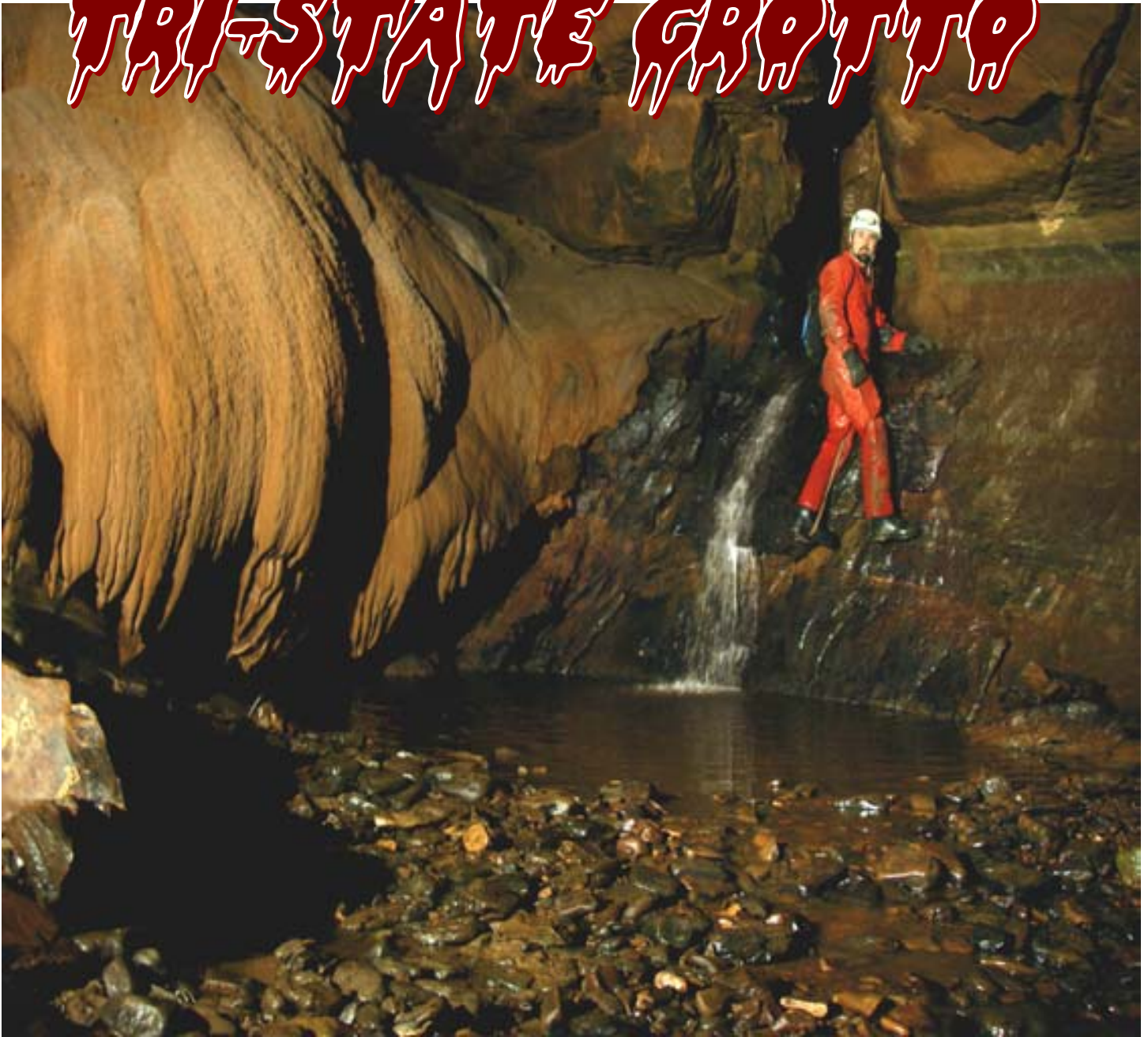


# DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



**MYSTIC CAVE**

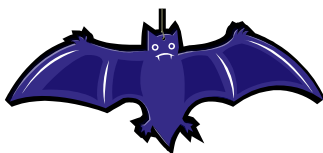
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All material for inclusion in the **DEAD DOG DISPATCH** must be sent to the EDITOR NO LATER THAN THE **25<sup>TH</sup>** OF EACH MONTH.

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\*\*\* The photo on the cover was taken by Nikki Fox in Mystic Cave, Pendleton Co, WV.

\*\*\*\* 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!**



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# CAVE IN EVENTS

## 2012

FEB 2 ----- GROUND HOG DAY  
FEB 5 ----- SUPER BOWL SUNDAY  
**FEB 8 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm**  
FEB 11 ----- Crystal Grottoes dig – 10am  
**FEB 14 ----- VALENTINE'S DAY**  
FEB 14 ----- VETERAN'S DAY  
FEB 18 ----- Whittings Neck – see Eric Berge  
**FEB 20 ----- PRESIDENT'S DAY**  
FEB 21 ----- FAT TUESDAY  
FEB 29 ----- LEAP DAY  
**FEB 29 ----- Last day for registration discount for  
2012 NSS Convention**  
**MAR 11 ----- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS**  
**MAR 14 ----- TSG meeting – 7PM – Deadline for beer,  
sodas, & water**  
**MAR 17 ----- ST PATRICK'S DAY**  
**MAR 20 ----- SPRING EQUINOX**  
MAR 22 ----- World Water Day  
MAR 25 ----- MD Day  
MAR 31 ----- Maxwelton Sink – see Jerry  
**APR 1 ----- ALL FOOL'S DAY**  
**APR 6 ----- GOOD FRIDAY**  
**APR 8 ----- EASTER**  
**APR 11 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm**  
**APR 15 ----- TAX DAY**  
APR 22 ----- EARTH DAY  
APR 27 ----- ARBOR DAY  
**APR 27-29 --- SPRING VAR – Hosted by TSG in  
Greenbrier Co, WV at the Poor Farm  
Festival Grounds**  
MAY 5 ----- CINCO de MAYO  
MAY 9 ----- TSG meeting – 7PM  
MAY 10 ----- DAY of PRAYER  
MAY 12 ----- Heritage Day (Adam Stephen Day)  
**MAY 13 ----- MOTHER'S DAY**  
MAY 19 ----- ARMED FORCES DAY  
**MAY 28 ----- MEMORIAL DAY**  
JUN 8-10 ----- Bubble Weekend  
JUN 13 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm  
**JUN 14 ----- FLAG DAY**  
**JUN 17 ----- FATHER'S DAY**  
JUN 20 ----- WV DAY  
**JUN 20 ----- SUMMER SOLSTICE**  
**JUN 25-30 --- NSS Convention, Lewisburg, WV**  
**JUL 1 ----- OTR Pre-registration begins**  
**JUL 4 ----- INDEPENDENCE DAY**  
**JUL 11 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm**  
**JUL 14 ----- TSG picnic**  
JUL 20-22 --- Karst-O-Rama, Great Saltpeter  
Preserve, KY  
JUL 22 ----- Parent's Day

JUL 31 ----- TRA Deadline  
AUG 8 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm  
**AUG 30-31 – SEP 1-3 --- OTR**  
**SEP 1 ----- Doo Dah Parade – 10am**  
**SEP 3 ----- LABOR DAY**  
SEP 9 ----- GRAND PARENT'S DAY  
**SEP 11 ----- PATRIOT'S DAY**  
**SEP 12 ----- TSG meeting – 7PM**  
**SEP 22 ----- AUTUMNAL EQUINOX**  
OCT 8 ----- COLUMBUS DAY  
OCT 10 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm  
OCT 20 ----- Bridge Day  
**OCT 31 ----- ALL HALLOW EVE (HALLOWEEN)**  
**NOV 4 ----- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS**  
NOV 10 ----- Sadie Hawkin's Day  
NOV 11 ----- VETERAN'S DAY  
NOV 14 ----- TSG meeting – 7pm  
NOV 22 ----- THANKS GIVING  
NOV 23 ----- BLACK FRIDAY  
DEC 12 ----- Grotto meeting – 7pm  
DEC 15 ----- Annual Grotto Christmas Celebration  
DEC 16 ----- Caving!  
**DEC 21 ----- WINTER SOLSTICE**  
DEC 24 ----- CHRISTMAS EVE  
DEC 26 ----- CHRISTMAS DAY  
DEC 31 ----- NEW YEAR'S EVE

### \*\*\*\*\* 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 January ----- **\$8.00**

**TOTAL TO DATE: ---- \$5111.00**

**Keep It Coming!**

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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 FEBRUARY

Daniel Amundson, Erek Bennett, Paulette  
Bennett, Barry Duncan, Vitas  
Eidukevicius, Terry Griffin, Tanner Haid,  
Malakai Hanson, Carrie Marcum, Billy  
Payne, John Payne, Barbara Walthers,  
Will Walthers, Tyler Ward, Tyler  
Wootten, Todd Zimmerman

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

## GROTTO NEWS

### Tri-State Grotto

#### Meeting

January 11, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

Jerry Bowen gave the Treasurer's report.

Jerry gave a report on MAKC about an award happening in May.

Jerry gave a report on a cave rescue.

#### *Old Business:*

Bob gave a report about dogs being allowed at VAR.

Sodas, beer, & water will be donated by members. Let the VAR committee know by the March meeting what you will be donating & bringing to VAR.

#### *New Business:*

Whitings Neck Cave – A cleanup is planned for sometime in June.

#### *Trips:*

Jerry went to Silers Cave in December.

## ***Upcoming trips:***

Jeff Marcum is going caving the weekend of Feb 21 & staying at the Boy Scout camp in Pocahontas Co.

Jerry is going caving the last weekend of March to get familiar with Maxwelton Cave.

## ***Cave Bucks:***

\$8.00 – Donated to WVCC.

Meeting was adjourned at \$8:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Paulette Bennett  
Secretary

Tri-State Grotto of the NSS

## **Spring 2012 VAR**

As visions of going underground dance thru your head let us invite you to Spring VAR instead.

Once again Tri-State Grotto is hosting Spring VAR. The event will be held at the Poor Farm Festival Grounds in Williamsburg, WV. The dates for this event will be 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, & 29<sup>th</sup> of April. We have lots of cave trips planed, including some on site plus lots of non-caving activities such as biking on the Greenbrier River Trail, Canoe or Kayak on the Greenbrier, hiking, geocatching, antiquing, and more.

To start off a great weekend, Tri-State's Chair – John DiCarlo – will host a wine and bluegrass get-together Friday night at the stage. Bring a bottle of your favorite vino and join others to sample and enjoy some bluegrass.

Saturday morning Vice Chair Bob Bennett has a very large lineup of "led trips". Those who pre-register will have an opportunity to sign up early. Some of the trips we're working on include: Culverson Creek, Windy Mouth, McClungs, Bone,

Lost World, Poor Farm (Pocahontas), Poor Farm (Greenbrier), Organ (Lipps), Maxwelton (Photo trip), Cabble & Briar Pits, Norman, Higginbothams and others. John Pearson has an on-site conservation project building some steps at Poor Farm plus a 2<sup>nd</sup> conservation project of the replacement of the fence cross-over at Davis Spring. We will try and get both the projects done that weekend. Saturday night's dinner will feature Pit Barbeque pork and chicken with beans, potato salad, coleslaw, and drinks. Also we haven't forgotten you vegetarians. The owners of Poor Farm will cater the meal. We're working on a Saturday night speaker. John Fox will DJ with the traditional caver's libations available on Saturday night. The always popular VAR business meeting will be held Sunday morning for you speleo politicians. We'll try to convince Front Royal Grotto to do their wonderful Sunday Breakfast.

There will also be an NCRC workshop. This workshop is intended to help cavers fine-tune their existing climbing system, work on ascending techniques and practice change-overs. If they don't know how to do a change-over, we will teach them. We would also help cavers that want to get ready for the entrance requirements for the NCRC weeklong in May. The Vertical workshop will begin on Friday and go until Sunday. Folks can come by anytime and play. (Carl Amundson & Kurt Waldron)

## **WOW!!!**

We also will raffle off a 2012 Mayacon convention registration with a shirt, guide book, pin, & patch at the VAR!!!! (Thanks to CDCG – Communications Design Consulting Group – who donated the registration package.)

A pre registration Form is included with this newsletter. We strongly advise you to use this. By pre registering you also insure we have a meal for you and it makes planning a whole lot easier.

We look forward to seeing you in the spring. More information will be in the Spring Region Record. For now – Cave softly & clean!.

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# TRIP REPORTS

Schetromph Cave Rescue  
by Stephen Bowen NSS 63836

At 5:57 PM Jan 24, 2012...

A half eaten second portion of my mom's famous Mac&Cheese occupied my plate when my dad's phone rang. The caller stated that the beginning of a cave rescue was underway and that if we were interested we might be of some help. Without delay dad started putting our gear in the truck while I changed clothes.

Checking and rechecking that we had everything needed we started out knowing we may not even be allowed to get close to the cave.

After waiting to pass through two check points we arrived at the staging area and looked for the man we were told to talk to. Once found he told us to suit up and to meet him in front of a fire truck that had passed us on our way to the cave. When we were ready the man told us to follow a path that lead steeply up the hill to where we could see 6 or 8 men gathered.

At the cave entrance we were again asked what qualifications we had. Dad and I are members of Tri-State Grotto, a local caving group, and the National Speleological Society and can average 85 caves a year. This was enough to gain us consideration. We started to hear details of the incident, and saw pictures the victim's friends had taken. The pictures showed a man head down in

the squeeze of a narrow 'hour glass' shaped passage (think head stand) and his left leg bent up against his chest (similar to yoga's "Child's Pose.") Having experienced being head first down holes like this before, though not as steep, I know it's nearly impossible to back up while working against gravity using just your arms. To have the leg bent as it was would add that much more difficulty to backing up.

(I'll mention here that in 2009 a young man from Virginia Tech went caving at Nutty Putty Cave in Utah. He ended up in a similar situation and even though a rescue attempt was made, his body is at this moment still in the cave, which is sealed as his tomb.)

Being smaller than my dad they chose me and started asking specific questions. I was able to adequately satisfy them that I was capable in a cave and able to use their equipment from previous experience I had acquired over the years. I was handed an air powered chisel, a length of hose, and a bottle of compressed air. Other items included: oil for applying to the leg and back, blanket, an air quality meter, and water. These were put in a big cloth bag with the chisel and hose.

More equipment was promised and I was ushered into the dark opening in the ground. Ready, eager, and calm I entered the cave knowing I would soon learn what was really going on down there. My guide to the victim's location would be one of the victim's friends who brought out the camera with the pictures (the same one who called for help.) I was amused that she was tutoring me about caving when that's usually my job.

The entrance area to the cave is small but not uncomfortable. Most caves keep

a fairly even size throughout though there are exceptions to this generalization especially when caves have multiple levels or are formed in multiple ways. Schetromph Cave happens to be an exception. The description in Caves of Maryland, Pages 95, 96 states "a 2 ft. wide, 15 ft. deep pit... drops into the second level" where the cave becomes markedly smaller.

Crouching with turned shoulders worked well in this passage but there were a few places that needed to be crawled through. Coming through a short crawl about 40' from the pit the cave comes to a small room about 5' across, and 4' high. To the left and close to the ceiling the cave continued, becoming smaller still. Several steps smaller actually. It is best described as a wormhole, because one must wiggle like a worm to pass through it. The map names it The Corkscrew, "aptly named to describe a very narrow crevice, lined with coral and projections, which twists upwards." [ibid] The map marks clearance to the ceiling through this area as one foot.

Experience tells me I will be unable to bend my legs, sit up, or even reach forwards or back if my arms are not already pointed in that direction. (Few caves are this tight, but I have been through caves with tighter areas.) I will also have to move a bag of supplies and an air tank through this area. Even with experience this will not be easy.

In the hours to come I would traverse The Corkscrew six times, head first in and feet first out. (Feet first is thought to be harder to do and is considered "backwards.")

I decide to take the bag through first since it contained the comfort items.

Entering the wormhole I can hear the voices of the two who had stayed with their trapped friend. They hear me from around the corner and excitedly introduce themselves and get me up to speed with the task before me. Thankfully towards the end of the wormhole the roof opened up to allow me to move my arms and see the two friends. Unfortunately it also became skinnier (from side to side) and I had to get on my side to squeeze into the position I would occupy for most of the next three hours.

The victim and I where now head to head and he was blocking the next portion of the worm hole that would have allowed me to pull my legs though a tight vertical corner (the opening in the roof of the tunnel) and thus get above/around him but since the other two were able to manage the scene from above I felt confident I didn't need to get any farther. I handed up the bag to the victim's two friends who were able to give the water to him while I went back, feet first, for the air tank.

Back with the air tank Victim's Friend #1 (VF1, with some talking through) was able to set up the chisel for me. Once every one was wearing protective equipment I went to work on the rock with the chisel. My fears of unintentionally stabbing the victim with the sharp bit dissipated some as I realized the bit seemed to have been designed not to slip. But I was still very careful and would not take any chances because my right hand which was gripping the shaft of the chisel was also in contact with the victim's back. I planned each new position carefully to minimize a chance the blade might slip. When it would slip the clearance between him and the points was the width of my palm.

I had VF1 call up on the radio to ask the rescue team to look for a metal plate which I could use as armor for the victims back so I could chisel on the closest pieces of rock that wouldn't allow me to use my hand to shield him. While I waited, and at VF2's suggestion, I cleared some material around the rock I wanted to break off allowing better access and giving the victim more room to move after the pinning rock was removed. Doing so turned out to be a great advantage but it was while I was doing this the air tank for the chisel ran out.

VF1 radioed up and told them we also needed a new air tank and I headed out to take them the depleted tank and retrieve the new tank and the plate. The rescue team outside wanted the two friends to come out as well to be checked out by the medics. Not to leave the victim alone in the dark but to satisfy the request, VF2 did come with me. VF3 had been called out shortly after guiding me to the wormhole.

With the new tank and the metal plate I made my way back to the scene. It was a bit more challenging not having the help I had the first time but I was able to get the tank into and through the wormhole without banging the regulator up too much. I noticed as I approached the victim that he had slid down into the bottom portion of the 'hour glass' while I was gone. This worried me. It could be bad if he was further pinched or possibly good since he could now move around a little bit. Even though he now had more room, he wasn't able to proceed further and was now in my way to chisel on any rock that impeded more forward progress which would undoubtedly be followed by other rocks as long as his leg was bent up underneath him. It would be best to get him back where he was,

finish the rock I was nearly done with and push him out the way he came in.

I had VF1 pull on his good leg and I pushed his shoulders to move him enough for me to get into a position to chisel off that last piece of rock. I was very much missing the help from VF2 of holding the light, and holding the chisel when I cleared the broken pieces off of the victims back or any other reason I might need my hands. Once the plate guarding the victim's soft flesh from a sharp chisel breaking through the rock was in place and the chisel hooked up to the new air bottle I told the victim that this was going to tickle a bit. He said he understood. I don't know how much vibration or pain he may have felt.

Thankfully the last pieces came off relatively quickly and easily. Encouraged that we had some extra room and the fact that he had moved while I was gone we decided to try again to move him up to a point where he could straighten his leg.

Relying on a trick I use myself in very tight spaces (tighter than the cork screw) I had him exhale as VF1 pulled on his good leg and I pushed up on his shoulders, stopping while he took time to breath and for us to rest. An inch or two at a time and sometimes losing ground we kept trying. In time I was able to get fully under him and see the leg in question. Pushing on it and a shoulder resulted in more progress. Once freeing a pant leg that was caught on a rock a final effort popped the knee over the top of the 'hour glass'. Once the leg was straight he slid right down through the hole nearly on top of me. This was the way he had planned to pass through this section in the beginning.



We grinned at each other, very relieved. VF1 radioed up to let the outside know this ordeal was coming to an end.

Here again I wished for the help of VF2 as she could have taken the chisel instead of having it lie beneath me. I knew it could have gone off from the trigger being pressed by any one of us as we passed over it. (I was so focused on getting the victim out that I didn't think to ask VF1 to at least turn off the bottle, which would have alleviated the problem.) Once through the wormhole the victim asked to rest.

It was the first time in over 4 hours that his head was on his shoulders rather than the other way around. I went to the bottom of the fifteen foot drop to get another water bottle. After the victim drank, VF1 and I began helping him through the crouching/crawling passage without the use of his left leg. I led crawling backwards and moving his feet (the left being barefoot for some reason) while VF1 supported him from behind.

About half way to the 15' drop (now a climb), a confined space professional, Randy, came down and we found a place big enough for us to change places. He got a harness on the victim and moved him with VF1's help the remaining distance to the climb. With the help of a set of ropes and his partner at the top they were able to hoist him up and out without any trouble.

I managed the final ascent all right, politely taking an offered hand. Exiting the cave unnoticed (the attention being focused on getting the victim down the steep hill) I went over to where my dad was standing a few feet away from the entrance. Many thanks

and hand-shakes were received and even a hug as I made my way to be checked out with VF1.

### Schetromph Cave Rescue by Jerry Bowen NSS 15162FE

My son Stephen is at the foundation of every good thing. Of course, I am biased, but most know he keeps a level head during a crisis. For example, two years ago we had a situation in our neighborhood. Our neighbor and his wife banged on our door indicating urgency. We ran to discover he had two severed arteries pumping blood from his arm. Stephen attended this neighbor for more than 45 minutes while we waited for an ambulance to arrive during a February snowstorm. Stephen kept our neighbor alive by applying a tourniquet, dressing his wound, raising his feet and cooling his head. Three surgeons said that he is alive today because of Stephen's cool, level-headed efforts. Read on, there is a God in Heaven.

### The Cave

Fast forward to January 24, 2012. YM1 runs the John Hopkins Outdoor Club in Baltimore, Maryland ([www.johnhopkins.edu/outdoors](http://www.johnhopkins.edu/outdoors)). The club does a lot of activities including caving. There were four members on this excursion, and they were all leaders in the club. YM1, to be rescued-YM2, YL3, and YL4, all appeared to be in their twenty's (young man, young lady). They use Whittings Neck Cave a lot and were hoping to find a new cave to explore. They got a lead on Schetromph Cave and were there to check it out as a site for future club outings. None had been in this cave before. According to YL3, they went in about 2:30 PM. The group enjoyed a leisurely trip through the

lower sections, stopping to take pictures. They were on the way out at 5:00 PM when the entrapment took place.

Ideally, to travel through a 20 foot long wormhole, every caver wants to follow their eyes. When they entered this area, they traveled through a tight, 'arms-before-you' belly-crawl. the average height and width being one foot. At the end, there is a difficult 90 degree turn that went straight up maybe four feet or so. On the map, this area is called the Corkscrew.

Traveling into the cave, the explorers were oriented going through this area headfirst. There was not enough room at the bottom of the short pit to change their vertical position. In order to exit the cave and manage the wormhole headfirst, it was necessary to drop headfirst into a short drop, manage the tight 90 degree turn to the right, and wiggle out through the wormhole. One can manage a short slide like this without dropping very fast, by utilizing friction.

### The Trap

Approaching the straight down tube from a hands-and-knees crawl and with knees on the lip, YM2 lowered himself into the pit headfirst. He missed grabbing his purchase, and dropped faster than expected before he could straighten out a leg. It was his left leg that got folded into his chest as if that knee were in a fetal position. The extra width of his leg being folded up was enough to jam him like a cork in a wine bottle. It was a gravity hold hanging him upside down. His companions worked for 15-20 minutes to free him.

What they didn't know, was there were several unseen protrusions grabbing his

clothing, making the job of pulling him out unsuccessful. The young ladies, who could get under YM2 to push upwards, either didn't have the strength, or long enough arms to effect the difference. It pained YM2, but eventually, the decision was made to call for help. At 5:42 PM, YL3 made the call to Washington County 9-1-1.

### The Call

This was a Tuesday evening like any other night in January. At 5:57 PM, it was dark outside. We were eating dinner at home when the phone rang. A friend who has a habit of listening to a scanner called to tell me there was a cave rescue being dispatched and thought I might be able to assist. I knew where the cave was just twenty minutes from our home. We thanked him for the tip and I asked Stephen if he would pursue this with me. Stephen, who worked outside that day, was in marginal health. He had lost his voice and could hardly speak. He simply squeaked, "Yeah". I picked up my plate to finish my dinner while assembling things in the house; first reaching for my Caves of Maryland loose leaf notebook, batteries, grub, then packing some caving gear from my carport. We went unsummoned on a chance they would let us help.

We made our way to westbound state route 40. About half-way to the cave, we were passed by a piece of rescue equipment. We managed to keep him in sight all the way to check point two. When we passed a local business, we noticed a fire truck just arriving in their parking lot, and heard later they had done some staging there. We crossed Conococheague Creek at Wilson, Maryland and made the second right roughly following the creek upstream where we approached the first

checkpoint. The guy had me stop and roll my window down. I convincingly told him why we were there and after seeing the stickers and decals on the truck, he let us pass.

After two-and-a-half miles we reached the second check point passing more people and stopped cars. On the right shoulder there were five cars with their flashers on before a turn and perhaps three cars on the right shoulder just past the turn. The equipment we were following stopped in the oncoming lane before the turn so we were forced to park on the side behind the other five vehicles, still a half-mile away. We both went to find someone with a radio. He radioed in to someone on scene and said, "I have two cavers here from Tri-State .... (pause)." I piped in, "..... Grotto, Tri-State Grotto." I didn't know it then, but he had the mike keyed and my voice was carried on most every radio down the road. The decision was made to let us through with our gear on the truck. We turned right onto a single-track hard top road.

### The Rescue Scene

There is a wide spot on the shoulder at the bottom of the hill. A fence and gate lead into a watercress spring. The remains of an old spring house with a rusty, sagging roof can be seen just beside the road. We parked to the right of the gate, in the grass, and out of everyone's way. The sight before us took our breath away. From where we were parked all the way to where the road curved out of sight was filled with emergency equipment. At least two box ambulances were down in the front. Behind them were an assortment of SUV's, two fire trucks were right by the cave, another rescue squad, and an air unit were already on the scene. Before

the night was over, more rescue vehicles

parked behind us, blocking us in. At least 500 feet of hard top was covered with rescue equipment. The area was lit up like a night-time football game.

The initial units were Clear Spring Volunteer Fire Company under Fire Chief and incident commander Mike Reid. Also there, was Maugansville Goodwill Volunteer Fire Department with Deputy Fire Chief Ian Swisher leading that department. There may have been others, but that hasn't been made clear. We didn't know anyone.

We geared up, and I pulled the cave map out of my notebook and rolled it up. Walking to the staging area, we were stopped by someone who looked important. I told him we had a map of the cave and he asked to borrow it. I told him he could have it, and never expected to see it again. We were asked to go to a staging area, but when we arrived no one was there. We didn't wait for an invitation to pull ourselves up the handline to the cave entrance.

When we got up the hill, I was impressed! Ian Swisher and a handful of his team were controlling the entrance. He had two radios. On one frequency, he was in contact with YM1 about 60 feet in a straight line to the rescue location inside the cave. On another frequency, he was talking to all the units on the street below. He used a cell phone, and another time I saw him looking at pictures from inside with a camera. He was a busy guy asking for material and making decisions. I saw an extension cord attached to a flood light aimed down into the entrance room that stayed shining into the cave the entire evening.

They had a rope bag with a rope extended inside, around the corner and out of sight. Miscellaneous chisel bits, helmets and turnout gear laid around the ground. I saw a rescue worker in the entrance, and he would disappear to the top of the climb-down, and back into sight. He was working the entrance from inside, shuttling messages and material from the climb-down to the entrance. We didn't know it then, but no attempt to free YM2 been launched as of yet.

Stephen had on his new Carhartt coat, and situated himself on the high side of the entrance and out of the way. I was looking in the hole when our conversation with Swisher was going on. Swisher started to quiz us about our experience. "Have you ever been in this cave before," he asked. "No" we replied, "but we are comfortable in caves and tight places." We added that in a good year we have visited up to 80 caves. We were interrupted by the appearance of YL3 who once again exited the cave with information. She had a camera with pictures to show rescuers what they would be up against. (These three or four pictures have appeared on the internet and in TV news casts and have been shown horizontally. The actual orientation is vertical). In talking with Swisher, YL3 revealed the travel time to the rescue site to be 7-10 minutes for a caver, and recommended whoever came in needed to be small. "The smaller the better," she said. The mapped route to the site was 85-90 feet.

Swisher had two cavers at the ready. Stephen anticipated his next move and took off his coat. Swisher looked at me, and then Stephen. He told Stephen he was smaller, get ready to go in. Stephen cast his coat out of the way, left it where he was sitting, and waited for material

to take in. They gave Stephen water, hearing protection for five people, eye protection, an air quality meter, a gallon

of chain-saw bar oil, a compressed air tank, hose and air chisel, most of which was packed into a cloth bag. Stephen followed YL3 back to the site and she assisted by carrying some of the material in. After Stephen disappeared into the hole, I didn't see him again until after ten o'clock. He went in, I am guessing, around seven o'clock.

Stephen says in his description that at the end of the wormhole was a two foot long opening in the ceiling (lengthwise with the tube). The opening revealed a small cavity above the tube next to the pit. The vertical pit YM2 was trapped in was not completely solid all the way around either. There was an open side of the pit visible to the small cavity as well. This visibility to the vertical pit allowed the students to take the pictures showing YM2's precarious situation. There was a bypass around the obstruction but it was not a preferred route. It was through this cavity and two foot ceiling slot that YL3 was able to bend herself to make the 9-1-1 phone call. Stephen tried to bend himself up through the same ceiling slot but was too tall to enter any further. All of his work was while he was lying on his side, reaching up through the slot, working from the wormhole. YM1 was above the victim on the upper level. He was helpful operating the radio, hooking up the air tank and running the regulator, offering moral support and pulling YM2's good leg when the attempts were made to adjust his position.

Observing from Topside

I went to occupy the space where Stephen had been sitting and got myself

ready for the wait. I thought about all the wonderful resources that lay before me. Here before me, were scores of willing people. People who care about the human condition and are quick to do something about it. People unpacking gear, throwing bags off the roof of their trucks, opening doors to retrieve something. All these folks with large hearts voluntarily gave up prime TV and family interaction to help a caver in trouble. I have to say I was impressed with the caring and helpful attitude I saw in each face. If I were ever in trouble, I would want people like these to be on my side. I give everyone an 'A' for effort and willingness. Then my phone started to ring.

The first phone call was from Carl Amundson in Berryville, Virginia, a volunteer from the Eastern Region-National Cave Rescue Commission (ER-NCRC). We talked three or four times that evening. Another ER-NCRC call was from Steve and Debbie Meyer in Barton, Maryland. Both calls came in good time with more willing people at the ready. The decision for ER-NCRC involvement was postponed at that time.

My map, there it is again! One guy holding it was showing it to five other people. With his index finger, he repeatedly pointed to a spot on the map. Some shook their heads, others shrugged their shoulders or turned the palm of their hands up as if to say, "What a predicament!"

I watched this map huddle three or four times through the evening as the holder showed it to newcomers.

Because an air chisel and portable air tank were in the cave, an idea was hatched by a fireman to drag a line from the compressor on the truck through

the cave. They had three hundred feet of hose. It was dragged up to the entrance, and laid there. It would have reached, but wasn't used. Stephen told me later it would have been a pain to pull it through the cave because the coils would catch at every turn.

Looking down the hill I observed the molded spots on top of the fire trucks where the stadium lights folded into when not in use. Those two trucks supplied light on the hill and were nearly as bright as daylight. The diesel engines were left running, creating a very loud atmosphere. Generators were also running supplying electricity for two-way radio battery chargers, laptop computers with wireless cards, miscellaneous lights, fans and whatever.

A unit showed up whose only function it was to supply refreshments to the volunteers. They placed two card tables on the street at the back of their unit, and spread out the snacks. Hot sandwiches and hot drinks were being handed out the back window. They collected three large bags of trash through the course of the evening.

At one point, I was listening to chatter and heard that special operation units were on their way from Frederick and Montgomery Counties. ETA for Montgomery County was 40 minutes. I watched the Frederick guy suit up and I liked him right away. He asked me about my caving suit, and it went from there. He explained to me that these rescue operations are shaped by OSHA standards. There is a lot of thought that goes into a rescue to keep not only the rescued safe, but the workers too. When special ops units arrived, more rope bags came up the hill. I noticed a rope rail was being rigged around the entrance. They moved some of



Maugansville's equipment out of the way and cleaned up the area. Some of the special ops teams were rigging their own belay ropes to specific trees, and using knots and hardware they practiced in training.

Sometime around 8:45 PM I observed three fire fighters struggling with equipment to get it up the hill. It looked like a large generator. They started an engine, activated a heater and a fresh air fan. They hauled a large, yellow 12 inch air hose over to the entrance and dropped it in, and started delivering blown-in heat. After two or three minutes, at the insistence of those inside Swisher asked the guy to turn off the heat. The operator replied, "Just doing what I was told." This equipment was pictured on the internet.

Right around nine, the Montgomery County guys arrived at the cave. These two were ready. They had a rope trailing out their left hand, and they were thumbing 'biners in their right hand. When someone turned their head toward the cave, these two leaned that way too; anxious. Just give these two the word, and they would be ready to go!

At 9:30 PM or so, an announcement was made by YM1 in the cave, that YM2 was free. There was a ripple of excitement that could be felt. Stephen had completed the task he was sent to do! I knew it wouldn't be long now and sat down by Stephen's coat. I heard the wump, wump, wump sound of an approaching state police helicopter, and thought of the ground crew supporting his landing site by setting out anemometers, electronic homing beacons and manning ground to air radios. About 9:35 PM the Montgomery guys entered the cave and traveled in various distances. Randy, the smaller of

the two, made it half-way to the wormhole where Stephen and he traded places assisting YM2 out.

I was getting cold, so I pulled Stephen's coat over me where I was sitting. At about 9:45 PM, Stephen, YM1 and YM2 and Randy were at the bottom of the climb-down. Swisher was looking around for something, then looking at me he said, "Throw me that coat." I did, and Swisher promptly tossed it into the entrance for YM2 to wear exiting the cave.

It took all of the next fifteen minutes for Randy and his companion to get a harness on YM2 and work him out. He exited the cave at 10:00 PM on the dot. Another ripple of excitement. YM2 had no boots or socks on either foot. His trousers were torn in several places. His face and hair sooty looking. All the rescue personnel were huddled around, and focused on YM2, casting a shadow over the entrance. Stephen popped out in the dark shadows, unnoticed, and he walked over to where I was standing as if he had been waiting around all evening. Newspaper reports have YM2 out at 10:15 PM, because it took 15 minutes to tie him into a stretcher and move him to the bottom of the hill.

It was all over but the crying. Stephen, the cavers, rescue personnel were all glad-handing. I saw Stephen getting hugs from the girls who were in the cave. We exchanged contact information. Stephen needed to retrieve his muddy coat so we worked our way over to the ambulance.

Along the way we passed a vehicle with about twelve men standing around the hood. I overheard one saying to the others, "Well men, what did we learn?" We kept on walking and didn't hear the conversation end. Stephen and the

other cavers had to sit in the second ambulance to get their blood pressure, temperature and vital signs checked.

A reporter from the Herald Mail Newspaper was there. He interviewed Chief Mike Reid, the incident commander, and he interviewed me. I told the reporter, "You really need to be talking to Stephen," something he didn't do. Chief Mike Reid told me later, the story didn't look anything like the story he told.

YM2 was flown by Maryland State Police helicopter to Baltimore where he was thoroughly examined and found to have no sustaining injury.

It took over an hour for everyone to pack up, it was a late night out. Thanks goes to a lot of people but to the unsung hero who had the even keel ..... well done.

## **Adam Stephen Dig Setting a record**

By John DiCarlo, NSS#25744  
MARTINSBURG, WV-On Jan 14, 2011, Tri-State Grotto returned to The Adam Stephen House to continue our dig to reopen the underground passages.

We are still going with the feeling that we are getting close.

As always Keith Hammersla provided a nice lunch spread.

We had 185 drywall buckets full of dirt taken out. This broke the record for the number of buckets. There were three

thirty-pound rocks taken out. We now have an area in the wall where water is seeping in.

Our crew consisted of: Bob Bennett, Jeff Marcum, Nathan Roser, Carol Tideman from Baltimore Grotto, Tom Griffin and his son Mason Griffin, Chris O'Dea and Alice Man from JMU Grotto, Jack Brawner, and Keith Hammersla,

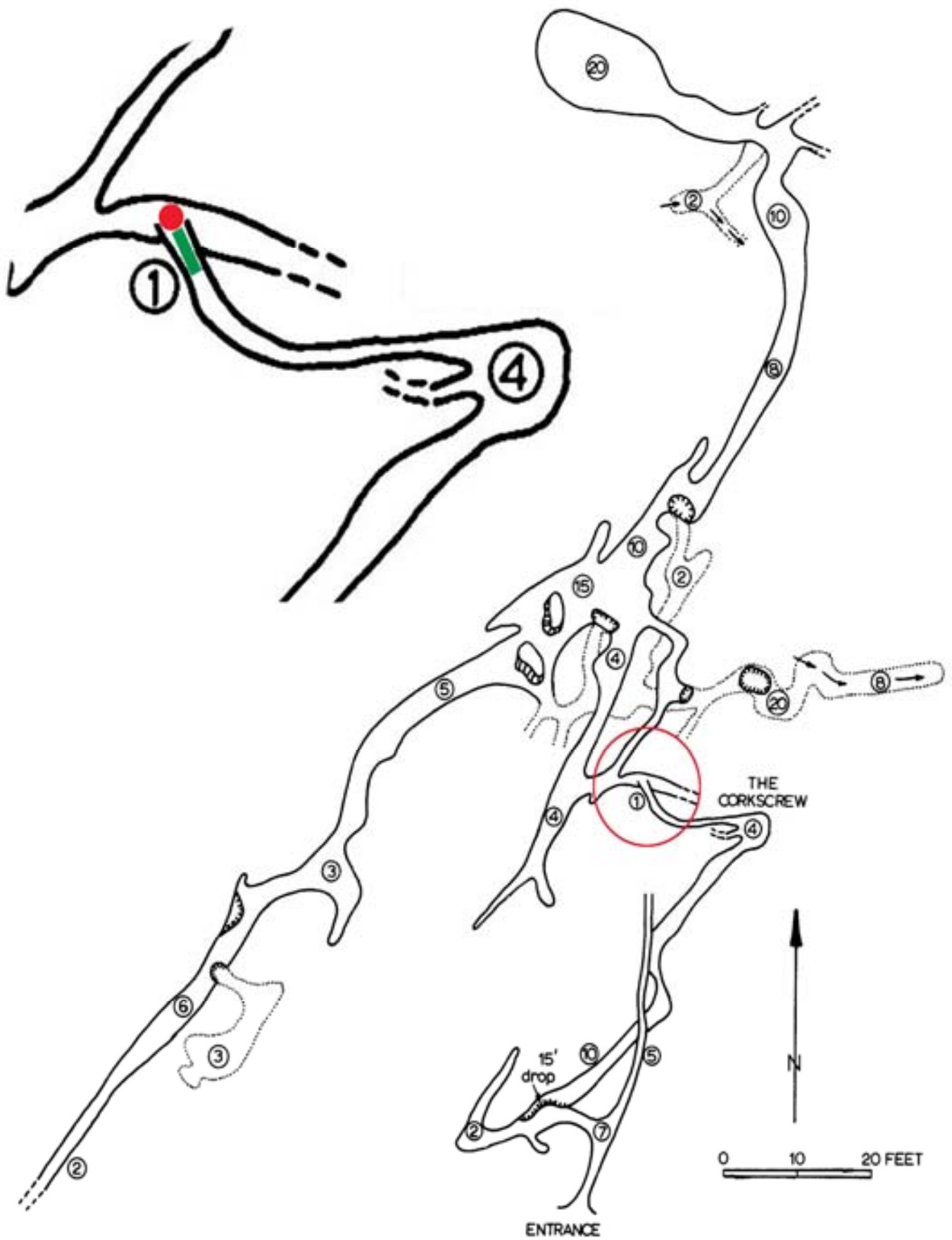
Seventy hours of volunteer effort went into this project, which is worth \$1,440.00.

## **Foundation Wall**

Brent Jefferson went by The Adam Stephen House on Tuesday, January 24, 2012. He took photos and measurements. He will get back to us with a design solution for the areas where the foundation wall was undermined.



Tri-State Passage - Crystal Grottoes  
(Bennett)





# CAVEM CALENDAR

## FEBRUARY 5TH - MARCH 17TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 5 SUPER BOWL SUNDAY	Feb 6	Feb 7	Feb 8  MEETING 7PM	Feb 9	Feb 10	Feb 11 CRYSTAL GROTTOES DIG 10AM
Feb 12	Feb 13	Feb 14 VALENTINE'S DAY VETERAN'S DAY	Feb 15	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 18 Whitings Neck - see Eric Berge
Feb 19	Feb 20 PRESIDENT'S DAY	Feb 21 FAT TUESDAY	Feb 22	Feb 23	Feb 24	Feb 25
Feb 26	Feb 27	Feb 28	Feb 29 LEAP DAY 2012 NSS CONVENTION DISCOUNT ENDS	Mar 1	Mar 2	Mar 3
Mar 4	Mar 5	Mar 6	Mar 7	Mar 8	Mar 9	Mar 10
Mar 11 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14  MEETING 7PM	Mar 15	Mar 16	Mar 17  ST PATRICK'S DAY



# DEAD DOG DISPATCH



Baker Quarry Gate (Devine)

- 1- FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS - CAVE RESCUE**
- 2- ADAM STEPHEN DIG REPORT**



## DEAD DOG DISPATCH

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