

**SISTEMA
HAUTLA,
MEXICO**

DEAD DOG DISPATCH

V#30

I#6

JUNE

2015

P#75

TRI-STATE GROTTO

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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 304-821-4621(H)** or **304-671-0344(C)** E-MAIL at gimpycaver@comcast.net

WE NEED EVERYONE TO KEEP THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR AN OPEN POSITION. WE STILL NEED SOMEONE FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS: PROGRAM CHAIR
PLEASE GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!



CAVIN EVENTS

2015

JUN 1 ----- Convention Discount Deadline
JUN 3 ----- Assault on the Apollo-6pm
JUN 5-7 --- Bubble Weekend - Nancy Hanks
JUN 7 ----- Molers Gate Maintenance - 10am
JUN 10 ----- TSG meeting 7pm
JUN 13 ---- Gate Charles Mauck Cave-FRG
JUN 12-14 --- Panhandle Bug Camp
JUN 14 ----- FLAG DAY
JUN 20 ----- WV DAY
JUN 21 ----- SUMMER SOLSTICE
JUN 21 ----- FATHER'S DAY
JUN 26-28 -- Karst-O-Rama - KY
JUN 27 ---- TSG Picnic - Blue Ridge Acres - 12 Noon
JUL 4 ----- INDEPENDENCE DAY
JUL 8 ----- TSG meeting 7pm
JUL 13-17 --- NSS Convention - Waynesville, MO
JUL 26 ----- PARENT'S DAY
JUL 31 ----- Last Day for TRA Membership
JUL 31- Aug 2 -- Mudfest - Lincoln Caverns, PA
AUG 1 ----- OTR registration goes live
Aug 7-9 --- Indiana Cave Capers
AUG 12 ----- TSG meeting - 7pm
AUG 27 ---- OTR Preregistration Ends
SEP 3-7 ---- OTR
SEP 7 ----- LABOR DAY

2016

JUL 17-23 --- NSS Convention - Ely, NV

***** CAVE BUCKS *****

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

Month of May ----- \$32.00

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- \$5886.50

The money was sent to the

DEAD DOG DISPATCH

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#77

New River Preserve!
Keep It Coming!

WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

Tri-State Grotto ----- www.tristategrotto.net/
VAR ----- www.varegion.org/
NSS ----- www.caves.org/
NSS Convention 2015 ----- <http://nss2015.caves.org>
OTR ----- www.otr.org/
MAR ----- www.caves.org/region/mar/
WVCC ----- www.wvcc.net/
Andy Celmer ----- www.tristategrotto.net/Andy/
Bob's Web Site ----- www.tristategrotto.net/Bob/
Jerry's Cave Web Site -----
----- <http://www.caves.org/member/jerry/>
Vitas Eidukevicius ----- www.tristategrotto.net/Vitas/
David Hackley's Web Site -----
----- <http://s180.photobucket.com/albums/x307/clearsig/>
Bob Gulden ----- www.caverbob.com/home.htm/
Rock Climbing Knots Friction -----
www.chockstone.org/TechTips/prusik.htm#Bachman/
Tri-State Grotto MySpace -----
----- www.myspace.com/tristategrotto/
Animated Knots by Grog ----- 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

GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MONTH OF JUNE

Bob Bennett, Gordon Birkhimer, Andy Celmer,
Any Crane, Mike Eppley, Jesse Hogbin, Jennifer
Kysar, Bill Vis

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

TRIP REPORTS

Spring VAR 2015

April 24, 25, 26, 2015

By John DiCarlo, NSS 25744

Natural Bridge, VA--I arrived Friday night and set up camp. At 9 pm the trips were set out. That was a madhouse scramble. There were more people than trips, and everyone wanted on a trip.



Our group hiking up the trail to Low Moor Cave

Sat morning we left camp for the trip to Low Moor Cave. As we were following in the caravan, the jeep I was in had the windshield wiper blade on the driver's side come off. Luckily the windshield wiper arm held it from being blown away.



Here we are entering Low Moor Cave

As we got to the cave we had to ford a stream. With all the rain lately the stream was swollen. If I had been in my van, I wouldn't have gone through it. As everyone had a pickup or SUV, all the vehicles plowed through without hesitation.



Cierra Durst (L) and Tracey Reed with a before shot showing how clean they are. They don't want to spread WNS.

Parking in the parking area everyone suited up and we were soon walking to the cave. It was an uphill climb on a dirt road with a switchback that took us even higher. We crested the road and dropped down from there. Soon we were arriving at the entrance.



Here we are making our way through the passage

We entered the cave one by one. The passage way was large. We worked our way down the passage until we came to a balcony. Taking turns, we looked over the edge down into another large room.



Taking a rest while looking around

From here we backtracked and took a passage to the right. I hadn't noticed it coming in. It was more visible on the way back. We went down other passages with large passageways and big rooms. We had to pass a small pool in a narrow passage. Some people just walled through it getting their boots wet. I found it was easy to span it so I kept my boots dry.



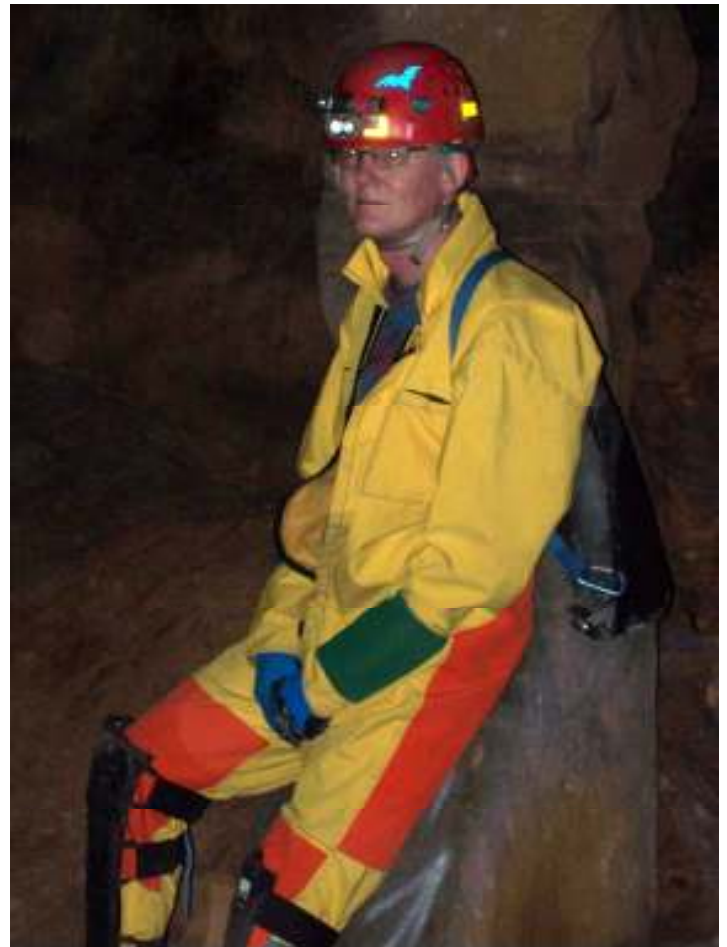
People moving around in a big room



J.C. and Judy Fisher in one of the large rooms in Low Moor Cave



Cierra Durst in Low Moor Cave



One of the cavers taking a break

Well, that didn't last long as we came to a large room with a big pool in it. There was no way we wouldn't get our feet wet now. I moved down the bank and into the pool. That wasn't bad. The bad part was getting up the wet clay back on the other side. We did have a few people take a fall here trying to get out of the stream. Finally everyone was across and we continued on our way. We did go up a passage, and when we were done looking at things, we turned around and backed out. We came to a metal ladder that spanned a pit. You have to go through a small portal, then sitting, work your way across the ladder.

We checked out some nice formations before turning around and crossing the ladder again on our way out. We stopped in a room and one of the ladies noticed that Amanda was missing. She kept calling out her name hoping she would answer. She never did. As we counted heads we noticed that several other people were missing. Some people went off looking for them. They never found them, and returned back to our group.



Part of our group taking a break

Finally, the missing people showed up. One of them had lead the small group to another passage in the cave to show them something. Amanda was back!



Amanda and her friend

We continued our tour. Eventually we made our way back to the room with the large pool in it. Dave Socky told us that he has been surveying the cave and had been here a lot. This is the first time he has seen water in that room. Again we moved through the water and had a trying time getting up the other side. Also again, we had a few people take a spill getting out of the pool.



Our trip leader Dave Socky

Moving on down the passage we came to Joe Carbide. It looked like a person standing there. Someone had drawn on the rock and made a face. Someone else had added some red paint over the face drawing. We took some pictures there. Tracey got a little carried away with her love of caving and expressed her love with Joe Carbide.





**Cierra Durst and Tracey Reed
pose with Joe Carbide**

Moving on we came to the entrance and climbed out. Now we had to walk up the road to the crest and down the other side back to our cars.



Part of our group moving through Low Moor Cave

Changing our clothes, we had clean things on, and headed back to camp. Three times we had to pull over to fix the windshield wiper blade. It was

raining harder, and on the way home we needed the wiper. We eventually we made it back to camp.



John DiCarlo having a snack -- Photo by J.C. Fisher



Trip Leader Dave Sockeye talks to us in a room

It was raining pretty good at this time. We could move around camp and talk to people, standing under a canopy whenever the rain.



Tracey Reed with her phone



The group in a large room

We moved back to camp and heard that the band had started. A crowd formed and we rocked to the live band Slumber Jack.



Judy Fisher



Break time

By dinner time the rain had stopped and the camp headed to dinner. The dinner was good. Afterwards we had Ernst Kastning give us a talk about Natural Bridge and its history. When he was finished, an award was given out and so were door prizes.

Sunday morning someone's car alarm sounded for a while and unfortunately served as reveille. The VAR meeting was held in sunshine. The rain was gone. After the meeting people packed up camp and headed home. In my opinion the rain did not get in the way of any of our activities.



Here's a few brief trip reports from the past couple of weeks.

May 9th - Terry, Gordy Ley (Franklin County), Ryan Boyce

Ryan had never been to either Elkhorn or Sites so it was decided to visit both caves the same day. Brian Loudon (Philly) was to meet us at the cave but we all got our wires crossed and we never saw Brian. I put a rope down the second pit of 79' and we made the short loop in the lower level, going downstream and climbing/squeezing up past the first big flowstone by the rimstone dams. Cave was moderately wet and very pretty as always. I yo-yoed the entrance pit a few times and the three of us headed down to Sites around mid-afternoon.

At Sites we all successfully avoided the 'hook'. Gordy had been there before but hadn't seen most of the cave so we took a nice tour of 1300 feet of well decorated passages.

I bounced the entrance pit twice and we were headed home by about 8PM.

May 16th- Terry, Andy Filer (York), Mindy Johnson and Brian Loudon (both Philly)

After our Grapevine trip at the end of April, Andy invited me to join them for some caving in Westmoreland County, Pa. I'd never been to that area before so I thought it'd probably be fun. There were four caves on the property but we only had time to visit two of them as they were pretty spread out. The first was called Copperhead Cave and involved a two mile hike, the last mile gaining about a thousand feet in elevation. It was a hot humid day and while I don't know about the three twenty-somethings, the long uphill took a lot out of me.

The cave featured a 35 foot entrance pit which we all rappelled (apparently most people opt for cable ladder). We toured most of the 4'000 feet of passages which were generally of walking dimensions, though a fair amount of climbing was involved. Upon exiting, it was decided that since we had already used up a lot of time, mostly in getting to and finding Copperhead (Mindy was the heroine and actually located the obscure entrance) that we would visit the larger of the three remaining caves.



Thanks to BATS for hosting an outstanding Spring VAR.

This was Bear Cave, one of the largest in the state, at a bit over a mile in length. Back at camp we had a quick supper after which one of the area cavers, Kerry Speelman, ran us up to the entrance, which was supposed to be close to camp, but was still a mile hike, fortunately without the elevation gain of our earlier trek.

Bear Cave has a very scenic entrance, actually there are several entrances. Once inside the maze pattern of passages quickly asserts itself. Kerry told us that as long as we tried to stay along the main stream route we could probably find our way to the back of the cave. Even so we managed to get turned around often, usually ending up back at the same low stream crawl. I tried the crawl once but the squeeze nature of the far end did not appeal to me so we kept searching for a route that would circumvent it. We checked multiple routes but still couldn't seem to get past that one obstacle. At one point we even ended up back at the entrance, where a careful study of the map by Andy, convinced us that we should have one more go at it. This time with Andy leading we were successful. We were glad to pass by the other end of the tight crawl and were soon at the back of the cave. Interesting to note that after all of our route finding problems going in, once at the back it only took about fifteen minutes to reach the entrance. We traversed a fair portion of the cave (probably close to a mile), and exited just as darkness was descending. It was a fun days caving and it would probably be worth a return trip to visit the other two caves.

May 25th- Terry, Brian Loudon, Andy Filer, Mindy Johnson, Nate MacLane, & Tom Griffin
Essentially the same trip to Elkhorn and Sites that I'd taken Gordy and Ryan on earlier.

I felt a little bad that we'd never hooked up with Brian before, through a miscommunication, so a spur of the moment trip was set up for Memorial Day. All five of us enjoyed our tour of Elkhorn. Note that Elkhorn will be closed from mid June until mid September.

Mindy and Andy had been to Sites before so they opted to head home after we got out of Elkhorn (late afternoon). Nate, Brian, and I went on down to Sites

and had a nice quick tour. Again we all successfully avoided getting "hooked". We left for home around dark. My home, that is, Brian and Nate still had a 2-3 hour drive towards Philly.

May 27-28- Terry, Marion O. Smith, Bill Balfour, Cliff Lindsay

I'd arranged for Marion and I to accompany Bill Balfour on one of his excursions to Lee County, Va. Bill had employment with the state to catalog all karst features, caves, pits on properties collectively known as the Cedars which were being purchased as preservation areas. He'd already located quite a few shallow pits so it sounded like the area has promise. On these two days we came up short. Located a number of interesting looking karst features but little else.

Bill did take Marion and I to one virgin pit (Bowen Pit #2) which we dropped and taped at 62'. The following morning before joining up with Bill and Cliff for the days misadventures, I took Marion to Coffin Cave, which I'd been to a few years back.

Bill related the following story regarding the discovery and naming of the cave. It seems there was as small rural cemetery near the road. When the state was widening the highway, they blasted into a cave with a sizable room. Shortly after this, a local woman was paying her respects to her deceased relatives. Upon climbing up around the hill to where the cemetery was, she discovered only a gaping hole (no cemetery). Convinced that all her descendants were swallowed up by the devil she beat a hasty retreat in a state of hysteria. Well, to end this story, the state had to retrieve all the coffins which had fallen into the cave (probably a collapse resulting from highway blasting) and have them buried elsewhere. Hence the name, Coffin Cave. I guess they got them all, because Marion and I didn't see any.

Our second day ridge walking was no more productive than the first. We found nothing of significance. Sometimes that's just how it goes. It was a long drive home.

Waffle Sinks

First Visit

By John DiCarlo NSS 25744

Berkeley County, WV--On Wednesday April 15, 2015, I checked out a sinkhole that I have had my eye on. Over time I have seen it take a lot of water. It can gulp some water. It will also pool up in bad rain. I have never seen it overflow. Water runoff from the road is directed into it. There is even rock hat has been placed in the ditch down to it.

I climbed my way down to the sink. It looked silted shut. It did have a few holes around it. I took some pictures.



Large sinkhole in the field

Next to it was another sink with some trees sticking out.



Sinkholes with some trees growing in them



The first sinkhole that gulps the run off from a large area

Looking around, I wondered if there were any more sinkholes around there. I pushed through the brush and out into a field. I immediately saw some sinks in front of me. I checked them out. The sink on my left was a large round one with no holes in it.

To my left I didn't see any more sinks, but to my right there looked like some possibilities. I walked over to the next sink and thought, "Alright!" "This looks like it goes." I took some pictures as I walked around it. Look at the pictures, what do you think?



Promising sinkhole photo 1



Promising Sinkhole photo 2



Promising sinkhole Photo 3

Moving on after finding this, I found another sink. This had a lot of debris pushed into it. It did have an eight inch hole on the side.

This area was like a waffle, flat and full of holes.

I took a picture across the field. There was a berm around this field and it was easy to see that this was built as a retaining pond for nearby lots. They had scraped off most of the top soil and exposed the sinks. The little dirt that was left has fallen in lots of the spots and now we have several sinks opening up.



Waffle Sinks -Looking across the field

I had covered most of the field except the area at the other end of the field. I hadn't seen any sinks there but I didn't walk it. I headed that way. Getting close as I looked around, I didn't see any sinks. Getting closer, I did see a small depression that had a small ditch heading down to it and a lot of small holes. I took some photos of it. That was the sixth sink that I found in the area.



The Sixth Sinkhole

Blueberry Waffle Cave

Fourth visit

5-20-15

By John DiCarlo, NSS 25744

Berkeley County, WV-We returned to **Blueberry Waffle Cave** again. This time it was Tom Griffin, Jerry Bowen, Bob Bennett, Scott Graham, and John DiCarlo. We wanted to dig some more and survey it.



Photo by Scott Graham
Looking down the entrance to Blueberry Waffle Cave

Arriving at the entrance Tom went down first, followed by Scott, then Jerry. I was near the top and Bob behind me.

The buckets that started coming up mostly had dirt, but a few had rocks. We dug for a while before Tom climbed into the room at the bottom. He took some measurements and had us take some too.



Photo by Scott Graham

John DiCarlo at the bottom of the entrance, taking measurements of a room off to the side

Tom climbed out of the cave and I was the next one in. While I was there Tom had me take some more measurements. Meanwhile Tom was taking shots with his compass. I finished up and came out of the room.

Trying to climb out was a feat. There was nothing to grab or put your feet on. Tom helped me up and I got out.



Scott Graham in the bottom of Blueberry Waffle Cave going feet first into the side room

Tom finished with his readings and came up. Scott slid down into the cave. Lining up with the entrance to the room he slid his way in. After looking around he came back out.



Surveying (ScottG)

Annual Grotto Picnic

The annual Grotto picnic date is changed this year. Due to scheduling conflicts it will be held Sat, June 27th noon until about 6pm. It will again be held at Blue Ridge Acres riverfront. Bring your favorite dish to share along with your favorite meat, etc. Sodas, water, ice, plates, etc will be furnished. The water at the boat ramp is great for kids & those who want to wade. The river current is relatively slow here so bring your kayak or canoe. Last year the kayaks were the hit of the picnic! John DiCarlo enjoyed it so much that his whole family bought kayaks & formed the DiCarlo Navy! There will be 2 grills to cook burgers, hot dogs, steaks, or anything else you would like to cook. If kayaks & swimming are too active for you then bring your chair and relax by the riverside and enjoy the camaraderie of your friends! If you need directions just contact Bob & he will send them to you.

See everyone at the picnic! BYOB!



Scott Graham almost all the way in the side room looking back up at us.

I walked over to the wood line and grabbed a few broken branches. Dragging them back to the cave entrance, I threw them down and across the entrance so the vines would have something to grow on. This would help it look semi-closed, not the freshly dug entrance that we had now.

West Virginia Bat Surveys – Winter 2014/2015

Craig Stihler, WVDNR

Since White Nose Syndrome (WNS) was first documented in West Virginia in 2009, the WVDNR's winter bat surveys have helped assess the impact of this disease on cave-dwelling bats. During winter 2014-2015, bat surveys were conducted at 21 caves including Hellhole (this includes NSS counts at Hamilton and New Trout caves). Hellhole, the most important bat hibernaculum in West Virginia, was surveyed on 28 February 2015. A total of 13 people split into three crews to survey the "bat route" portion of the cave. A total of 15,856 bats were tallied, and while this sounds like a large number of bats, it is very significantly less than what has been tallied in the past.

A total of 1,623 little brown bats were counted in the Bat Room and the Shipp Room of Hellhole, but in previous surveys the same portions of the cave contained 57,809 little brown bats, a decline of 97%. Indiana bats declined from 18,557 individuals in 2010 (the year WNS was detected at the cave) to 1,875 bats, a decline of 90%. However, Virginia big-eared bats continue to do well and are apparently not affected by WNS. The 2015 total was the highest on record with 12,036 Virginia big-eared bats counted in Hellhole. The results of the 2015 Hellhole bat survey are shown below.

Results of the February 2015 Winter Bat Survey in Hellhole, Pendleton County, WV

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NUMBER
Little brown bat	<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	1,912
Indiana bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	1,875
Eastern small-footed bat	<i>Myotis leibii</i>	4
Tricolored bat (=Eastern pipistrelle)	<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	25
Big brown bat	<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	4
Virginia big-eared bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus</i>	12,036
TOTAL		15,856

Perhaps the most disappointing finding this past winter was that bat populations were still declining, and there was no sign of recovery or even of populations stabilizing. Between the 2013 surveys and the 2015 surveys, little brown bats and Indiana bats both declined an additional 26%, and tricolored bats an additional 52%. The table below shows the overall change in population numbers by species. The declines are based on comparing the 2015 numbers to the last count at each site before WNS arrived at that particular site.

Changes in winter bat populations from pre-White Nose Syndrome to Winter 2014/2015

Bat Species	Population change from number before WNS arrived
Little brown bat	-97.4
Tricolored bat	-95.4
Indiana bat	-84.5
Northern long-eared bat	-55.9
Big brown bat	-39.2
Eastern small-footed bat	+10.5
Virginia big-eared bat	+92.0



CAVIN CALENDAR

MAY 10TH - JUNE 20TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jun 7 Molers Gate Maintenance 10am Bubbe Weekend Nancy Hanks	Jun 8	Jun 9	 Meeting 7pm	Jun 11	Jun 12 Biologists from American University	Jun 13 Biologists from American University
Jun 14 Biologists from American University FLAG DAY	Jun 15	Jun 16	Jun 17 GEPKS - 6pm John D	Jun 18	Jun 19	Jun 20 WV DAY
Jun 21 SOLSTICE FATHER'S DAY	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jun 24	Jun 25	Jun 26	Jun 27 Annual TSG picnic at BRA 12 noon-6pm
Jun 28	Jun 29	Jun 30	Jul 1	Jul 2	Jul 3	
Jul 5	Jul 6	Jul 7	 Meeting 7pm	Jul 9	Jul 10	Jul 11
Jul 12	Jul 13 NSS Convention Waynesville, MO	Jul 14 NSS Convention Waynesville, MO	Jul 15 NSS Convention Waynesville, MO	Jul 16 NSS Convention Waynesville, MO	Jul 17 NSS Convention Waynesville, MO	Jul 18

DEAD DOG DISPATCH



LOWMOOR CAVE (JC)



DEAD DOG DISPATCH

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