

DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



STEPHENS GAP CAVE, JACKSON CO, AL

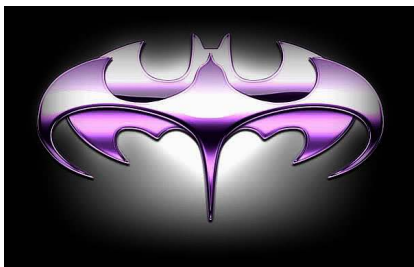
VOL. #31

ISS. #5

MAY

2016

#71



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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.

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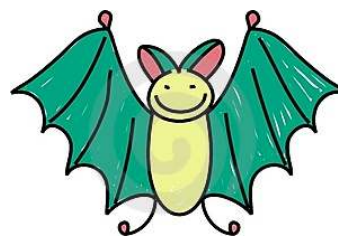
E-MAIL: gimpycaver@comcast.net

*** The cover this month was taken by Cassandra Mosley in Stephens Gap Cave, Jackson Co, AL.

**** Don't forget, the **JONES QUARRY BOOKLET** is STILL available at a reasonable price **\$6.00**. There is only a couple left! 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!



CAVIN EVENTS

2016

The money was sent to SCCI.
Keep It Coming!

WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

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

MAY 4 --- Jordan Lane dig - 6pm - see Tim Jordan
MAY 5 --- CINCO de MAYO
MAY 7 --- WVASS meeting - Unus, WV - 1pm
MAY 8 --- MOTHER'S DAY
MAY 11 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
MAY 13-15 --- Spring MAR - Shade Gap, PA
MAY 14 --- Adam Stephen Day - 9am - see Bob B
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 4 --- Norman Cave - see Jeff Jahn
JUN 8 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
JUN 10-12 --- Bubble Weekend
JUN 10-12 --- WVACS Classic - WVASS field station,
Greenbrier Co, WV
JUN 14 --- FLAG DAY
JUN 17-19 --- Karst-O-Rama - Great Saltpeter Cave
Preserve, KY
JUN 19 --- FATHER'S DAY
JUN 20 --- SUMMER SOLSTICE
JUL 4 --- INDEPENDENCE DAY
JUL 13 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
JUL 18-22 --- NSS Convention - Ely, NV
AUG 4-7 --- Indiana Cave Capers
AUG 10 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
AUG 20 --- Annual TSG picnic - Blue Ridge Acres,
Harpers Ferry, WV - 12pm
SEP 1-5 --- OTR
SEP 3 --- Doo Dah Parade - 10am
SEP 5 --- LABOR DAY
SEP 11 --- PATRIOT'S DAY
SEP 14 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
SEP 23 --- AUTUMN EQUINOX
OCT 12 --- TSG meeting - 7pm
OCT 15 --- Bridge Day

***** 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 April ----- \$23.00

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- \$6191.50

DEAD DOG DISPATCH

V.#31

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GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MONTH OF MAY

Carl Amundson, Sandy Amundson, Eric Berge,
Angela Durst, James Durst, JC Fisher, Doyle
Garvin, Chase Griffin, Lucas Hanson, Jeff Marcum,
Greg McCoy, Pat Minnick, Josh Prusha, Steve
Rexford, Meredith Smith, Trevor Ward

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Alabama Pitting

Well, here it is April and I haven't been to a new hundred foot pit since last October at the TAG Fall Cave-in. So a while back I contacted Andy Zellner, who has a weekend residence in Jackson County, Ala, to see if he might be able to remedy my dilemma. Andy has been a major player in TAG caving since the early nineties, and a good friend of mine for over two decades. I had earlier provided him with a list of TAG hundred footers I have yet to visit. Of the 450 or so hundred footers in TAG, I've been to about 95% of them, so that leaves about twenty that I haven't seen. Most of these have access issues, but Andy seemed to think we could probably at least get in a few. We experienced some mutual scheduling problems and eventually had to settle on Easter weekend.

I arrived at Andy's house around 8AM Saturday and we wasted no time getting started. Our first stop was actually in Franklin County, Tenn., just over the Alabama line. After a five hundred foot elevation gain Andy easily located the entrance to Rusty's Resounding Rock Drop. For a long time Rusty's was thought to be just a 117' pit with a very tight entrance. Recently it has been extended by Indiana cavers to a depth of over 400 feet. The Indianians forced multiple constrictions to accomplish this, and also made the tight entrance much more accommodating. Andy said that bouncing the entrance pit was affording me the nicest part of the cave. He also volunteered that Marion's only comment on the cave had been "what a suckhole", so I opted to do just that, bounce the entrance pit.

On our way off the mountain we stumbled onto the concealed entrance to a small cave. I'm not much of a tech person (in fact only Marion may be less so than I), but the TCS (Tennessee Cave Survey) has an app which allowed Andy to draw up on his phone topo maps showing all reported caves in the state. I was impressed. Our little find was not shown, so we assumed it to be virgin and named it

Twin Trees Cave. It had about 65 feet of passage in two directions, and ended at a six foot deep soil sump pit without detectable air.

We next dropped back down into Alabama where we would spend the rest of the weekend. Our second hundred footer of the day involved another five hundred foot elevation gain. Fly Hole turned out to be a fairly nice 106' dead bottom pit. Nearby, and at the same elevation, was a spacious 65 footer called Snowflower Pot. For a shallow pit, it was quite impressive.... kind of a mini-TAG classic.

For our last stop of the day, Andy took me to a large cluster of pits in the vicinity of Low Gap in northern Jackson County, Ala. Thankfully there was no elevation gain here, just a mile hike contouring along the contact. It was not a boring hike as karst features abounded, any of which would have counted as caves in our neck of the woods. We passed over a dozen that did not qualify as caves in Alabama, even though the ACS (Alabama Cave Survey) recently down-graded to include any combination of vertical or horizontal totaling fifty feet as a qualifier. Previously, only pits that were at least fifty feet deep or caves fifty feet long were counted. Using the old system, a 40 foot pit measuring 10 feet across would not have qualified. In the new format this same 40 foot pit would count (40 deep + 10 horizontal = 50), as would a 25 foot pit with 25 feet of passage. There are many hundreds of such small pits on the slopes of the Cumberland Plateau in north eastern Alabama.

As we hiked Andy would pause by this hole or that hole, mention a name and a depth, and then proceed onto the next. I quickly lost track. When we reached a point where he said the next cluster was quite a bit further, we started bopping all the pits we'd passed on our way back to his truck. In all I dropped nine pits ranging from 36' to 91' in depth. Most I did solo so as to save time, but Andy also bounced a few he said he hadn't done before. We finished up just as dusk fell. It had been a great day, with a total of over 800 feet of new to me vertical, including two new hundred footers.

On Sunday we started out with the same enthusiasm but circumstances soon thwarted our efforts. Our objectives were all in Madison County which is located just west of Jackson. Showers increased in duration and intensity as the day progressed. We first spent about three hours looking

for a short multi-drop called Dixie Hole, finally giving up after concluding that it had most likely been bulldozed over by a recent massive logging operation, when our exhaustive search of myriad brush piles failed to reveal the elusive entrance. Meanwhile rain showers pelted us intermittently.

After returning to Andy's truck, we hiked about a mile in the opposite direction along the contour in search of a large sink containing the entrances to Diane's Cave and Sophie Hole. Although long known, as indicated by their low ACS numbers, neither Andy nor I had ever visited these caves before. Diane's Cave, while having an impressively large entrance, was only a couple of hundred feet long. A map of Sophie Hole indicated it was a 124' pit with multiple ledges. Two waterfalls cascaded into the sink containing these two caves, the larger of which plunged directly into Sophie Hole. We were only able to go down about forty feet before the water became too intense. As neither of us were prepared for a "beat you to your knees" drubbing in a raging waterfall we routed, thinking our health would be better preserved by returning to Sophie Hole at a drier time of year. The rain picked up again and we called it a day.

Sunday didn't go as planned, but we did learn a few things. Thanks to a phenomenal Saturday the weekend was still very productive, and just plain fun. Many thanks to Andy for his hospitality and guide services.

Terry McClanathan

TSG Meeting 4/13/16

John called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Jerry gave the Treasurer's report.

Correspondence: Bob talked about children's books to hand out to families at VAR and scout troops. The books were supplied by the Park Service.

Old Business: VAR - John talked about the names that were picked for the wild trips at VAR.

Bob talked about the led trips for VAR.

Bob also talked about the local attractions near Endless.

Bob said that he would bring extra toilet paper, pens, felt pens, and markers for VAR.

Tom has the T-shirts made & paid for.

Adam Stephen Day/Natural Heritage Day will be Sat, May 14th between 10am & 5pm. Be there about 9am.

Jones Quarry: Bob talked about the control of trips and who to contact for trips. On weekends, only 2 days per month but never 2 days on the same weekend. Each group is limited to one trip per month.

Bob is going to check with JC about an e-calendar for Jones Quarry trips.

New Business: Mrs Teter, owner of Mystic Cave, has passed away. Viewing & service will be on Sat, Apr 16th.

Tom talked about the 3rd repair of the gate to Baker Quarry.

JV talked about the bat count for Dyers Cave.

Don Arrowood talked about the closing of the P caves near Williamson, PA.

Spring MAR is on May 13th-15th.

Tim Jordan talked about a possible entrance to Pig cave & other possible entrances on his property.

There is also a well with a possible cave on the property.

Do a dig on the property on Wed, May 4th at 6pm.

The annual TSG summer picnic will be on Sat, Aug 20th from 12 noon until about 6pm at the Blue Ridge Acres waterfront.

Cave Bucks: \$23.00 - SCCI

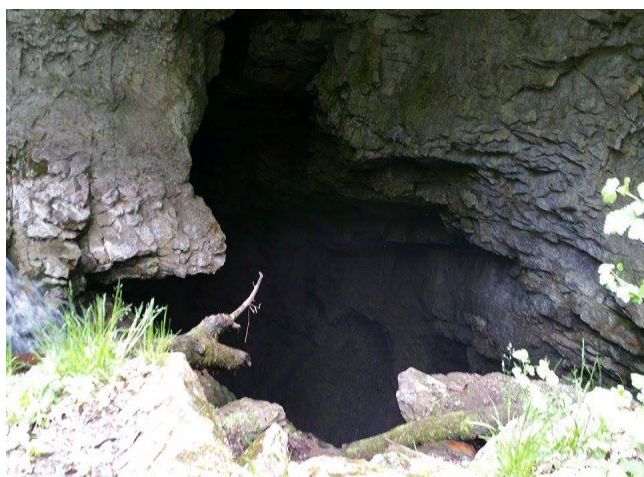
John adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Friar Hole System

Early in the morning of 5/7/16 five cavers got up and drove to Greenbrier County for a day trip. We planned to go see some of the more well-known entrances to the Friars Hole System. On our way down through Cranberry Glades we passed a wonderful waterfall that was visible from the road, we stopped and spend maybe 20 minutes hopping around and taking pictures.



The main attraction was going to be Crookshank Pit, which is about 120 feet.



There had been a phenomenal amount of rain the days before us so there was a massive amount of water pouring into the pit. After some discussion it was decided that it was in the best interest of safety to not drop the pit. We had a new person that was not experienced enough for a water drop. A few of us went to the lip of the pit just to get a taste of what it all looked like.

We all packed up our gear, a little disheartened and headed to the next entrance, Snedegar's.



It was a walk in entrance and opened up into very large borehole. We walked around in there for maybe thirty minutes to get a feel for the place and then headed out. The next entrance was a considerable drive away. It was to be the Friars Hole Entrance. This entrance is stream passage that is composed of three drops before you get to trunk passage. The first drop is only 15 feet and could probably be done free handed if you really wanted to. The second drop is 25 feet and right next to a waterfall. The last drop is 35 feet and in the same room as another booming waterfall. It took us about 3 hours to rig, drop all three and then de-rig. We came out soaking wet and I was more than thrilled to learn that I had forgotten a spare pair of socks at home. We exited the cave at 9:30 and ready for some warm food.

Shawn Hogbin



Hamilton Cave Trip – Spring VAR (The Endless VAR) – April 23, 2016

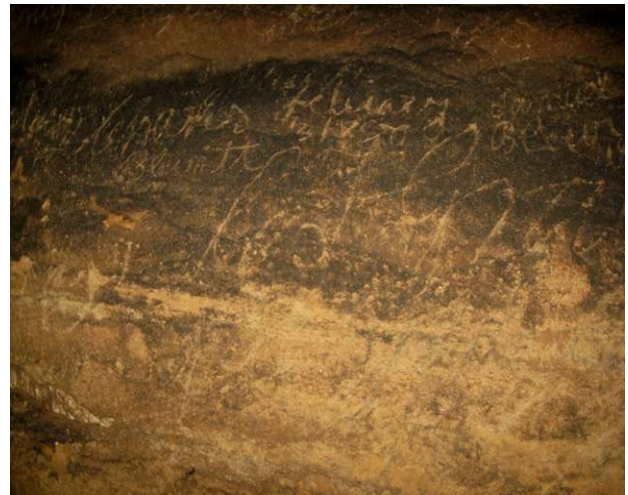
By: Mike Ward (NSS #54210)

It had been ten years since my last trip to Hamilton Cave near Franklin, WV. The last time I was there I was still fairly new to caving, didn't have a map, and didn't have anyone with me that had actually been very deep into the cave. Needless to say, we spent most of our time making circles in the maze of passages near the entrance that day.

At the Spring VAR this year, I was fortunate to tag along on a trip to Hamilton Cave led by Eric Berge. He, along with Adam Nelson and Todd Zimmerman, lead an awesome trip.

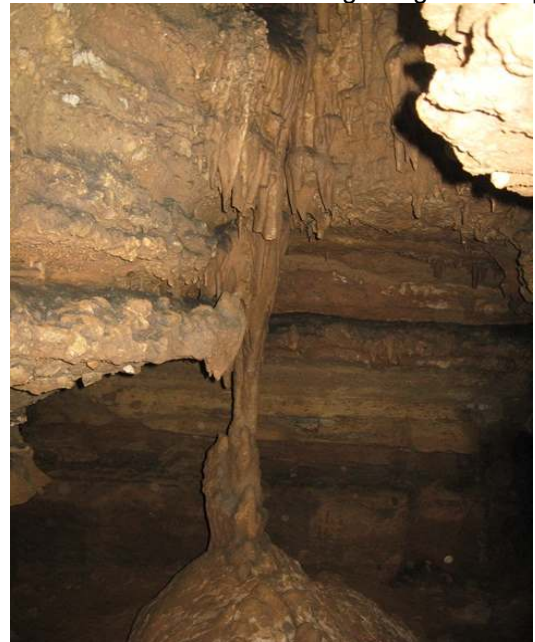
I had forgotten just how long the hike was up the side of the mountain to get to the cave entrance...or perhaps it was just the uphill climb, but eventually the entire group made it to the cave entrance. There were a total of fifteen cavers in our group on this trip. Some were from local grottos (Tri-State, PSC, Front Royal) while others were from places further away (Charlottesville, New York City, New Jersey). It was a group of some experienced and some newer cavers. Hamilton Cave was an excellent choice for all who joined in on the trip. After a brief safety talk, Eric lead the trip into the cave. The beginning of the cave was very much like I remembered it from years ago. Lots of side passages that crisscrossed each other in a maze that all seemed to end up in the same place. Adam brought up the rear leaving markers to make it easier to find out way out through this maze.

The first place that Eric led us to was a passage with a wall full of old signatures. There were dates back into the 1800's next to some of the signatures. Many of these signatures were likely left in the cave by folks during the Civil War days when this cave was used as a salt peter mine that was used to make gunpowder.



Next, we started into an area where we worked on our belly crawling skills. Not sure exactly how long this passage was, but it did seem to be never ending. This led through some areas of breakdown and some slightly more open passages and eventually to a room called the Slab Room. From this room we had to chimney over some small pits into an area where there was an archaeological dig years ago. Eric explained that there were bones from a short nosed bear and other animals found in this area. Just as recent as last year, Adam was part of a group that removed the last of the bags of matrix from the dig site to be taken to a lab for more study. After remembering the journey from the entrance to this part of the cave, I can only imagine the work that had to be done to get all those bags out of the cave. After a short break back in the Slab Room, the trip continued toward areas further back in the cave. Various climbs, crawls, and squeezes lead to some very interesting formations along the way.

Column formation near the beginning of the trip.



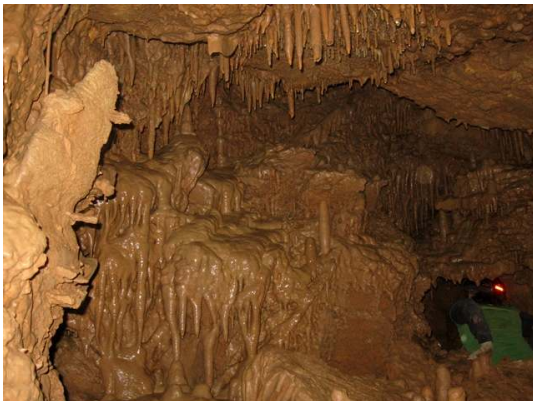
Here is a picture of part of the group from New York City in a part of the passage with beautiful ceiling formations.



Short soda straws and columns that I found in a small hole along the way.



Knowing that our time was limited as we needed to be heading back to VAR for the BBQ dinner, Eric led us to one of the Formation Rooms. There wasn't much space in this room for more than one or two people, so we went in individually to make sure we didn't disturb any of the formations. This is a picture of the area just outside of the Formation Room. You can see one of the cavers from NJ just entering the small entrance into the room in this picture as well.



As I waited my turn, I took in all the beauty around me. This area outside the Formation Room had so many different sorts of formations to enjoy. Here are a few pictures of them.

Outside the Formation Room.



Ribbon formation outside the Formation Room.



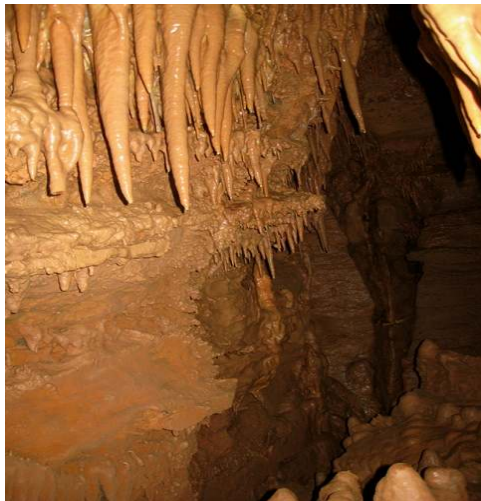
Another formation outside the Formation Room.



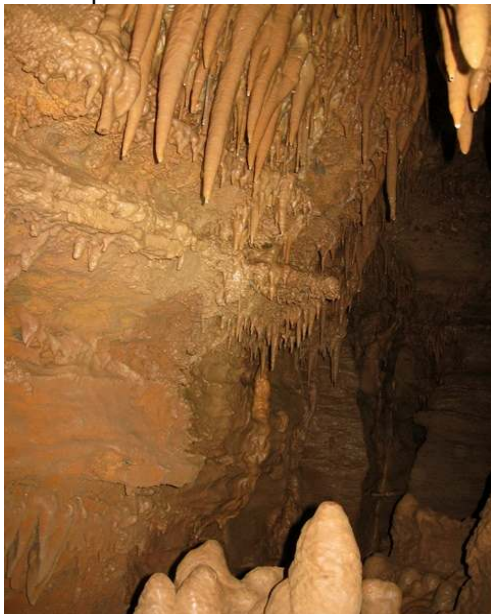
Inside the Formation Room was simply stunning. The pictures can do this area of the cave no justice. The room was full of stalagmites, stalactites, soda straws, columns, ribbon formations (sometimes called bacon) and so many other things that I just didn't want to leave.

Here are some pictures of this room.





A few more pictures of inside the Formation Room.



The ceiling of the Formation Room.



After spending about an hour or so for the entire group to get the opportunity to see into the Formation Room, Eric led the trip back out toward the cave entrance. On the way out we took an opportunity to get a group picture. Eric was taking this picture so he didn't get to be in it.

This picture was taken in the Slab Room.



Soon enough we made our way back to the entrance and were out into the light again. We were now ready to make the trip back over the mountain to Endless Campground to enjoy the BBQ dinner.

We didn't get to see the entire cave on this trip. Unfortunately time was not on our side this day, but Eric did tell us about some of the other rooms and other area such as the Escalator, Airblower and Duck Room. Maybe one day soon another trip can be set up so that all these areas of Hamilton Cave can be enjoyed. I want to say a special thank you to our guide Eric Berge and his two assistants Adam Nelson and Todd Zimmerman that led the trip to Hamilton Cave for us this day. Without their help this trip would not have been possible.

This is kind of a spoof. I was going to give this out at VAR but only gave it to a handful of people. I have the answers if you want to advertise that fact.

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Occasionally, I get an email or a text from someone who has used a misspelled word either by accident or design. If by design, they are using a homophone. A homophone is a word that is pronounced like another word but is different in meaning, origin, or spelling. The following story uses over a hundred homophones. See if you can find them all.

A CAVING STORY THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN by Jerry Bowen, Tri-State Grotto

Friday afternoon is the thyme to do the first thing at VAR—go shopping for the proper gear. Baste at Endless Caverns in New Market, Virginia, there was a vendor named Inner Mountain Outfitters. Nina, the principle owner was running it. Going in, eye looked at everything she had to cell, and spied a really nice Petzl ascender. I knead to bye that ascender, and picked it up. Addressing Nina, we mentioned, “We all sew herd you had outer-where”. So she showed us her blew Meander coveralls, and noticed our size wasn’t available. She told us a wail of a story about that, which really tares me up! I asked her who could due a repair and so a seem in my back pack. I paid cache for my ascender and received fore dollars and thirteen scents in change. I said, “Thank ewe” to Nina, and left.

Friday night, there was a whine tasting event where there was a hole lot of sipping going on. If it wasn’t wine, then it was the loggers. Then we hung around the campfire drinking Coke and singing songs. The fire was enchanting, it turned into a late nite.

The next day, bleary I’d, we met at Tri-State Grotto registration to go caving. It was my terne to drive so I drove my six cylinder pick-up truck which isn’t very powerful. George was driving his ate cylinder Cougar. On our way to the cave, he past me like I was sitting still because I had more wait. He maid me feel insignificant in my heavy truck. He nearly mist an oncoming driver. Driving down the rowed I vowed to be careful because it started to reign. A censor caused a lite on my dashboard to illuminate, indicating whet roads.

We all geared up in the parking area and started our wok. We walked through a creak and saw a hunter who was looking to chute a bare. We staid out of his way. Finally, the raise of the Son peaked through the clouds.

The cave was beautiful! We found the entrance, witch was in plane site. Some louse asked why couldn’t the cave be moved closer to home, butt found out the cave was stationery. We put on our minors helmet and followed Dave, are trip leader who new the weigh. We were aloud to walk in waste deep water and later stopped to weight for slower people who didn’t want to get wet. We were lead strait through a canyon and then had to crawl

threw a small whole where my genes got dirty. Inn one passage we found breakdown where the sealing had dropped large bolders. Don’t mecca mistake climbing over the rocks, they whey allot. Watt in the whirled is this? We came to a room where the lush formations were a site to behold! I was in wrapped attention! This area was really rheumy! Later, we had to make an assent up a steep climb. I tide nots in the rope to help some cavers. I told them to bee careful and to yews there ascender. During this operation, I bumped my knows so aisle be moore careful next time. (This wasn’t Sights Cave you know). Dave, my idle, thanked me for my assistants; I thanked him for his complement. There never was a buoy bourne, who was more ready for this caving trip; I really felt Victoria’s after conquering the darkness! I tell you, caving is not like walking through a maul! Maybe you can take a pique at my pictures.

At dinner that night, we went to a table set for a king to sit with our friends. I saw Jimmy whored the cookies. We eight serial, beats, buries, karats, a pair and a peace of bred. What a offal meal! Of coarse I didn’t like it because there was no meet! I can’t eat another byte. It was enough to give me the flew! I would dye for a better meal! (I shouldn’t teas you like that! The food wasn’t that way atoll! The fax are, the food really was good!)

Saturday knight, there was a program where will Orendoorf used a laptop computer, a projector and a Power Point to discuss ‘Appalachian Karst with Emphasis on the Virgins’. There was a drawing and my fiend, Bob, one a climbing rope. After that, a guy with a base guitar played cords until midnight; such music I never hurd! We had to dress warm, it was going to frees, so Mary put on her fir coat and I wrapped an Afghanistan around me! Except four the cold and the light rain, it was a perfect weekend, the wether turned out stellar! We had to brake camp on Sunday and drive home.

Some people have read through my tome and have accused me of misspelling words. Have I Ben? I should say knot! I ran a spell check on this story and every word is spelled correctly! You’re still smiling, we’ll sea about that! This is where I waive good-buy!



Mystic Cave Waterfall Room (All 3 photos Copyright by Nikki Fox)
Alex Martin, MUSG and Chris Coates in photos (3/5/16)



Mystic Cave Flowstone Mound



Mystic Cave Water Spray

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Round Top, MD (Photos by Scott Graham)

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CAVIN CALENDAR

MAY 8TH - JUNE 18TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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
May 22	May 23	May 24	May 25	May 26	May 27 Speleofest - Lone Star Preserve	May 28 Speleofest - Lone Star Preserve
May 29 Speleofest - Lone Star Preserve	May 30  MEMORIAL DAY	May 31	Jun 1	Jun 2 SERA - Pigeon Mt, GA	Jun 3 SERA - Pigeon Mt, GA	Jun 4 SERA - Pigeon Mt, GA Norman Cave - Jeff Jahn
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Mystic Cave Pool (Copyright by Nikki Fox)



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