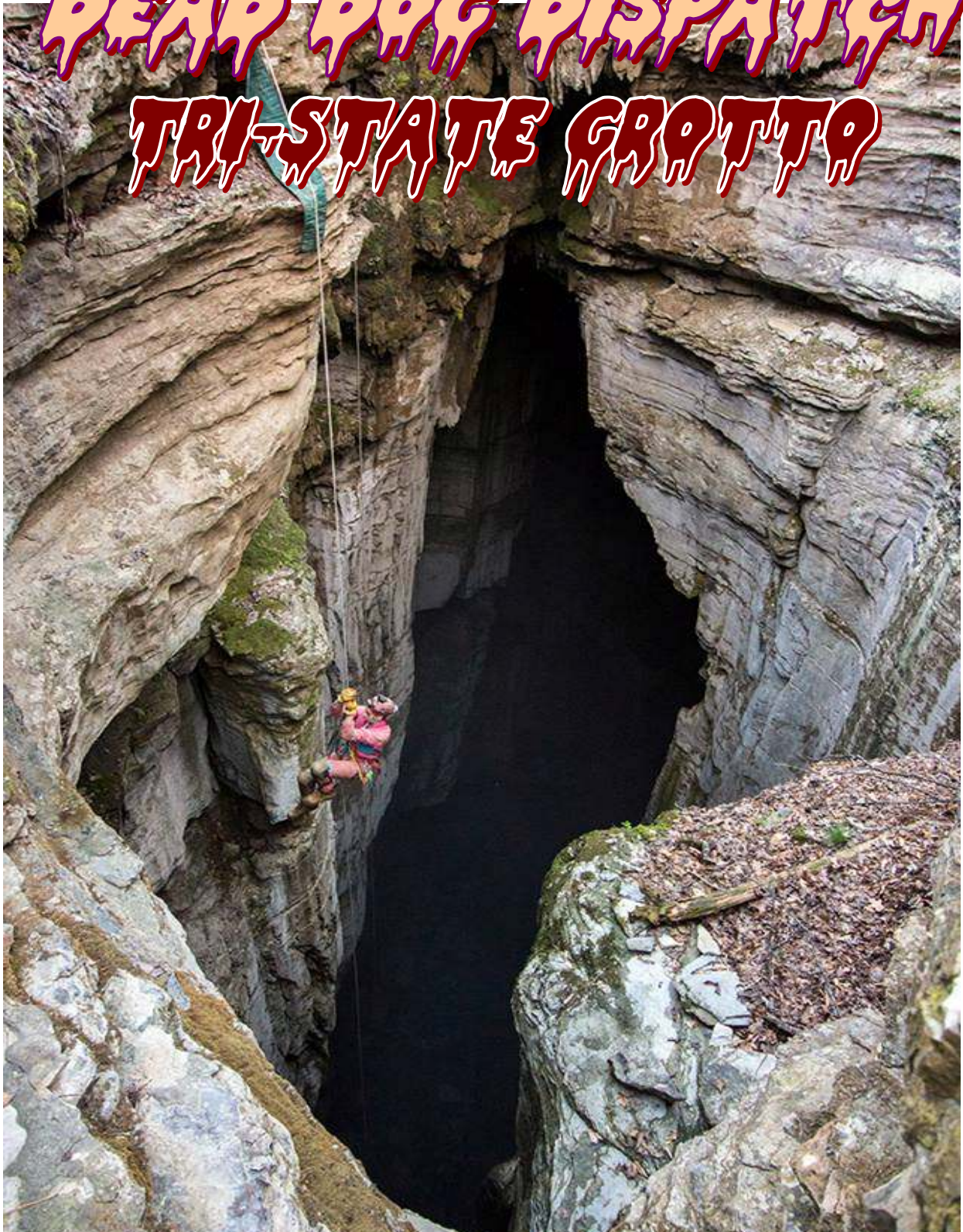


DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



VALHALLA, JACKSON CO, AL

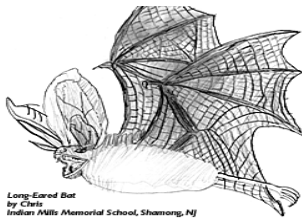
VOL. #31

ISS. #4

APR

2016

#55



SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP ---- \$50/YEAR
(SUSTAINING-\$50/yr until \$200 total is met)
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Payment of DUES can be made at MONTHLY MEETINGS
 or can be SENT TO:

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All material for inclusion in the **DEAD DOG DISPATCH** must be sent to the EDITOR NO BY THE **25TH** OF EACH MONTH.

*** The cover this month was taken by Ryan Mauer. It shows Shawn Hogbin ascending out of Valhalla Cave in Jackson Co, AL.

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 Safety Chair ----- Tom Griffin -----540-955-0611
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 Youth Chair ----

**** 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

*****ONLY 2 LEFT!*****

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!

TRI-STATE GROTTTO MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

FULL MEMBERSHIP ----- \$10.00 (Must be NSS)
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LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP ---- \$200.00



DEAD DOG DISPATCH

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CAVIN EVENTS

2016

The money was sent to SCCI.
Keep It Coming!

WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

APR 1 ---- ALL FOOL'S DAY
APR 2 ---- P, B, & J DAY
APR 15 --- TAX DAY
APR 22 --- EARTH DAY
APR 22-24 --- Spring VAR - Endless Caverns
APR 29 --- ARBOR DAY
MAY 5 --- CINCO de MAYO
MAY 7 --- WVASS meeting - Unus, WV
MAY 8 --- MOTHER'S DAY
MAY 11 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
MAY 13-15 --- Spring MAR - Shade Gap, PA
MAY 14 --- Adam Stephen Day - 9am
MAY 16 --- ARMED FORCES DAY
MAY 27-30 --- Speleofest - Lone Star Preserve, KY
MAY 30 --- MEMORIAL DAY
JUN 2-5 ---- SERA Cave Carnival - Pigeon Mt, GA
JUN 8 ---- TSG meeting - 7pm
JUN 10-12 --- Bubble Weekend
JUN 14 --- FLAG DAY
JUN 19 --- FATHER'S DAY
JUN 20 --- SUMMER SOLSTICE
JUL 4 ---- INDEPENDENCE DAY
JUL 13 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
JUL 17-23 --- NSS Convention - Ely, NV
AUG 10 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
SEP 1-5 --- OTR
SEP 3 ---- Doo Dah Parade - 10am
SEP 5 ---- MEMORIAL DAY
SEP 11 --- PATRIOT'S DAY
SEP 14 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
SEP 23 --- AUTUMN EQUINOX
OCT 12 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
OCT 15 --- Bridge Day

Tri-State Grotto ----- www.tristategrotto.net/
VAR ----- www.varegion.org/
NSS ----- www.caves.org/
NSS Convention 2016 ----- www.nss2016.caves.org/
OTR ----- www.otr.org/
MAR ----- www.caves.org/region/mar/
WVCC ----- www.wvcc.net/
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

***** 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 March ----- \$20.00

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- \$6168.50

GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MONTH OF APRIL

Pete Bracken, Marni Epstein, Jeff Hajenga, Kevin Hughes, Jeff Jahn, Lauren McCoy, Adam Oates, Doc Phillips, Mike Ward

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

DEAD DOG DISPATCH

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REPORTS

TAG Spring Break

My Spring Break started off with a 9 hour drive from Morgantown to Kimball Tennessee on a Friday night. We were camping at a little site called "Cavers Paradise" which came with a rope course, a "sauna", "hot tub", and most importantly heated showers. The car I was in arrived at Cavers Paradise at about 2 in the morning. Everyone quickly set up camp and headed off to bed, most of us feeling like kids on Christmas Eve.

We woke up around 8 the next morning and made our way back into town. We decided to stop for breakfast at the local Waffle House, which would become our breakfast location for the rest of the trip. After a short breakfast and Walmart run, we headed to Cedar Ridge Crystal Cave. This was a non-vertical cave, but was highly decorated. The cave is located right beside Interstate 24. It was blown open during construction of the interstate and then had to be closed because locals were taking formations out of the cave to sell at local gas stations. The gate was a concrete wall with small metal door that could be unlocked with a key. Once you crawl through the entrance you have to make your way through some easier crawling and stooping. After this you arrive in what is obviously the main attraction. The whole roof of the main room is coated in soda straws. The room had to be at least 50 feet wide and 70 feet long. After we were done gawking at the crystal white soda straws we moved our way to the back of this room. In the back of the room there are columns rimstone pools and decorated flowstone. The formations covered almost all free space in the cave, and white helictites were growing off some of the columns. After spending a considerable amount of time in the cave, we headed back to Caver's Paradise and spent the rest of the day lounging around and preparing for the vertical

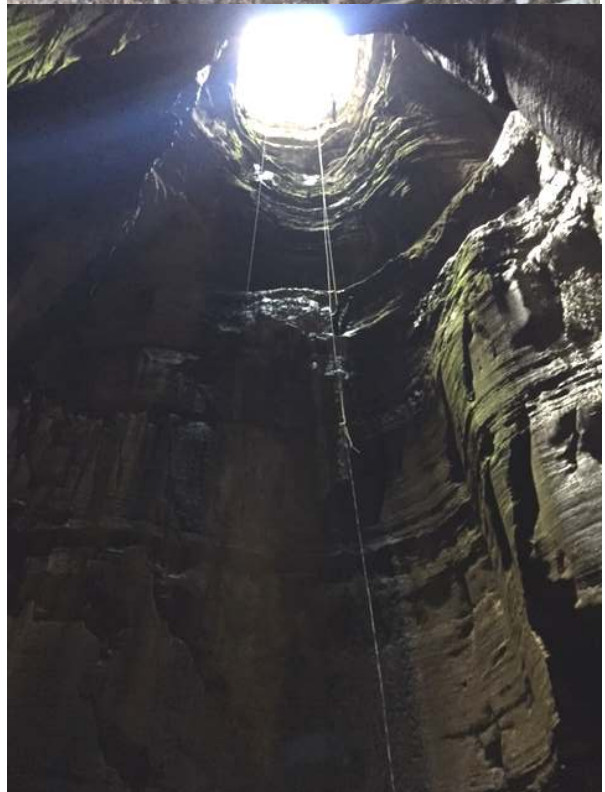
drops we had to stomach tomorrow.



(Pictures of the soda straws and columns in Cedar Ridge Crystal Cave)

For Day #2 the itinerary entailed Cagle's Chasm and South Pittsburg Pit. First we went to Waffle House to meet up with Alan Cressler, who is known for his knowledge of the TAG

region. He would be joining us for the day. For the first half of the day I went to Cagle's Chasm (187 feet); this was to be my first "TAG Cave." Once we arrived at the pit, Ryan asked if anyone wanted to rig up "Jeep Side" (110 feet) which is a drop that leads to part of Cagle's and has a keyhole that can be rigged to drop into the main pit. I went along with Ryan to help rig that pit, which at the time we were told would only be 70 feet! Luckily we rigged with a 200 foot rope so it did not make a difference. I rappelled down the first few feet which puts you on top of a large flowstone formation. As I work my way down the flowstone, I look over the ledge expecting to see a 50 or 60 foot free drop, and I got almost double that. Needless to say I was fairly startled but dropped it anyway. After taking a glance through the Jeep Side Keyhole to the main pit, I ascended out of Jeep Side and walked over to Cagle's Chasm. I dropped into the 187 feet almost stunned by how it felt to be free hanging for so long. After looking around there for a few minutes, everyone climbed out, I bounced Jeep Side one more time, and then headed to South Pittsburg



(In order: Entrance to Cagle's, Entrance to Jeep Side, and from the bottom of Cagle's)



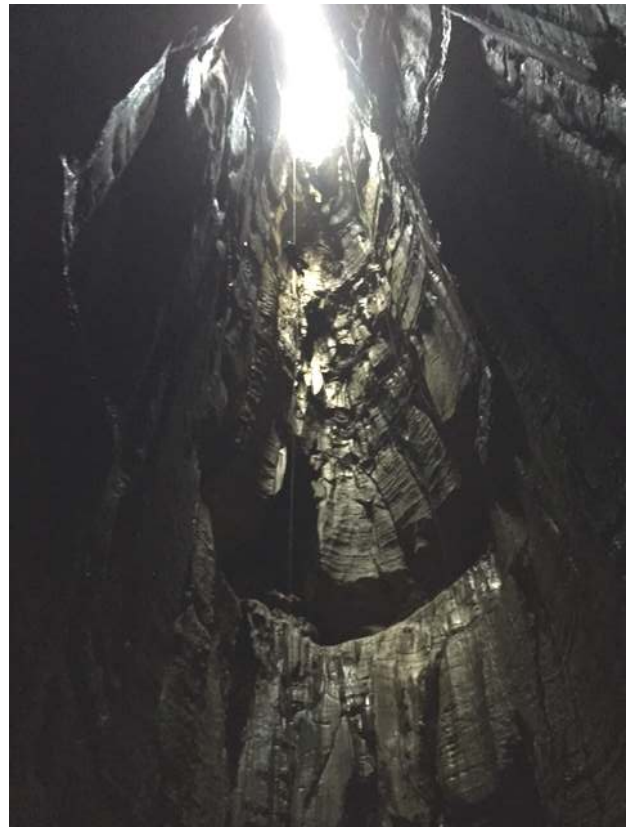
Pit.

We decided to rig the 160 foot drop of Pittsburg Pitt with two ropes, one on each side. Being the ambitious caver I am, I made sure to

bounce both ropes. I went down one side and quickly climbed out of it and then rappelled down the other rope. From here I waited around with Ryan and Wayne for dusk, because Ryan really wanted to get a picture of the pit at dusk under a clear sky and the conditions were just right. I climbed 2/3 of the way up one of the ropes while Wayne went 1/3 of the way up the other. We both awkwardly held flashbulbs and Ryan was able to pull off a few shots. After that we ascended out of the pit in darkness, which was a strange feeling for me. I started climbing out of the pit in almost full light and crested the lip at night. From here we headed back to camp. This night was fairly cold so we found ourselves huddled into the

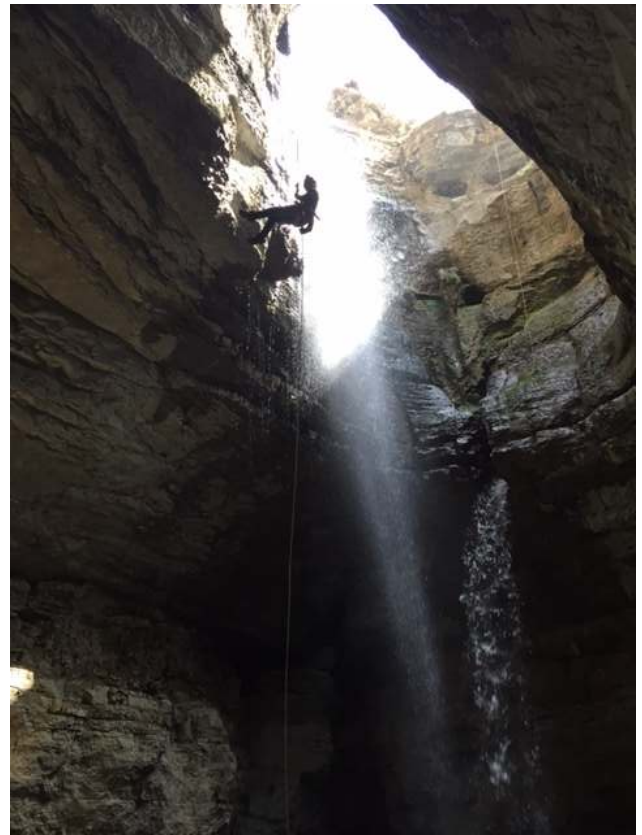


sauna for a few hours before braving the night.



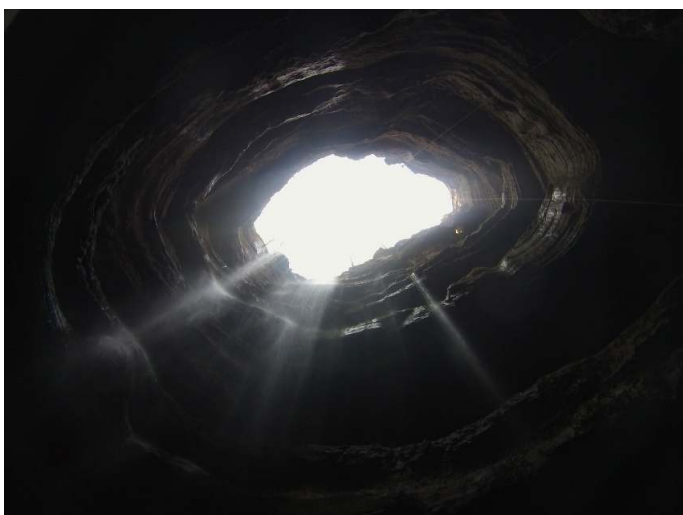
(First pick is of myself and Wayne rappelling, 2nd is of Alan Cressler ascending out)

For Day #3 we would also bounce two pits. The first cave we went to was Stephen's Gap Cave. The drop from top to bottom is 150 feet, but we were doing a shorter drop of 120, which lands you on "The Pedestal." In this cave there is a walk-in entrance and a pit entrance, which makes it very photo friendly. It is also great because you can rappel and then walk out instead of ascending out. I made sure to climb out at least once to say that I did it. I rappelled the pit 3 times. It is truly a beautiful pit because you rappel so close to two thundering waterfalls. To me, this was the best cave we did during Spring Break. While at Stephen's Gap about half a mile away is a small cave called Pipe Side. It is a nice 60 foot drop that was lightly decorated and a few of us bounced it just to say that we did.



(First Picture is from the opposite side of the pedestal which is the flat round rock near the waterfall, second picture is of the entrance area, the third picture is of a WVUSG member rappelling Stephen's Gap)

From Stephen's Gap we moved on to Neversink. Neversink Pit is 162 foot pit that had several small waterfalls all concentrated in one area. There is very little cave beyond the pit so it was a quick trip in and out. Of course, after another long day most of the group was tired so we went back to camp to lounge around the fire and in the sauna. This night would turn out to be the coldest night of the trip.



Pictures from the bottom (Mark Jonard) and top (Emily Dillon) of Neversink

For Day #4 there was only one cave on our list: Valhalla. Valhalla is a 220 foot pit entrance

from the **short** side. I was one of the first few down into the cave. Myself along with a few others decided to go to a room called "Mega Dome" which is a 200 foot high dome with a rope bolt rigged to the top. Valhalla has a minor maze system and it can be very hard to get to where you want to go even if you know the general direction. It took us about 90 minutes to find our way to the Mega Dome. Once there a select few of us climbed to the top of the 200 feet. Once you are at the top you have to change over to your rack. It did not matter that I had practiced change-overs dozens of times in practice, my heart was still in my throat while I was doing it. I was the last person to climb up the Mega Dome so from there we headed out. We took a quick stop at the waterfall room which has a massive in cave waterfall that comes out of the top of a 160 foot dome. From there we hiked the 2.5 miles out of the cave preserve back to our cars in the dark. Once we got back to camp, I fired up the makeshift hot tub (a barrel like pool with a semi submerged potbelly stove) to get the water a little warm. After spending an hour or so in the water I headed to





(Picture 1 is of the entrance pit of Valhalla, with a person standing at the bottom, and the other is of Mega Dome, with Mark a little over 1/3 of the way up.)

Day #5 would be my last day in cave. We would be going to Natural Well Cave, which is in Monte Sano State Park outside of Huntsville. After jumping through the park's hurdles and permission forms, we marched to the cave. The pit was surrounded by a rusty chain link fence that none of us would trust any amount of weight to be put on it. There was a short concrete wall that was put there for us to drape our ropes over. Natural Well is a 190 foot pit, but after doing 220 the day before it felt a little short (never thought I would say that about 190 feet.) We did not spend long in the cave because the park demanded that could not stay past dusk. After de-rigging we all headed to "Ole Hickory BBQ" outside of Huntsville and treated ourselves to a full southern BBQ. We all got back to camp and enjoyed the new

warm weather that had moved in.



(Pictures of Natural Well from the top and bottom)

This was the end of my trip. The next day I left at about noon. Once back in Morgantown, I drove back home to Martinsburg. With all this time on the road it gave me a lot of time to think about how amazing this trip really was. I was able to get into some world-class caves. I had amazing friends with me to take pictures with, and help me enjoy my experience. Even though I saw these amazing caves in Tennessee and Alabama, I still, and always will, be impartial to the caves of West Virginia.

If you would like to see some video of my trip go to:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDaYQR3a8jM> or search: **2016 TAG Spring Break Cave Trip WVU Student Grotto**
Shawn

Another Trip Report

The weekend of April 8th started while I was waiting for Ryan to pick me up for the ride down to WVACS. Using my time wisely I made sure to look at the weather forecast for the weekend. Since it was April I was expecting nothing short of wonderful spring weather. Well, I ended up with snow and 20 degree weather. We made our way down to WVACS Friday and got there late in the evening. I set up my hammock while it was flurrying. Woke up next late the next morning and we didn't get into Bone-Norman until 12:30, which I guess makes us "Gentleman Cavers." Once we got into the cave we were maybe 50 feet in and there was a wonderful group of formations (Pic #1). We hung around that area for a bit looking at 2 considerably large salamanders.



From there we moved into the waterfall area, which you could hear from the entrance room. The waterfall had a considerable amount of water coming over and was next to deafening (Pic #2).



After enjoying the waterfall we moved on through a mix of borehole/stream passage. The deepest water was waist deep, and was a little chilly and very fast moving. Most of the trip was spent in this passageway. We got to a point where we could start seeing some obvious turn-offs.

The leader of the group started us all up the flowstone to the side passage. Once on top of the heavily travelled flowstone, you have to step down a few feet. I walked a few feet and had another 4 foot wall to step over. It then dawned on me that I was just standing in a very large, dry rimstone pool. There were 4 of these very large rimstone pools, the largest that I think I have ever seen. After a few more short crawls and stoops, the group ended up in "Caramel Corner." It was a passageway that had an impressive amount of flowstone and speleothems (Pic #3).



On the trip back through we took a small trip to the West Virginia Room, which had a few totem poles and a nice flowstone shield in the back (Pic #6).

The rimstone pools in this area were crystal clear and were next to impossible to stop looking at (Pic #4 and #5). This was our turn around point.



After maybe 30 minutes we exited and went to Higginbotham's #4. It was so cold outside that none of us hesitated to dive into the 80 foot, cobbled belly crawl, we just wanted the 55 degree warmth that the cave could provide. After the crawlway there was some bear crawling through a stream and sand. That section was short and we ended up in some large stream passage. It was very straight and flat. We covered the same distance in that passage in 30 minutes that took us 90 minutes in Bone-Norman. The water never got above your knees. Ryan wanted to stop at "A Special Place" which was a nicely decorated section of this stream passage. (Pic #8). Since we had a pretty early callout time, we turned around there after several pictures and exited the cave at 1:30.

We exited the cave at around 4, and we were more than cold, considering most of us were near-soaked through to our base layers. The next day we decided to do two short trips into the Higginbotham's Cave System. The first trip was in to Higginbotham's #2, which we only went in to the entrance room to look at the flowstone and formations in the back (Pic #7).



There was one more goal for the trip, and that was to go see the Falls of Hill Creek in the Monongahela National Forest. The park was covered in 6 inches

of snow, but the roads were clear. There are 3 waterfalls there, we took time to look at Middle Falls and Lower Falls (Pic #9). The lip on Lower Falls looks perfect for a nice rappel and we all swore to come back and bounce the 30 - 40 foot drop. This was the capstone on our trip and we all headed back to Morgantown from there. Despite it being a pretty cold weekend, I was able to go to three amazing places that I most certainly want to visit again.

-Shawn



TSG Meeting, Wed, Feb 10, 2016

John called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
Jerry gave the Treasurer's report.
3 new visitors

OLD BUSINESS: VAR at Endless Caverns on Apr 22-24. Deposit for the dinner has been sent.

Adam Stephen dig for Mar 12, 2016 9:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Adam Stephen Day (Heritage Day) will be Sat, May 14th, 2016 starting at 9:00 am.

NEW BUSINESS: Baker Quarry gate repair - March 19th at 9:00 am.

Cleveland Grotto trip to Jones Quarry & Donaldson on Sat, Feb 19.

Cleveland Grotto trip to Whittings Neck & Indian River on Sun Feb 20th

Who's Been Caving?

Whittings Neck - Doc & Tim

Tom went to Whittings neck 2 weeks ago

Wed night caving - Fox Skull Cave - meet at BP at Spring Mill.

Mystic Cave closes on April 1st for VA big eared bats!

Any new TSG members of less than 6 months can be included in the Endless lottery!

CAVE BUCKS: \$44.00 to SCCI

John adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted

Paulette Bennett, Secretary

TSG Meeting Mar 9, 2016

John called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Jerry gave the Treasurer's report.

OLD BUSINESS: Jerry has clips and name tag holders for VAR.

John gave a report on VAR and how many have Pre-Registered.

Jerry will be sending a check for \$1000 to Endless for deposit for VAR.

Terry is leading a trip for VAR.

There was some discussion about Nutt Cave.

Baker Quarry gate repair will be Mar 19th.

Mike Ward will be leading a trip to Jones Quarry on March 19th.

Bob talked about Mrs Teter possible having a stroke. Will go to Seneca Rocks to see Mrs Teter on Mar 12th instead of having the Adam Stephen dig.

NEW BUSINESS: 3 women from a YMCA youth group talked to us about possible access to Jones Quarry Cave. They work with troubled kids. Doc talked about a trip in Donaldson Cave. Mike Ward donated 10 helmets and chin straps. A motion was made to purchase 10 headlamps for the helmets.

John talked about the trip to Fox Skull and the visitors they had. There was a raccoon in Fox Skull Cave and 2 WV state police in tactical uniforms visited some as they walked back to their cars to insure that they were safe!

Doc talked about the trip to Endless to change light bulbs.

Bob, Tom & Dave Knox went to Fruit Fly Cave. No Wed night caving.

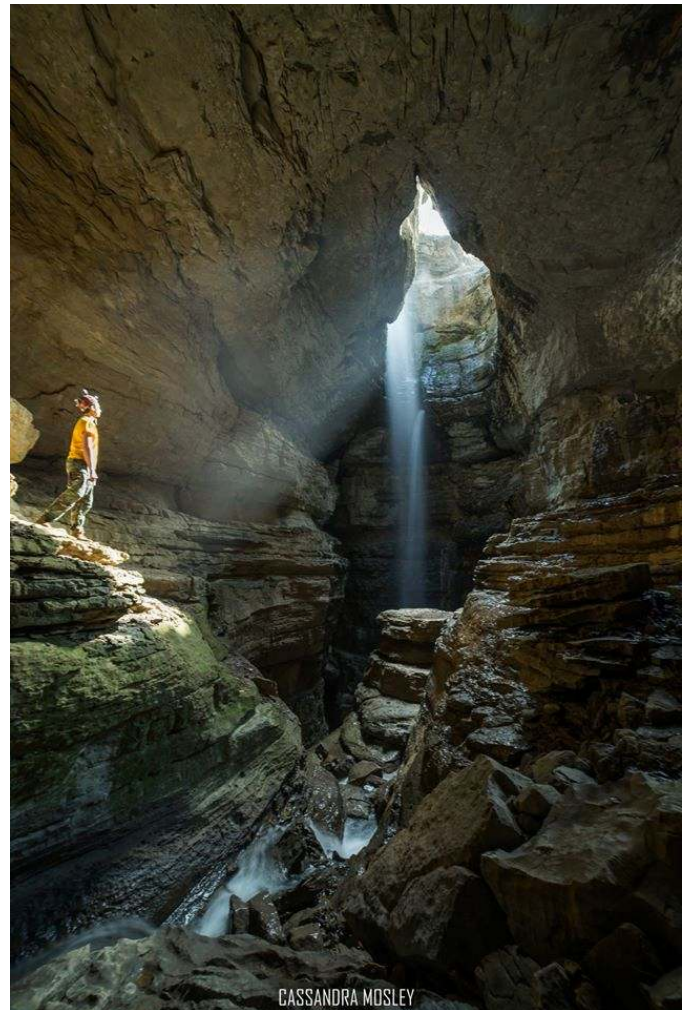
CAVE BUCKS: \$20 will be sent to SCCI.

Lights for helmets are already ordered: \$243.48.

John adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Paulette Bennett, Secretary



Stephens Gap (Cassandra Mosley)



Valhalla (Cassandra Mosley)



South Pittsburg Pit (Ryan Mauer)



CAVIN CALENDAR

APRIL 10TH - MAY 21ST



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr 10	Apr 11	Apr 12	Apr 13 Meeting 7pm	Apr 14	Apr 15	Apr 16
Apr 17	Apr 18 TAX DAY	Apr 19	Apr 20	Apr 21	Apr 22 Spring VAR at Endless Caverns	Apr 23 Spring VAR at Endless Caverns
Apr 24 Spring VAR at Endless Caverns	Apr 25	Apr 26	Apr 27	Apr 28	Apr 29	Apr 30 Sharps Cave - see Cheryl Suitor
May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5 CINCO de MAYO	May 6	May 7 WVASS meeting - Unus, WV - 1pm
May 8 MOTHER'S DAY	May 9	May 10	May 11 Meeting 7pm	May 12	May 13 Spring MAR - Shade Gap, PA	May 14 Spring MAR - Shade Gap, PA Adam Stephen Day - 9am
May 15 Spring MAR - Shade Gap, PA	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21 ARMED FORCES DAY

DEAD DOG DISPATCH



Shawn Hogbin rappelling into Stephens Gap cave (By Cassandra Mosley)



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