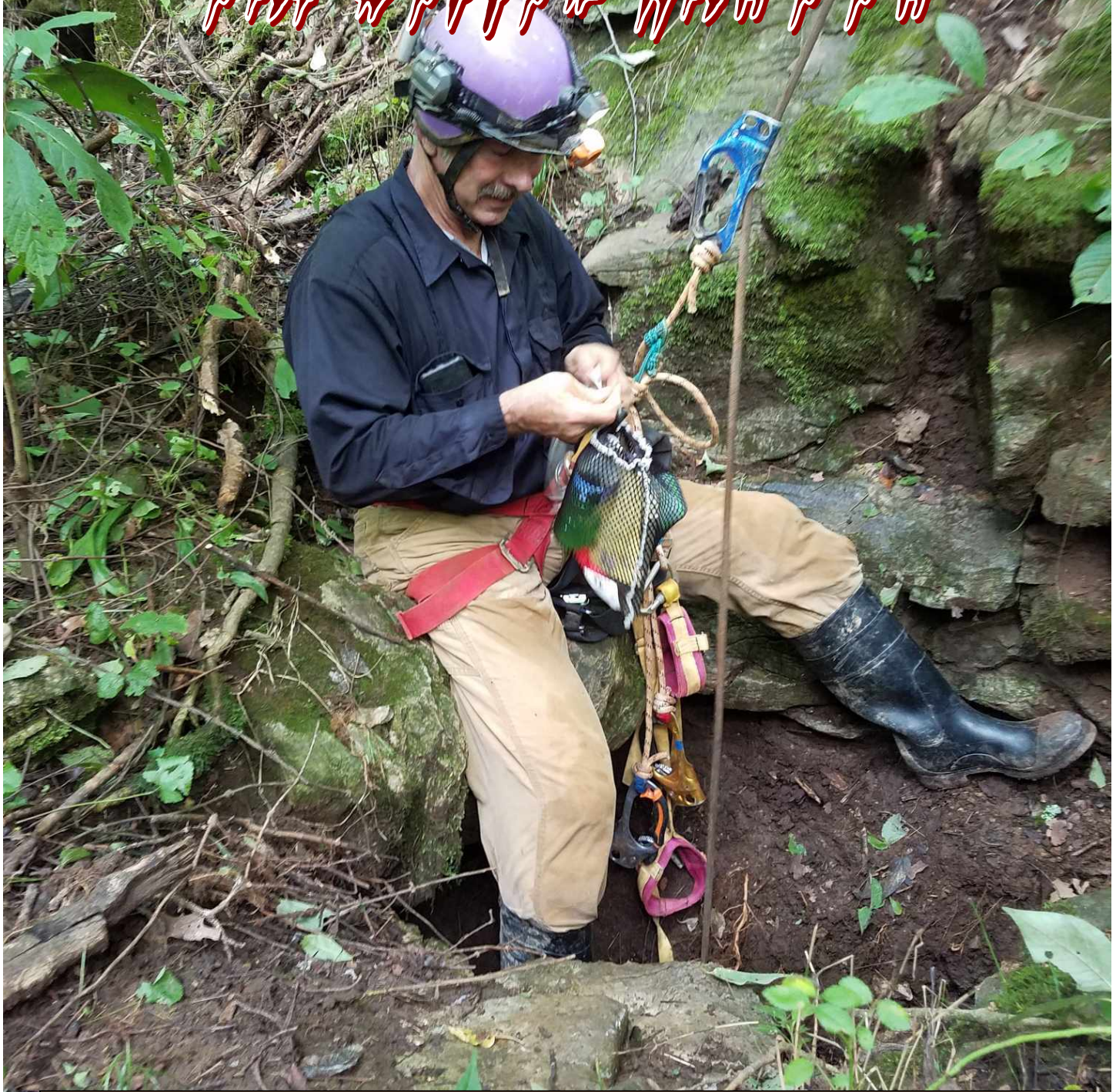


DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



SANTAS CHIMNEY, JEFFERSON CO, WV

VOL. #33

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DEC

2018

#135

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TRI-STATE GROTTTO OFFICERS

CHAIR - John DiCarlo - 301-432-2323
j.dicarlo@myactv.net

V-CHAIR - Bob Bennett - 304-671-0344
gimpycaver@comcast.net

TREASURER- Jerry Bowen - 301-790-0476
bookmaker-jb@myactv.net

SECRETARY - Paulette Bennett - 304-671-8317
kywoman15@comcast.net

Member At Large - Tom Griffin - 240-676-3184
A1TopCatDesign@gmail.com

Conservation Chair - Mason Griffin - 240-268-2593
tmgriffin@mix.wvu.edu

Equipment Chair - Doc Phillips - 703-583-0390
thosearemagicbeans@gmail.com

Membership Chair - Bob Bennett -304-671-0344
Newsletter Editor --- Bob Bennett ----304-671-0344
Funding - Paulette Bennett -304-671-8317

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JERRY BOWEN, TREASURER
TRI-STATE GROTTTO of the NSS
17817 STONE VALLEY CR.
HAGERSTOWN, MD 21740
301-465-2651

E-MAIL: bookmaker-jb@myactv.net

For MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION contact:

BOB BENNETT, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
TRI-STATE GROTTTO of the NSS
464 HUCKLEBERRY DR.
GERRARDSTOWN, WV 25420-0211
304-821-4621
E-MAIL: gimpycaver@comcast.net

** The photo on this month's cover was taken by Bob Bennett. It shows Tom Griffin preparing to drop 40' Santas Chimney in Jefferson 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 plus the cost of shipping!

*****10 LEFT!*****

WE NEED EVERYONE TO KEEP THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR AN OPEN POSITION. WE STILL HAVE 4 POSITIONS OPEN!
PLEASE GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!



CAVING EVENTS

2018

DEC 4 ---- Ridgewalk-Jefferson Co.
DEC 5 ---- Wed Night Caving – Big Col Cave –
6pm (Cancelled)
DEC 9 ---- Endless Caverns wild trip – see Dave
Lucas for time
DEC 12 --- TSG meeting – 7pm – Elections
DEC 21 --- WINTER SOLSTICE
DEC 22 --- Annual TSG Christmas Party – 6pm
– Bedington Ruritan
DEC 24 --- CHRISTMAS EVE
DEC 25 --- CHRISTMAS DAY
DEC 31 --- NEW YEAR'S EVE

2019

JAN 1 ---- NEW YEAR'S DAY
JAN 9 ---- TSG meeting – 7pm
JAN 21 --- MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
JAN 24 --- PEANUT BUTTER DAY
JAN 24 --- TSG BIRTHDAY – 33 years old!
FEB 2 ---- GROUND HOG DAY
FEB 13 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
FEB 14 --- VALENTINE'S DAY
FEB 18 --- PRESIDENT'S DAY
FEB 12 ---- FAT TUESDAY
MAR 10 --- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
STARTS
MAR 13 -- TSG meeting – 7pm
MAR 14 --- PI DAY
MAR 17 --- ST PATRICK'S DAY
MAR 22 --- WORLD WATER DAY
MAR 25 --- MD DAY
APR 1 --- ALL FOOL'S DAY
APR 2 --- PB&J DAY
APR 7 ---- NATIONAL BEER DAY
APR 10 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
APR 15 --- TAX DAY
APR 17 --- BAT APPRECIATION DAY
APR 19 --- GOOD FRIDAY
APR 21 --- EASTER
APR 22 --- EARTH DAY
APR 26 --- ARBOR DAY
MAY 1 --- MAY DAY

MAY 5 --- SINKHOLE DE MAYO
MAY 8 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
MAY 12 --- MOTHERS DAY
MAY 18 --- ARMED FORCES DAY
MAY 27 --- MEMORIAL DAY
JUN 7-9 --- BUBBLE CAVE WEEKEND
JUN 12 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
JUN 14 --- FLAG DAY
JUN 18 --- FATHERS DAY
JUN 17-21 --- NSS Convention – Cookville, TN
JUN 21 --- SUMMER SOLSTICE

***** 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 NOVEMBER ----- \$21.58

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- \$7080.11

GREAT JOB EVERYONE! Let's continue the giving!

The money was sent to MAKC.
Keep It Coming!

WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

Tri-State Grotto ----- www.tristategrotto.net/
VAR ----- www.varegion.org/
NSS ----- www.caves.org/
NSS Convention 2017 ----- <http://nss2017.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 -----

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----- <http://www.caves.org/member/jerry/>
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/
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



MONTH OF DECEMBER

Priscilla Armer, Mark Boland, John Elliott, Evert
Bonito Vis

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



TSG MEETING

11/14/18

There were 15 people in attendance.
John called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.
Jerry gave the treasurer's Report.

Correspondence: Jerry reported that he is stepping
down as treasurer.

Old Business: Molers trip sent well. The Waterfall
Room was extremely wet with chest deep water.
Gary & Elysia found as couple of sinks with new
caves.
Silers Cave was sold!

Bob is to send a "Thank You" to Gary's place of
employment for donating steel for Baker Quarry
gate.
Doc needs more poles to continue his experimental
work.
One of the headlamps quit working on the Grotto
loaner helmets. He will be checking process on
replacement headlamps.

New Business: New Business: Jones Quarry
Cleanup will be Sat, Nov 17th from 9am until about
3pm. Lunch will be provided. There is also a scout
trip at the same time.
Nov 10th was Vivian's birthday.
Bob talked about Road Kill Cave (one of Beau's
projects.)

NSS Membership Dues: If you have had your NSS
numbers lapse for a long time, you will have to pay
all of the past dues current to keep your old NSS
number.

The NSS changed one of its By-Laws due to a
problem they had this past summer.
Bill brought several books from the NSS storage.
The NSS has an over-abundance of these books.
They are free to anyone in the Grotto who wants
them.

Trips: John talked about the trip to Indian River
Cave. They saw a bat with a lot of its hair missing.
The next vertical training at James Rumsey will be
Wed, Nov 28th at 6pm.
The next Wed Evening Caving will be a trip to Big
Column Cave on Wed, Dec 5th at 6pm.

Cave Bucks: \$21.58 – It will be sent to MAKC.

Bob conducted the nominations for 2019 Grotto
Officers. Nominations were:
Secretary – Doc & Paulette
Treasurer – Elysia
V. Chair – Bob
Chair – John
The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Paulette Bennett
Secretary – Tri-State Grotto

Fall Break in Kentucky

By Shawn Hogbin

I believe that the first time I had heard caving stories about Rockcastle County Kentucky was on a car ride with Terry McClanathan. He was explaining that he had a good time caving in that area (despite a 120' pit shrinking down to 72'). He encouraged me to have the WVU Student Grotto take a trip there over Thanksgiving Break, and I also believed that would be a grand idea. Terry kindly shared some contact information with me and I got underway planning a trip for Thanksgiving Break. Initially, the trip had 11 people interested, but by the time it came time to leave for the trip, only two remained. They kept saying things like "I need to spend time with my family over the holiday" or "I have caved with you every weekend, please, I need this break." Absurd.

So, myself and Emily Neely left Morgantown Friday afternoon and made it to the Great Saltpeter Preserve (GSP) around 11:30 pm. During our drive down, we were plagued with a very loud rattling noise from underneath my car, however, after some inspection it was determined to be a heat shield and my car would at least make it to Kentucky without any real issue. Bob Roth met us at the gate of GSP and let us in, and we quickly parked our car and went to sleep.

I woke up to see that Jerry Bowen had also been camping at GSP. I made my way to go talk with Bob Roth about what our plans were for the day. Since my group had so rapidly evaporated, I was willing to just go with the flow (as long as that meant caving). Terry McClanathan later joined us that morning, and we decided we would go to John Griffin Cave in Jackson County.



Terry, Jerry, Emily and myself in the entrance to John Griffin Cave. (Photo by Bob Roth)

As we were gearing up for the walk to John Griffin Cave, Bob Roth opens his car door and Einstein, his cave dog, hops out. Einstein proved to be one of the more capable cavers I have caved with and was often eager to explore passage.



Emily with Einstein the Cave Dog



Terry McClanathan & Emily Neely at the entrance of Wind Cave (Photo by Shawn Hogbin)

John Griffin Cave has an impressive creek-side entrance, with an easy walk. There is one main tunnel passage that is nearly always >10' and often 20' wide. We saw several small waterfalls, a few bats and many signatures from all eras. The cave had some obvious signs of being mined for saltpeter in the entrance room. The cave had some of the best limestone pendants I had ever seen. There were huge clusters of them and they would often be over 18" long. There were some little charming side passages, including one that was a tiny little loop that had us all laughing. At the back of the cave is a 20' waterfall—this was our turn around point. While walking back to our cars, Bob Roth insisted that we “go to another Jackson County cave.” So, we started our drive to Wind Cave.



Shawn Hogbin at the entrance of Wind Cave (Photo by Emily Neely)

We should have been tipped off that we were in for a real treat when the local town and church were named “Wind Cave.” It has to be a good sign when the local landmarks are named after the cave, not the other way around. The walk to the entrance was short and we could see the entrance from a good distance away. Everyone in our group was in awe of the size of the entrance, which easily exceeded 70' in height and was likely 250' wide. No single picture could do it

justice. The main passage continued off to the side, and it was impressive in its own right. We made sure to be respectful of the bats and there were

plenty of bats, more than I have ever seen in the wild. The cave had some charming passages, notable a curvy maze passage where you couldn't see what was 10' ahead of you.

After spending plenty of time enjoying Wind Cave, we headed to nearby River Styx Cave, which is significantly shorter. It started with a stream stoop and opened up into walking passage. Eventually it ended in a very wet 20' drop. We did not go down the drop because no one was feeling particularly brave enough to get *that* wet. Dinner was the next thing on the agenda, so Bob Roth guided us back to civilization and then went on his merry way. Jerry, Terry, Emily and I stopped for dinner at the topically named Limestone Grill.

After a satisfying dinner Jerry retired to camp while Terry, Emily and I went to Sinks of the Round Stone Pit. This is a 72' pit located on the mountainside near the more famous Sinks of the Round Stone Cave (SOTRSC). The pit is a nearly dead-bottom pit but is very large. It really is a nice pit and if you are a fan of vertical work you really should visit it when you are in the SOTRS area. Terry had plans to bounce the pit 6 times, so Emily and I took off down the mountain to visit SOTRSC.

Holy cow. Kentucky continued to impress. Despite getting our feet a little wet at the entrance the cave is nothing but a breeze. 80' ceilings, huge stream borehole, even some thin waterfalls. Emily and I certainly spent more time looking up at the ceiling and it resulted in quite a few stumbled steps. We knew we could do a through-trip and would have to go through two crawls. I started on a crawl only to stick my head out at the top of the 60' passage! You can imagine my surprise to

so suddenly come up on a very serious lip. Well, we completed the through trip with no problems and enjoyed the half mile walk back in the 50-degree weather. Shortly after, we started to head back to camp.

Terry and I made plans the night before to wake up early and see some of the caves on GSP property. We planned on seeing Bob Dobbs Cave and Lloyd Mullins Cave. However, we spent our whole morning in Bob Dobbs, which had two passages, a lower and an upper passage to enjoy. The lower passage took a long time to traverse but near the end of it were some of the largest crinoid fossils I had ever seen. At first, I had mistaken them for copper pipes sticking out of the cave wall. The upper passage was easier to move through and was also well decorated. Once Terry and I realized we had been in the cave past our projected time, we headed back to the others.

Bob Roth offered to give us a tour of the Great Saltpeter Cave. Terry stayed behind to enjoy an early breakfast. Emily, Jerry, Bob and I headed into the cave. Bob humored us by feeding us stories about the cave's history. It is easy to feel small in this cave. There are several rooms in the cave that



are incredibly large and passages to match. We walked around all parts of the cave and saw some of the impressive saltpeter mining remains.

Saltpeter remains in Great Saltpeter Cave (Photo by Shawn Hogbin)

I would divulge more of the story of this cave, but I simply believe it cannot be done justice unless you are hearing the stories while in the Great Saltpeter Cave.

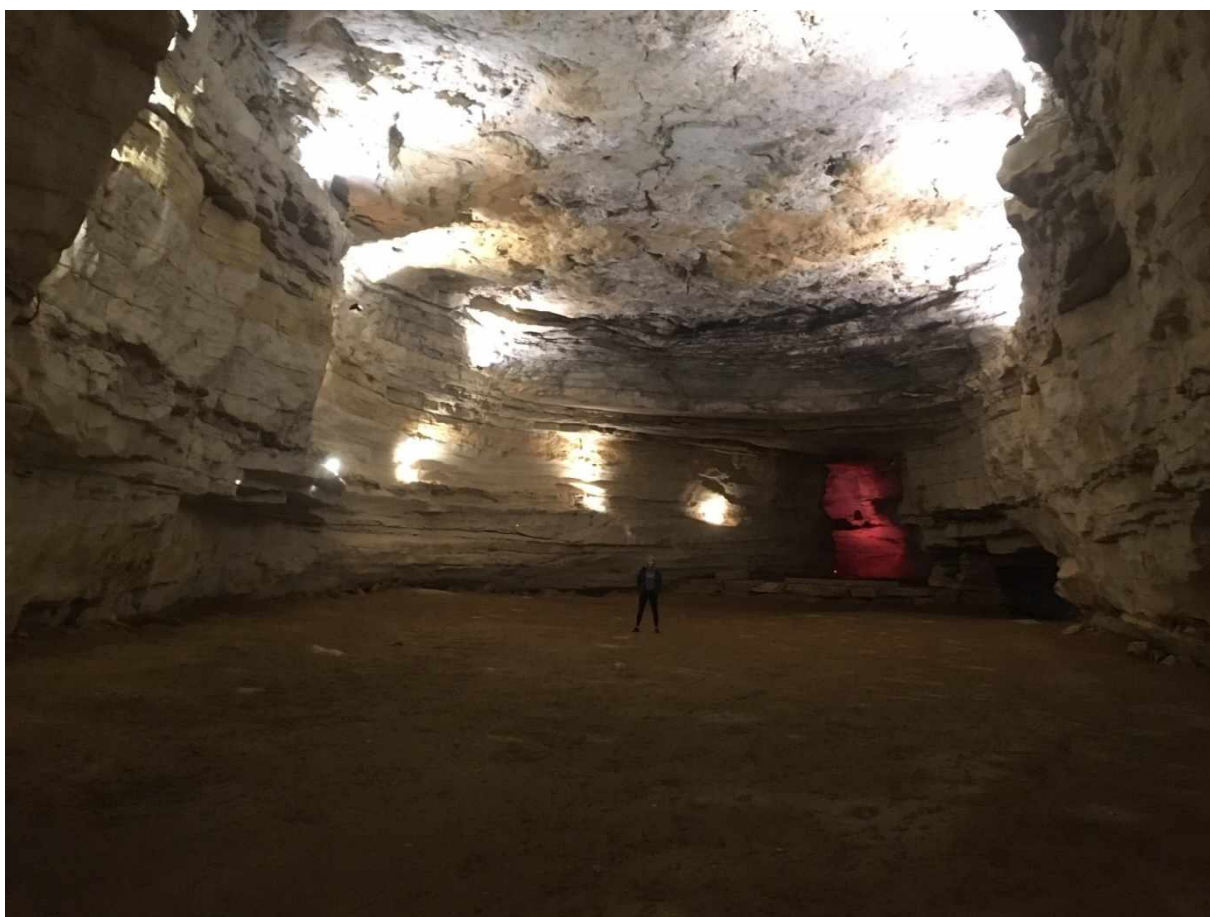
After our tour Jerry started to pack up for his return home. The rest of our group headed to the Skylight Entrance of Pine Hill Cave. This is quite a

really my 51st unique 100+' pit. Once we emerged we were grateful for the pleasant weather. After bouncing this pit, we were going to hunt down a new 100' pit but we found out it was closed due to hunting season.

From here Terry started his trip home and Bob Roth returned to GSP. Emily and I went to grab some food and decided to hit some caves in the SOTRS area. First on our list was Across the Road Cave, which consisted of about 1500' of passage. We did visit the skylight entrance to this cave and nearly found the lower entrance.

After that we headed to Signature Cave,

which came recommended by both Terry and Bob. Signature cave is quite a fun cave. It never wants to quit. You will be walking through some curvy passage and then it will come to a sudden end, but, off to the side there is a little crawl. If you go through the crawl you will pop up into more passage. This whole process will repeat itself many times. Somehow,



Emily in the Echo Room in the Great Saltpeter Cave (Photo by Shawn Hogbin)

nice 131' pit. There is a large room at the bottom, two waterfalls and a lot of flowstone to gawk at. If any cave photographers are reading this, a very nice picture could be taken of someone on rope in this pit. At the time I thought that it was my 50th unique 100+' pit. However, I had miscounted, and it was

Emily and I made one very large loop which was a pleasant surprise. We only had one more cave left on the day, Lloyd Mullins. The entrance to Lloyd Mullins is a 20' climbdown and then is 350' of alternating crawls and high dome rooms.

It was now Monday, the last day of our trip. Bob was giving a tour of the Great Saltpeter Cave to a friend, Teddy. Teddy was new to caving and he

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was interested in tagging along with Emily and me to Climax Cave. After some poor navigating by yours truly, we made it to the cave. Climax Cave was the perfect cave to end the trip on. It had large passage, large flowstone formations and even saltpeter mining remains. We headed into the large breakdown room in the cave and then made a loop back to the entrance. At the time I was interested in attempting a through trip to the Clark Entrance, so we headed back to the large breakdown room. We quickly got turned around in a breakdown crawly maze and popped back up into the main passage. After going through a particularly tight squeeze, most of the group was ready to head out.

Once it was all said and done, this was a great trip. Emily had visited 11 caves and I had visited 12. The weather behaved for the whole trip and hovered around 55 degrees during the day. The company was world class. On our trip back, it was hard not to admit that Kentucky had found a fond place in our caving hearts. I'd be foolish to not go back, and I make a point of not being too foolish.

- Shawn

Wet Caving Escapades of 2018 by Donald "Doc" Phillips

I sit at my computer typing an article for the Dead Dog Dispatch today because another caving trip was cancelled, and the free time gives me the opportunity to think about all the other cancellations we have had this year, the wettest year so far according to the National Weather Service.

Tri State Grotto's monthly Wednesday night caving event was going to be a visit to Big Column Cave, but the weather reports curbed the activity with a rumor of snow, ice and falling temperatures with flurries in the valley including the West Virginia Panhandle. Daunting news if you have to drive any mentionable distance to go caving.

Seems like most trips were cancelled by either weather or flooding. I

got lucky with my yearly camp out at Thorn Springs this last August, arriving in the afternoon to a wet campground, but within the hour the sun came out and a rainbow appeared promising a beautiful weekend. The caves were not yet soaked with water or flooded, so the event went well. OTR on the other hand was plagued with participation with sparse dry time.

The Sinks of Gandy had high water and the other caves in the area were not that appealing to visit in the rain and drizzle. It was the first time that some TSG cavers did not go caving on this 2018 event due to more than average rainfall. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to visit Dreen Cave on Friday before the weather became inclement. The camp site was a muddy muddle, leaving footwear caked and difficult to deal with in a tent, or in my case, a camper truck.

I recall not only cave trips being cancelled but digs and miscellaneous explorations and events. Caving became slick with the abundant rain, providing plenty of treacherous footing and handholds to overcome. And if things didn't get bad enough, a snowfall canceled a cleanup at Jones Quarry Cave just a few weeks ago.

To end on a bright note - Safety First, Caving a Close Second. In the immediate area I did not hear of any rescues or watery entrapments like the Tham Luang Nang Non Cave (Reclining Goddess Cave) in Thailand this last July trapping a dozen boys and a soccer coach for a little over two weeks. Hardy souls, amphibians and cavers still had a good time despite all the wetness and hopefully we will have a more cooperative weather in the new year of 2019.





Rhodes Cave, PA (Photo supplied by Shawn Hogbin)



Endless stream passage (Elysia Mathias)



Elysia rappelling in Endless (Jerry Bowen)



Nina rappelling in Endless (Jerry Bowen)



OTR 2018 (Bob B-Art Jr)



CAVIN CALENDAR

DECEMBER 9TH - JANUARY 19TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec 9 Endless caverns Wild Trip - see Dave or Tom	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12  Meeting 7pm - Elections	Dec 13	Dec 14	Dec 15
Dec 16	Dec 17	Dec 18	Dec 19	Dec 20	Dec 21  SOLSTICE	Dec 22 ANNUAL TSG CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION 6PM
Dec 23	Dec 24  CHRISTMAS EVE	Dec 25  CHRISTMAS DAY	Dec 26	Dec 27	Dec 28	Dec 29
Dec 30	Dec 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	Jan 1  NEW YEAR'S DAY	Jan 2	Jan 3	Jan 4	Jan 5
Jan 6	Jan 7	Jan 8	Jan 9  Meeting 7pm	Jan 10	Jan 11	Jan 12
Jan 13	Jan 14	Jan 15	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19

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Endless Caverns (by Elysia Mathias)



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TRI-STATE GROTTO OF THE NSS
BOB BENNETT, BOB BENNETT, ED
464 HUCKLEBERRY DR
GERRARDSTOWN, WV 25420-0344
304-671-0344
gimpycaver@comcast.net

