i>Oct 30</i>	<i>Oct 31</i> All Hallow Eve (Halloween)	<i>Nov 1</i>	<i>Nov 2</i>	<i>Nov 3</i>	<i>Nov 4</i>	<i>Nov 5</i>
<i>Nov 6</i> Daylight Saving Time Ends	<i>Nov 7</i>	<i>Nov 8</i> ELECTION DAY	<i>Nov 9</i>  Meeting 7pm Annual Nominations	<i>Nov 10</i>	<i>Nov 11</i> VETERAN'S DAY	<i>Nov 12</i> SADIE HAWKIN'S DAY
<i>Nov 13</i>	<i>Nov 14</i>	<i>Nov 15</i>	<i>Nov 16</i>	<i>Nov 17</i>	<i>Nov 18</i>	<i>Nov 19</i>

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Halloween @ OTR

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TRI-STATE GROTTO OF THE NSS  
BOB BENNETT, EDITOR  
464 HUCKLEBERRY DR  
GERRARDSTOWN, WV 25420-0344  
304-579-4304  
gimpycaver@comcast.net



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