

DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



**ANTHODITE BUSHES IN REINCARNATION CORRIDOR
NEAR CAMP 1 IN KIMBLE PIT (CASSANDRA MOSLEY)**

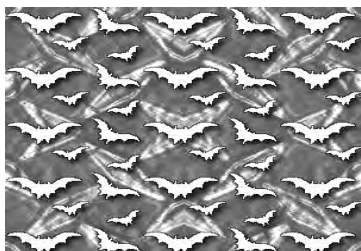
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All material for inclusion in the **DEAD DOG DISPATCH** must be sent to the EDITOR NO BY THE **25TH** OF EACH MONTH.

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LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP ---- \$200.00
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Payment of DUES can be made at MONTHLY MEETINGS
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** The cover this month was taken by Cassandra Mosley in Kimble Pit, Pendleton Co, WV.

**** Don't forget, the **JONES QUARRY BOOKLET** is ALMOST GONE!. There are 10 left! If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the BOOKLET, contact **BOB BENNETT 304-821-4621(H)** or **304-671-0344(C)** E-MAIL at gimpycaver@comcast.net
 The copy will cost \$6.00 each!

*****10 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!



CAVE IN EVENTS

2017

JAN 1 ---- NEW YEAR'S DAY
JAN 11 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
JAN 16 --- Martin Luther King Jr Day
JAN 24 ---- TSG Birthday!!!
JAN 26-29 – Carter Caves Adventure Weekend
FEB 2 ---- Ground Hog Day
FEB 8 ---- TSG meeting – 7pm
FEB 14 --- VALENTINE'S DAY
FEB 20 --- PRESIDENT'S DAY
FEB 28 --- Fat Tuesday
MAR 8 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
MAR 12 --- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
STARTS
MAR 14 --- PI DAY
MAR 17 --- ST PATRICK'S DAY
MAR 20 --- VERNAL EQUINOX
MAR 24 --- MD Day
APR 1 ---- All Fool's Day
APR 2 ---- PB&J Day
APR 12 --- TSG Meeting – 7pm
APR 14 --- GOOD FRIDAY
APR 16 --- EASTER
APR 17 --- TAX DAY
APR 22 --- EARTH DAY
APR 28 --- ARBOR DAY
APR 28-30 --- Spring VAR – Thorn Springs
MAY 1 --- Day of Prayer
MAY 5 --- Cinco de Mayo
MAY 5 --- WVASS Meeting – Unus, WV – 1pm
MAY 10 --- TSG Meeting – 7pm
MAY 13 --- Adam Stephen Day – 9am
MAY 20 --- ARMED FORCES DAY
MAY 26-29 --- Speleofest – KY
MAY 29 --- MEMORIAL DAY
JUN 2-4 --- Spring MAR/NRO – Cobleskill, NY
JUN 6-9 --- Bubble weekend at Nancy Hanks
JUN 14 --- FLAG DAY
JUN 14 --- TSG Meeting – 7pm
JUN 18 --- FATHER'S DAY
JUN 19-23 --- NSS Convention, Rio Rancho, NM
JUN 30-JUL 4 --- MAKC 20th Anniversary –
Blairsville, PA

***** 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 DECEMBER ----- **\$40.00**

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- **\$6422.50**

**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

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GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MONTH OF JANUARY

Nathaniel Allen, Eric Armer, Chris Coates, Courtney Finkbeiner, Judy Fisher, Bob Gray, Stacey Hajenga, Keith Hammersla, Samantha Hicks, Clint Hogbin, Dave Lucas, Corey Majtyka, Tim McDougle, Yoshida, Minouri, Todd Roberts, Johnny Robinson Sr, Earl Suitor, Fiord'aliza Vis, Trish Walthers, Tri-State Grotto

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

REPORTS

TSG MEETING
12/14/16

John called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
Jerry gave the Treasurer's Report.

Correspondence: MAKC is having a camping/caving event Jun 2-4, 2017. There will be cave trips, auction, food, etc. It cost will be "FREE".

Old Business: The total of the scrap metal collected in the sinkhole cleanup in Greenbrier Co was 3800 lbs. We actually made \$20 from the metal. The total cost will be approximately \$140. John guessed closest on weight at 4000 lb while Bob guessed exactly right on the refund from the metal at \$20. We will be doing another cleanup closer to spring unless we get a warm break in the weather. There is a total of 3 pits & one spring cave on the property with a possibility of more.

The attendance at the Christmas party was 36. We invited several of the local land owners. The owners of Jones Quarry did attend the party. We gave Allen & Vivian Monger both Appreciation Certificates from the NSS for their friendship with the caving community.

Doc gave a report on the rusty Grotto canopy poles. He has tried a couple of things so far but what he & Tim have done would require a lot of labor. He is

still looking into other ways to refurbish the poles. The Spring VAR will be on the last weekend of April 2017. The sponsors will be Tommy & Friends.

JC gave a report on the computer that the Grotto purchased for the WVDNR. The computer is ready but Craig Stihler has not received it yet. Craig will give a report & demonstration on how & what he does with the bat detection equipment after he has everything ready.

New Business: Jerry has 2 amendments for the Grotto Constitution and By-Laws. We will publish the Constitution & By-Laws for members to see & discuss before voting on the amendments. Jerry will send John Scrivener a PDF of the documents to post on the TSG website to make it easy for members to access & see them.

Don Arrowood suggested that the Grotto send the owner of Baker Caverns a thank you for taking us through the cave. The Grotto will also send him & several other cave owners Christmas cards. Don also talked about the history of Baker Caverns since it is an 'old' commercial cave. The cave has over 3000' of passage with close to half of it on the 'old' commercial tour.

Wed Night Caving: We will be having a vertical session at James Rumsey on Wed, Dec 17th 6-9 pm. Bring you gear if you have any.

Doc talked about trips to Jones Quarry, Whittings Neck, & Indian River.

JC talked about trips to Carlsbad National Park for the 2017 NSS Convention held in NM. Permits are required for these trips with only a handful of permits handed out each week.

John will check with Keith about the next Adam Stephen dig which should be in Feb or Mar.

Cave Bucks: \$40. It will again be sent to SCCI.

Elections: The following were railroaded:

Chair - John DiCarlo

V-Chair – Bob Bennett

Treasurer – Jerry Bowen

Secretary – Paulette Bennett

John adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paulette Bennett

Secretary

Tri-State Grotto of the NSS

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A Wednesday Night Caving Trip to Bakers Caverns

by Doc Phillips with contributions from Robert Denton, Jr.

On December 7, 2016, Tri-States Grotto's Wednesday night caving adventures took us into Pennsylvania to visit Bakers Caverns. Just under twenty TSG members gathered at six thirty in the evening at the Sunnyway Food Market parking lot located in the town of Greencastle just a few miles from the Maryland/Pennsylvanian border.

We were instructed by the cave owner to bring as few vehicles as possible, so we consolidated our troop into five cars and drove to the caverns. I headed the caravan, turning and twisting on the two lane roads in the early darkness of the evening and almost missed our destination - but was able to double back without any problems. I was accustomed to driving up from the other direction so I did not recognize the house or our caverns parking area. Once parked we gathered our gear and headed for the door at the basement level of the home where the caverns door entrance is located.

If you are unfamiliar with Bakers Caverns, the entrance is situated at the basement access side of a two story home. It seems very unlikely that there is a huge cave system under the house or that anyone would build anything on top of it. Baker Caverns was once a commercial venture with a gift shop and a tour schedule, but closed in the mid-fifties for reasons unknown to me.

Our host, Lee, unlocked the door and we all proceeded down a flight on concrete stairs into the cave. As we walked father in, I noticed that the passage seemed warmer than other wild caves I have visited. There

was no climbing, squeezing, slithering or exposure; just a nice smooth floor to stroll upon as we followed the leader/owner thorough elegant tall passageways and up a flight of steep stairs.

At the top of the first set of stairs I noticed roots hanging from the ceiling. They were long, thin threadlike black root tendrils growing up to several feet in length from the ceiling with some ends reaching a small pool of crystal clear water.

The lighting was exceptional with all of us professional cavers wearing our favorite headlamps and helmets. Next time I go caving I am going to look for hand rails and stairs. It was unnerving to still be clean this far into a cave - I could get used to this!

There were several interesting side passages that we passed. I had to remind myself and respect the privilege, and honor the owner's request of 'no exploring'. I heard that Bakers Caverns has three levels and was a much larger system than our walking tour.

Our excursion was moving faster than I would have liked, only occasionally posing to take pictures and admire the sites. We stayed close together as a big group could and were on our best behavior, trying to keep the children on the tour at bay while watching our step.

Apparently we traveled in a big loop underground and found ourselves back at the entrance stairs, but there was no leaving the caverns yet. A passage kept going on the right hand side of the stairs and, following our host, we continued into a tall concrete lined passage which delivered us to a huge chamber that reminded me of subterranean ballrooms where dances are held and held or hosted underground marriage ceremonies. Formations and decorations could be seen all along the wall of the hall. Some of us

also noted that layers of limestone were traveling vertically. Apparently the cave was created by moving water in combination of water pressure and could possibly be made from the same limestone as Whittings Neck Cave and other caves down the Intrastate 81 as far as New Market.

I had an enlightening conversation with Robert Denton Jr. about the geological history of the caverns during our expedition, and he was gracious enough to add the following information.

"There was a lot to look at (in the caverns) from a scientific point of view. I noticed that no one had a map of the cave (or if someone did I never got to see it). I have the very crude map that appears in Ralph Stone's "Pennsylvania Caves", but that's all I've ever seen. Speaking of which, after reading Stone's description of the cave, I realized what that area we passed through with the concrete ceiling and walls was. Stone describes a second cave close to the original one, with a sinuous passage leading to a large, well-decorated room. I believe what the prior owner must have done was connect the two caves via the sinkhole that led to the second cave after pushing the passage from the first cave through, and into the sinkhole from the other side. They then stabilized the sinkhole using the concrete walls (and ceiling). Of course at one time the two caves were connected, but the sink collapsed into a shallow passage area, disconnecting them. It's my understanding that there are several more caves on the property. It would be interesting to map all these sinkholes and caves using modern methods, to get a better idea of the hydrogeology and speleogenesis (cave development) at the site (if they

haven't been mapped already).

Ralph Stone placed the cave in the "Trenton Group", a series of Ordovician Limestones named for a section in NY; but this unit is no longer recognized in this part of PA, MD, or WV. I thought "mistakenly" that the cave was in the Chambersburg Formation (equivalent to the Edinburg Formation of VA), but it's actually mapped in the St. Paul Group which is also recognized in MD and the WV panhandle. The St. Paul consists of the Row Park Limestone and New Market Limestone. This makes sense because the cave's bedrock didn't look like the Chambersburg to me at all. From what I could see the cave is formed primarily in the New Market Limestone. The New Market was mined at a now abandoned quarry immediately north of Williamson, PA, a few miles north of the cave.

It's of note that there is a significant geologic fault located behind (to the east) of the house. I suspect the fault may have some connection to the development of the cave here. East of the house (and the fault) is the Martinsburg (shale) Formation. Now what's interesting about this is that remember how I said the shape of the cave's passages and chambers suggested to me it was once a large spring that had since been abandoned as the base level in the region dropped? Well, that makes even more sense now that I've looked at the geology. It's of note that many of the big springs in the region (e.g. the springs in Martinsburg, Hagerstown, and the various large springs in Winchester, etc.) all are located along faults where the Martinsburg Formation contacts the adjacent limestone and dolostone. The cupolas, channels, wall scallops, lack of any significant breakdown, and passage shapes

all seemed to suggest that the cave was initially formed by a large quantity of slowly rising groundwater, what we call a "hypogene" cave (i.e. "formed from below"). It's intriguing that the cave is located on "Warm Spring Road". I wonder if there is still a warm spring somewhere along the road today? Be that as it may, the bottom line is that there may be more caves along this fault, and cavers should be looking for them.

I can't emphasize more that this cave and the other caves on the property would be very interesting to study closely. I think they have a good story to tell."

Once we were out of the caverns there was a head count. It was chilly that evening and it was a comfort to get into a warm vehicle. A few cavers took the time to chat with our guide and host before we drove back to Greencastle and home.

In conclusion, it was a pleasant and clean trip. Nothing to wash or scrub back home and no changing and shivering by the road which I have become accustomed to in cold weather caving.

I have to thank the owner, Lee Meyers for the access, Donald Arrowood for the leg work and set up of the trip, and Bob and Paulette Bennett for bringing up the rear and keeping us all together. Also, a special thanks for all of those who took pictures and posted them on Facebook; they have been well viewed and appreciated. I also thank Robert Denton Jr. for bestowing his knowledge and expertise to this article. Good caving and cave on!



(Doc Phillips)



(Doc Phillips)



Roots (John DiCarlo)



Ceiling Reflection (BB)



(John DiCarlo)



Reflection in pool (Bob Denton)



Rusted up switches (John DiCarlo)

Enigma Cave-Another TAG Classic

Nestled deep in a rocky hollow of Tennessee's very rural Van Buren County can be found a relatively new TAG classic by the name of Enigma. Enigma lies on the north side of a major, normally dry, steep walled canyon known as the Rocky River Gorge. On the south side of this same gorge is another deep cave called Paradox. Though on opposite sides of the gorge the two caves are only about a mile apart. As their names suggest both caves do things they should not be doing. Paradox runs in the opposite direction from which the drainage dictates it should trend. Enigma is a vertical maze of canyons interconnected by high domes and pits which is being explored in an upward fashion rather than the more common "follow the water down" manner. Both are significant caves over 300 feet deep and more than two miles long.

Paradox has been known for several decades. The cave has two entrances over a mile apart. It has a depth of 400 feet and contains four separate pits that are over 100 feet deep. To reach the bottom requires rappels of 125' and 154'. There are also parallel pits of 140' and 165' at the mid-level. A couple of smaller pits below the 154 take you to the bottom. Mainly due to its location three miles back a very rough "road", and despite the fact that it is a fairly easy vertical cave, I haven't been back to Paradox in more than twenty years.

Enigma is across the gorge from Paradox and about a mile further downstream from its "sister". While Paradox is entered high on the mountain, the entrance to Enigma is found nearly at stream level. The exploration of Paradox was done in the more traditional top down manner, but most of Enigma has been explored from the bottom up. Marion O. Smith provided me with the following background history on Enigma.

The blowing entrance has been known since 1988. Digging efforts were sporadic for the next two decades. TAG in the 90's saw a lot of activity resulting in many fine discoveries, so I'm guessing that the low elevation blower that was Enigma was not given high priority. In 2010 Tennessee cavers Joel Buckner and Hal Love were the first to enter Enigma. Over the next several year's exploration

was undertaken by a host of TAG cavers including James Harry Smith, Thanny Mann, Trey Caplenor, Anne and Clinton Elmore, Bill Walter, Elliot Stahl, Brian Killingbeck, and others.

Marion entered the picture in early 2014 and immediately became fascinated with the complexity and potential of the cave. From the entrance multiple routes lead to a series of shallow pits, dome rooms, and overlapping corridors. With the aid of others he has been systematically unravelling the mysteries of Enigma for the past few of years. The crowning jewel was the discovery of an immense dome over 200 feet high with a nearly all-weather waterfall cascading from high above.

This dome is one of the most impressive in TAG and has been one of the main focuses of recent exploration in Enigma. It has no special name like Fantastic or Surprise, but is simply referred to as the Enigma Dome. Jim Smith (James Harry) was one of the first to gaze at its immensity when he rappelled into it from a window about fifty feet above the floor. In 2014 John Harman, Derek Bristol, and Clinton Elmore undertook the scaling of the walls of the dome. They eventually reached a point near the top, but high water conditions made accessing the passage from which the waterfall issued a chilling prospect. Finally a bit over a year ago Tennessean Mike Green and Frenchman Damien Lebrun-Grandie completed this daunting task. The stream passage at the top of the falls was subsequently explored for several thousand feet by this duo plus Andy Zellner and Elliot Stahl, but not surveyed.

Though I'd heard rumor of a new exceptionally big pit in Tennessee, it wasn't until about three years ago that I first went there with Marion. Corey Hackley and Sharon Jones were also on the trip. Marion wanted me to set bolts to drop into a canyon in order to verify its relationship to other passages in a lower level of the cave. The drop taped at 66' and ended up where Marion had predicted. Marion then took us over to the big dome. Its lateral dimensions and height greatly exceeded my expectations. Most of the breakdown was scoured and clean-washed by the waterfall which Marion said never seemed to dry up. While there, Corey and I climbed the dome as far as it had been scaled at that time. The route has about a half dozen hanging rebelay and splits near the top.

Corey took the straight up route to a point which I later measured at 222', while I veered to the left on fixed ropes which were headed in the direction of the waterfall.

On my second trip to Enigma, about a year ago, Marion and I were joined by an old mutual caving buddy who currently resides near Whiteside Mountain in North Carolina, Mark Lassiter. Once again I set some bolts at Marion's request at the top of a deep canyon which turned out to be a nice free 134' rappel, dropping to a point very near the 66' pit I had bolted on the previous trip. Mark and I climbed the Enigma Dome, this time following Corey's path to the 222 foot level I mentioned earlier. At this level there is a saddle, on the other side of which is a deep parallel pit. Elliot Stahl had left this pit rigged from previous trips because it provides an alternate route to the high alcoves of the big dome. In fact, on this trip Marion had gone in this way, and was waiting on Mark and me when we reached the top. I bounced the parallel pit and taped it at 140', but with a very awkward rebelay about sixty feet down. At present there are three pits over one hundred feet deep in Enigma.

Zeke McKee, a local TAG caver from nearby Sparta, Tennessee (about an hour's drive north of Enigma), has taken on the responsibility of coordinating the mapping of Enigma. Due to the complex nature of the cave this is quite a commitment on Zeke's part. The late summer /autumn drought which plagued the southeast this past year has been a boon to cavers. At the TAG Fall Cave-in Marion informed me that the waterfall in the Enigma Dome had ceased flowing, a phenomenon which he said he'd never witnessed before. We made plans for a mapping trip with Zeke in early November.

Marion was not comfortable with some of the rigging used to access the passage at the top of the waterfall, so Chris Coates volunteered to re-rig some of this more to his (Marion's) liking in order for us to begin surveying the stream passage which had been scooped by the Green, Stahl, Lebrun-Grandie, Zellner party. There were five of us on the next (my third) Enigma trip; Chris Coates, Nikki

Fox, Zeke, Marion, and myself. Marion donated a new 11mm rope for Chris to use in replacing some of the original 9mm rope used by Mike (Green) and Damien on their initial push to the falls. Chris also did some bolting to create a somewhat friendlier (less pucker factor) means of reaching the targeted passage. I brought in my hundred meter tape to get an accurate measurement of the drop from falls to



Chris rigging in Enigma Cave (Nikki Fox)

floor, and we all had survey gear to help Zeke with the mapping of the upper level. As Chris worked his magic with the re-rigging, the rest of us geared up at a high window in the dome. When Chris finished his task, we were able to easily climb up to a perch from which our goal was within sight and only about twenty feet higher and twenty feet further away.

The only remaining obstacle was a J-rappel over 200+ feet of gaping blackness. I knew Marion was not going to like it, and for some reason I chose this moment to inquire of Zeke if he'd ever done a J-rappel before. Its funny how such a maneuver performed when practicing from a tree or gymnasium just ten feet off the ground or floor seems fairly routine, but when there is only a lot of nothingness below you, your mind sounds a cautionary alarm, and the pucker factor skyrockets. Zeke answered in the negative, but added that he did at least know how to do a "J" in theory. Suffice to say that we did eventually manage to get the five of us tucked safely in the intended passage where we doffed vertical gear and commenced our survey.

After mapping through about two hundred feet of breezy, crawly passage over smooth slippery bedrock we encountered a passage of walking height which gradually lowered until finally becoming too tight. Backtracking, we climbed up into a higher level which was larger and soon assumed borehole proportions.



Borehole in Enigma Cave (Nikki Fox)

This passage was also well decorated.



Terry looking at formations in Enigma (Nikki Fox)

We first surveyed to a muddy terminus several hundred feet to the left. The main borehole continue to the right so we split into two teams. Marion, Zeke, and I leap-frogged ahead of Nikki and Chris a hundred yards or so. Within a few hundred feet our survey took us to a low wet mud crawl. Not

relishing the prospect of getting totally slimed, we opted to continue the survey up into a high breakdown chamber. Unfortunately this chamber did not offer a means of bypassing the ugly crawl, though it did produce the high point (at least so far) in the cave. As our hearts were just not into a sleaze fest in the muddy crawl, we (Zeke and I basically out-voted a seemingly determined Marion) decided to abort the survey. We retreated to where Nikki and Chris were tying in with our survey.

Nikki took some photos in the borehole before we all returned to our extraction point at the top of the J-rappel into the void. Despite having done more pitting than any caver in the country, Marion simply is not comfortable with this kind of aerial acrobatics. I

approach with reserved caution, and Zeke seemed to take it all in stride, even though he had never done anything like this before. As far as I know, Chris and Nikki were unphased.

I requested that Chris stay at the top with my hundred meter tape long enough for me to descend (past more than half a dozen rebelay) to the bottom so I could get a measurement from waterfall to floor. Instead of the reported 265' the drop shrunk to 246'. The 265 figure was obtained using a disto from the lowest point on the floor. The drop from

the falls lands higher up the breakdown slope, and

the disto probably bounced off the top of the dome which is several feet higher than the breakover at the waterfall: these factors most likely account for the discrepancy between the two figures. If it were dry and we had a long enough rope, the 246 would be a truly awesome free drop.

Next ensued two hours of total buffoonery on my part. The only way into the Enigma Dome from the bottom is to climb a fixed rope of 23' (coming from the cave entrance) and proceed through a short passage that is combination crawl and stoop to where it pops out high on the breakdown hill of the dome room. Once in the room, this passage is obscured by breakdown and can be hard to find, but this was trip number three for me, so surely I would have no problem. No one else came down the big pit as they were all exiting with Marion by the same high route we utilized on the way in. On my first trip I was just following Marion and paid no attention to where the hidden exit was located in relation to anything else in the room. On my second trip Mark Lassiter) and I had a lot of trouble finding the way out, but between the two of us, we did eventually blunder into the correct spot, but once again I guess I wasn't as observant as I should have been. On this, my third trip, I started climbing the breakdown, headed in the general direction of where I thought Mark and I had found our way out. I first went into a passage which seemed about right, but after several hundred feet it became too tight. Not the way, oops!



Terry coming out of crawlway (Nikki Fox)

I returned to the room and proceeded to get myself completely disoriented. I was getting tired of lugging my pack all over the breakdown in what

was becoming an exhausting search for the exit, so I removed it and set it down on what I thought was a prominent piece of large breakdown before continuing with my flailathon. This was mistake number two and you can guess what happened. After I'd been engaged in this "activity" for well over an hour, Marion appeared at one of the high windows off the dome floor, having correctly assessed the situation (that being that Monk was hopelessly lost), and was trying to direct me to the proper spot in the breakdown.

"Marion, I can't leave until I find my pack."

In exasperation from Marion high above, "How in the #\$%* did you manage to lose your #%&+ #%\$& pack?"

"Don't ask".

"We're all getting cold and we want to leave. How can anyone be so %#&=% stupid. Where did you put it!??"

"If I knew that I'd have it on my back, and even if I find it I still have no idea how to get out of here."

More mumblings from above. Shortly after that I did at least find the pack, but I was no closer to extracting myself. In another half hour Marion mercifully popped out of the correct hole and rescued me. This time I paid close attention to my surroundings. We all got a good laugh at my highjinks and I guess Marion forgave me. Except for the two hour delay of which I was the perpetrator, we did have a productive trip, netting a bit over one thousand feet of survey for Zeke's rapidly expanding project.

The weekend before Christmas saw me once again at Marion's house with Shawn Hogbin for some new Enigma adventures. Entering on this, my fourth trip, would be a substantial group consisting of Zeke, Marion, Elliot and David (Elliot's Dad) Stahl, John Harman, Damien (the Frenchman), Shawn, and myself. Marion wanted John, Elliot, and Damien to do some aide climbing to gain access to some high leads off one of the mid-level canyons. While they were working on this, Zeke suggested that since I wanted to take Shawn over to the Enigma Dome, we might work on surveying some of the passages exiting from the bottom of the huge dome room.

Our first effort produced about four hundred feet in the passage near the top of the breakdown which I had stumbled into during my search for a

way out on my last debacle. Next Zeke lead us into a significant subway passage at floor level which branched in several places. At one of these branches we tied into an existing survey and off we went with Shawn on point, me reading disto X (my newest and most wonderful survey toy), and Zeke doing double duty keeping book and sketching. A few hours and fifteen hundred feet later the passage branched again, with both branches still going. We stopped mapping only because Zeke ran out of paper in his survey book. Not only did we get nearly two thousand feet of survey on this trip, but most of what we mapped was fairly spacious, in other words an easy survey.

Back at the dome room, Shawn climbed up to the 222' saddle, across from the 140' parallel pit. Dry conditions were no more. Marion informed me that central Tennessee had recently received nine inches of rain. Our idea of rigging the 246' drop with a free hanging rope will have to wait until the next very dry spell rolls around. In TAG that will not happen until at least next fall, and maybe not even then. The waterfall was pulsating about twenty feet from the rope and the air was saturated with a heavy swirling mist. Shawn soon made short work of the six rebelay (when I was forty years younger I could climb like that...ahh..."those glory days"), rappelled back down, and the three of us exited the room (without getting lost this time).

Marion and John were still working in a high lead when Zeke and I caught up to their group. They soon finished and all eight of us left the cave together. Zeke tells me that Enigma is now nearly two miles long and has a vertical extent of 308'. Marion is pretty sure the cave will make at least three miles by the time all known passages have been mapped. While West Virginia's Germany Valley has been the recipient of many of the accolades in cave exploration over the past fifteen years, Enigma is proof that exciting things are still possible in TAG.

Terry McClanathan NSS 12103



Winter TAG Trip

The day after my last final exam, I was on the road to TAG. More truthfully, Terry McClanathan had picked me up and we were driving down to Marion Smith's house. It was a 9 hour drive that started at 8 pm. The drive was full of caving facts, statistical and anecdotal. We arrived at Marion's house around 4 or 5 in the morning. We walked in and set up for a three hour nap, along the way we managed to wake up a slumbering John Harman.

Once we laid down it was time for us to get back up, and we found our way into the nearest gas station, which had a mom & pop restaurant attached to it. Here is where I met Marion Smith. For those of you that know Marion, you know that is all that needs to be said. Terry and Marion made sure to keep the breakfast conversation lighthearted and entertaining. I soon learned that we were heading to Enigma Cave. We returned to Marion's house to pack gear and arrange rides in 4WD vehicles. The drive to the cave probably totaled one hour, but the majority of it was spent crawling along on a dirt road. After creeping along at the appropriate speed, Marion pulled out into a small parking area and we all got out our gear. It was a little chilly outside, and we were happy once we got our layers on. From the parking area we all walked down the valley, crossed a mostly dry river bed, and then found the relatively small entrance to Enigma Cave. It was not hard to find, because the recent survey trips had trodden down the leaves and such around it.

The entrance area is a crawl-way. In some sections of the crawl-way you get to stand up and step over a small drop, at one point you have the option of hooking your cowstails into a guide rope. Once you get through this entrance area you end up in a small dome, which is where our group was to split up. Terry, Zeke (the man-in-charge of the survey) and myself headed towards the Lasso Pit while Marion, John Harman and several others climbed the dome we were presently in. We would be seeing them 7.5 hours later.

After climbing the Lasso Pit, Zeke and Terry led me into the big room of Enigma Cave. This room contains a dome that is 235 ft tall, and has a booming waterfall from the near top of the dome.

After gawking around for a few minutes we headed into our survey lead at the time. The passage started as standing, then to stooping, eventually to crawling. It took us a long time and we only surveyed a couple hundred feet of passage (meager in comparison to what we did later in the day).

Once we finished our lead, Zeke told us that the borehole passage at the bottom of the waterfall had not been fully surveyed. We made our way into the trunk, and after finding the old survey tie-in points, went to town on the survey. The passage never got lower than a stoop and was always generously wide. The only negative part about the passage was that it was coated in mud. The mud never failed to help us find the floor, even if that was not the goal. We reached a point where two equally sized passages split, and we decided that to be our final point for the day. We had set 40 survey stations! We walked our way back out of the passage to the Enigma Dome. Zeke told us that we had surveyed around 2000 feet of passage.

After eating a quick meal in the cave, I set out to climb the 222 ft rigging of Enigma Dome. There are a handful of re-belays along the way, however the first 140 or so is free. It is also very close to a waterfall. Once I topped out, I started back down. It felt like it took longer on the way down than it did on the way up (mainly because I was taking my weight off of the re-belay without the help of my ascenders, I quickly learned to fix that). Once I was down the drop, we started to head out of the cave. After a little waiting we met up with the other group. Once through the surprisingly cold entrance area, we emerged to a pleasant 60 degrees. Almost 9 hours total in the cave. We made our way back to the cars. Once off the back road, I went with a group to go get some Mexican food, Terry and Marion returned to Marion's for dinner also.

After overfilling myself on food, I met up with Terry back at Marion's. I could tell from the conversation that Terry had plans for tonight, he wanted to visit Bo Allen Pit. This, like Enigma would be a new cave on my list. At 11 pm Terry and I headed to Bo Allen Pit, which is a 153 ft pit. Even in the dark Terry managed to walk straight to the cave, which has a well hidden entrance. Terry quickly rigged the pit, I got on rope first, and made sure the rope touched the bottom. The tiny entrance to Bo Allen is misleading, and once through the

small vertical squeeze you are in a wonderful free hang. Along the way down you are accompanied by flowstone. There is not much at the bottom of the cave, except a notable amount of cow skulls placed on a ledge.

Once Terry was down, I climbed out, Terry followed. I kid you not, the outside air was 70 degrees (confirmed by the exterior thermometer on Terry's car). It was nice to feel like it was summer again, but the warm air was caused by part of an incoming weather system, that chilled the area back down into the 30's and spitted snow by morning. We were back to Marion's house by 1:30 am. We crept into bed, once again to wake up at 8 am.

We returned to the same breakfast joint, where I ordered the same exact food I did the last time I was there, 24 hours ago. Marion had plans to take Terry and me nerd-holing. The first cave was Cliff Side Cave, which has around 700 feet of passage. The entrance room has some pleasant formations, however once you navigate through a short breakdown drop, the cave turns into borehole. On top of this, white soda straws coat large sections of the ceiling. This cave would end up being my 50th individual wild cave. We spend a little over an hour enjoying the hundreds of soda straws. After this, we headed to a small, 50 foot cave, called Cane Creek Camp Cave. Terry and I ran into the cave, and the short walk from the road to the cave takes longer than visiting the cave itself.

Even with two happy cavers, Marion still managed to treat us by showing us another roadside cave called Sandstone Maze Cave. The notable parts of this cave are the 1.) Sandstone ceiling and the 2.) Limestone spires that you have to balance on to navigate the cave. This cave was also very short. This was the final cave on the day, and Marion's house was the next stop.

Terry and I quickly packed up and said our goodbyes, and we were on the road by 1 pm. There was a long drive back up the East Coast for us, but it was as enjoyable as the trip down.

-Keep Kaving-
-Shawn Hogbin



CANYON CALENDAR

JANUARY 8TH - FEBRUARY 18TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 8	Jan 9	Jan 10	Jan 11  Meeting 7pm	Jan 12	Jan 13	Jan 14
Jan 15	Jan 16 MARTIN LUTHER JR KING DAY	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20	Jan 21
Jan 22	Jan 23	Jan 24  BIRTHDAY	Jan 25	Jan 26 Carter Caves Adventure Weekend	Jan 27 Carter Caves Adventure Weekend	Jan 28 Carter Caves Adventure Weekend
Jan 29 Carter Caves Adventure Weekend	Jan 30	Jan 31	Feb 1	Feb 2 	Feb 3	Feb 4
Feb 5	Feb 6	Feb 7	Feb 8  Meeting 7pm	Feb 9	Feb 10	Feb 11
Feb 12	Feb 13	Feb 14  VALENTINE'S DAY	Feb 15	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 18

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V-Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

Member at
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