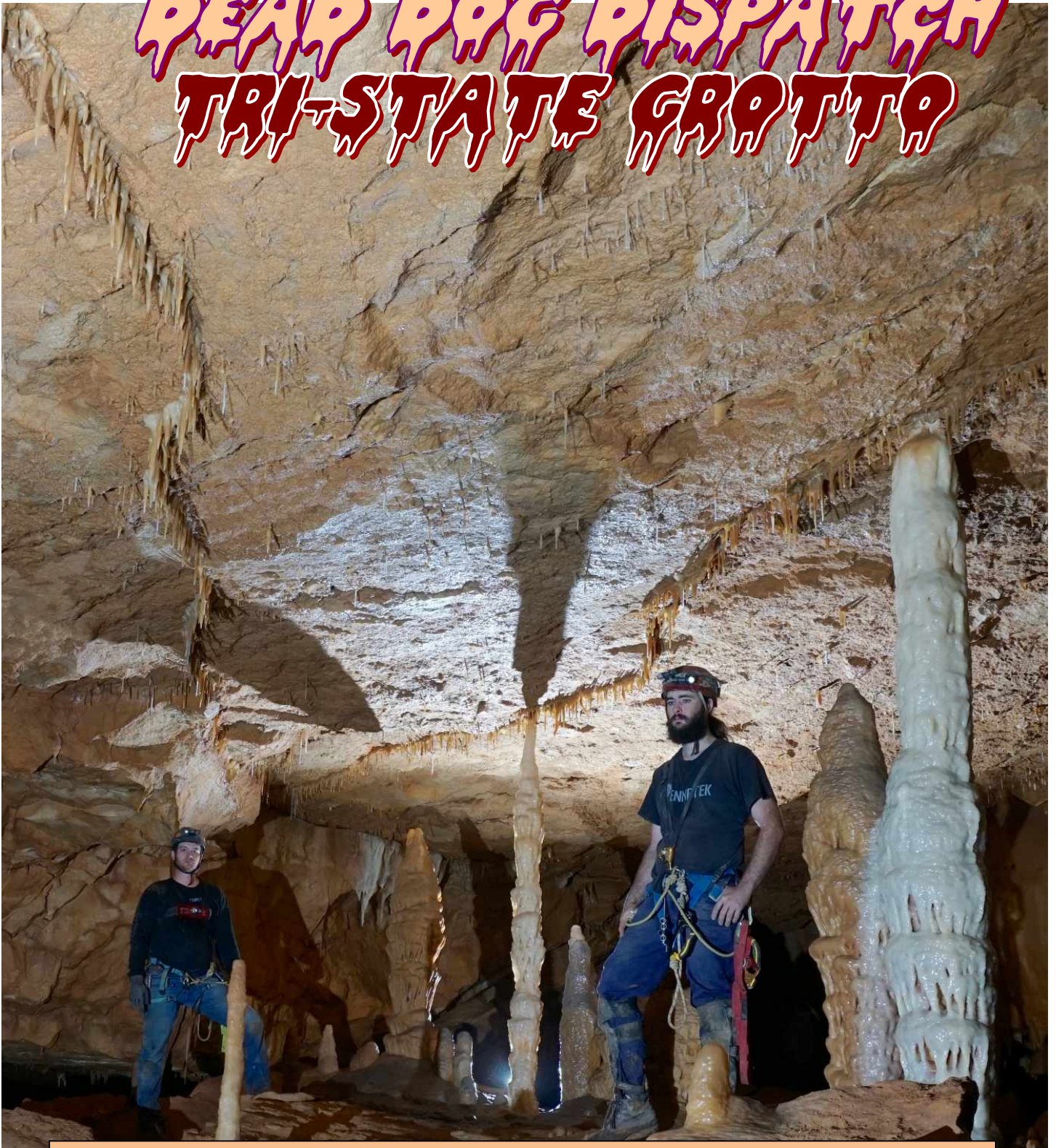


DEAD DOG DISPATCH TRI-STATE GROTTO



CHISUM CHASM, WHITE CO, TN

VOL. #36

ISS. #5

MAY

2021

#43

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*** The photo on the cover this month was taken by Jim Fox. It shows Zeke McKee (with beard) and an unidentified caver in the formation room of Chism Chasm, White Co, TN.

**** 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!



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CAVE EVENTS

2021

MAY 1 --- May Day
 MAY 1 --- Batman Day
MAY 1 --- Molers Cave gate repair – 10am – see Tom Griffin
 MAY 2 --- Brothers & Sisters Day
 MAY 4 --- MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU!
 MAY 5 --- Childrens Day
 MAY 5 --- SINKHOLE de MAYO
 MAY 6 --- Baker Quarry – Work on gate
 MAY 8 --- National Train Day
 MAY 8 --- Adam Stephen Day – Cancelled
MAY 9 --- Mothers Day
MAY 12 --- TSG meeting – 7pm Virtual
 MAY 13 --- FRG Meeting – 7pm Virtual
 MAY 15 --- Armed Forces Day
 MAY 15 --- Peace Officers Day
MAY 15 --- Crystal Grottoes Cavern – 10am – Spread gravel thru the tour passage – see John DiCarlo
 MAY 22 --- Baker Quarry – see Brent Jefferson
 MAY 23 --- Lucky Penny Day
 MAY 25 --- National Wine Day
 MAY 28 --- National Hamburger Day
 MAY 29-31 --- Speleolfest, KY
MAY 31 --- MEMORIAL DAY
JUN 9 --- TSG Meeting – 7PM
 JUN 11-13 --- Bubble Weekend
 JUN 14 --- Flag Day
 JUN 19 --- Juneteenth Day
JUN 20 --- Summer Solstice
JUN 20 --- Fathers Day
 JUN 20 --- WV Day
 JUN 23 --- Lucky Penny Day
 JUN 29 --- International Mud Day
JUL 4 --- Independence Day
 JUL 7 --- World Chocolate Day
JUL 14 --- TSG Meeting – 7pm
 JUL 16 --- World Snake Day
 JUL 18 --- Hot Dog Day
 JUL 18 --- Ice Cream Day
JUL 24 --- TSG Annual Picnic – 12 noon
 JUL 24 --- National Cousin Day
 JUL 25 --- National Carousel Day
 JUL 26-30 --- NSS Convention, Weed, CA - Virtual

JUL 26 --- Parents Day
 JUL 28 --- Milk Chocolate Day
 AUG 2 --- International Beer Day
 AUG 2 --- Root Beer Float Day
 AUG 6-8 --- IN Cave Capers
 AUG 11 --- National Son & Daughter Day
AUG 11 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
 AUG 12 --- National Middle Child Day
 AUG 12 --- FRG Meeting – 7pm
 AUG 13 --- Left Handers Day
 AUG 13-15 --- Karst-O-Rama, KY
 AUG 16 --- Elvis Died
 AUG 21 --- Senior Citizen Day
 AUG 25 --- National Comic Book Day
SEP 2-6 --- OTR
SEP 4 --- Doo Dah Parade – 10am
 SEP 4 --- WVASS meeting – 630pm
SEP 6 --- LABOR DAY
SEP 8 --- TSG meeting – 7pm
 SEP 9 --- Teddy Bear Day
SEP 11 --- Remembrance Day – 9/11
 SEP 12 --- Chocolate Milkshake Day
 SEP 12 --- Grand Parents Day
 SEP 20 --- Wife Appreciation Day
 SEP 21 --- Miniature Golf Day
 SEP 21 --- National Ice Cream Cone Day
SEP 24-26 --- FALL MAR-VAR
 SEP 25 --- National Comic Book Day
 SEP 25 --- National Daughter Day
 SEP 28 --- National Son Day
 SEP 28 --- National Super Hero Day
 SEP 29 --- National Coffee 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 MAY ----- **\$00.00**

TOTAL TO DATE: ----- \$7529.81

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GREAT JOB EVERYONE! Let's continue the giving!

Keep It Coming!

WEBSITE & CAVING LINKS

Tri State Grotto ----- www.tristategrotto.net/
VAR ----- <http://var.caves.org/index.php>
NSS ----- www.caves.org/
NSS Convention 2020 ----- <https://nss2020.caves.org/>
NSS Convention 2021 ----- <http://nss2021.caves.org/>
OTR ----- www.otr.org/
MAR ----- www.caves.org/region/mar/
WVCC ----- www.wvcc.net/
Bob's Web Site ----- www.tristategrotto.net/Bob/
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/
Crystal Grottoes Caverns
www.crystalgrottoescaverns.com
Silers Cave -----
<https://www.karst.org/index.php/category/preserves/silers-cave-preserve/>

GROTTO BIRTHDAYS

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Carl Amundson, Eric Berge, Emily Bowen,
Stephen Bowen, JC Fisher, Katelyn Setters Floyd,
Doyle Garvin, Chase Griffin, Lucas Hanson,
Hargobind Khasla, Elysia Mathias, Greg McCoy,
Pat Minnick, Trevor Ward

Happy Birthday!

REPORTS

TSG Meeting, April 14, 2021

John called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held online.

Elysia read the treasurer's report, and it was approved.

Bob read the minutes, and they were approved.

Old Business

The new website is ready to go, still waiting on the domain. Bob will check with Art Jr. to get permission to transfer ownership of the domain.

Jeff reported that DNR is still waiting for input for places to put the cave protection signs.

New Business

TSG is going to be putting new gravel down on Crystal Grottoes passages May 15 at 10 AM. Lunch provided.

Trips

John reported on the mud clean-up and light bulb change trips to Crystal Grottoes.

Tom went to the open house at Baker Caverns, now called Black-Coffey Caverns under new ownership. Someone asked about the other caves in that area. They are on an active mine property and the owner will not allow caving there.

Tom reported that Sarah Furnace is ¾ mile away from being the longest cave in PA.

Adam and Ashby went to the Shepherdstown caves and found a geocache in one of them. In Fruit Fly, it looked like someone was living in it. They went to the Adam Stephen House and located what they think is the cliff-side entrance to the tunnels. The curator is ok with us digging there.

Recently a group of 15 took a trip to Molers Cave. Bob made it all the way to the bottom. There will be a conservation trip to Molers Cave on Sat. May 1 at 10 AM to repair a breached gate, clean up debris and branches, and then go caving. Dr. Latterell, owner of Molers Cave lives in Colorado with his sister. He has dementia and is moving into an assisted living place and won't be coming back. His sister will have the property when he passes, and it will be up to her to do as she wants. Roger is the new caretaker and said that there will always be a trail down to the cave.

Nikki Fox went to Friars Hole. They found two virgin domes, and were in the cave for 5 ½ hours.

Bob reported that Adam Stephen Day Sat. May 8 will only be doing small, social distanced tours this year, not the Heritage Festival. Let him know if you are interested in helping out.

Tom spoke to Mike at Endless, and he said that Wednesdays or Sundays would work for TSG to do a caving trip. Mike would like to go along, but can only go on Wednesdays.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.
Respectfully Submitted,
Lynn DiCarlo

TRIP REPORTS

Checking out the pump circuit

By John DiCarlo NSS 25744, Boonsboro, Md

On Wednesday, March 31, 2021 I went by and picked up Levi Baker and we drove to Crystal Grottoes Caverns. They were not open on weekdays yet. We met owner, Cassie Downs, at the Cave House. She let us in and Levi and I headed into the cave.

We headed to the Tri-State Grotto Passage. Our mission was to check out the electric to the sump pump down in the pit. I went to plug my meter into the outlet and it wouldn't go in. I had grabbed the only meter I have that the probes wouldn't fit. Bummer!



We checked out the cords to the pumps. Levi traced the cord through many windings and discovered that the wrong pump was plugged in. We switched them around. Out of the four outlets, this one was the most corroded. I only plugged the cord part way in so I could hit the blades with my tester. Nothing. We flipped both switches by the outlets, still nothing. I tried to open the box. One screw came out. The second one, I couldn't see if it had a slot or not. I tried with a screwdriver, but I didn't get anywhere. It was out of my eyes focus range. I put the one screw back in. I decided I would need help with this.



We headed out the back of the TSG passage heading to the blanket room and turned out the lights behind us. We went through the cave looking for burned out light bulbs. Tri-State Grotto was coming in two days to replace them, so I wanted to get a heads up where they were. Debbie Floyd had said that a lot were out. Crystal Grottoes Caverns goes to every-day tours on the first of April, so we wanted the cave lit up nice.

The worst spots were above the Lake, the High Spot, and Crystal Palace. The Lake had maybe two bulbs left that lit up, the High Spot had one light left at the top, and at Crystal Palace, there were 5 lights out, plus the Bacon Formation was dark.

We also noticed that the three-way switch for the TSG passage by the steps didn't work and added that to our to-do list.

We headed out of the cave and I told Cassie I'd see her in two days when Tri-State Grotto would be back to replace the light bulbs.

Changing Light Bulbs In Crystal Grottoes Caverns

By John DiCarlo NSS 25744, Boonsboro, Md
On Friday April 2, 2021, I met Adam Haines and his cousin Ashby Haines at Crystal Grottoes. Our mission today was to replace burned out light bulbs.

We went into the cave house to greet the owner Cassie Downs and Manager Debbie Floyd.

Debbie had stocked up with a case of LED spotlights and a case of LED light bulbs. We broke into them and carried a canvas bag full of them into the cave.

Looking around the Entrance Room we didn't see any burned-out bulbs. We moved farther into the cave until we got to Crystal Palace. Nothing that was out was down low. We sent Ashby into a hole, and then told him to climb up. He found his way to the Bacon Formation. He changed the light bulb, but it still didn't work. The fixture was bad. He came back out and we continued through the cave.

We noticed a large red bulb that was out. I said, "that's the only light with color in the whole cave." Cassie's father, Jerry Downs, never thought the cave needed colored lights. It had great color on it's on. We passed it up as we didn't know the story behind it, and we didn't have a large light bulb.



We made our way to the High Spot. Looking around there were a lot of lights out. About the only one we saw lit was at the top of the passage 35 feet off the floor. "Ok," we thought, "we need a ladder."

We headed out through the back door and looked for a ladder. We found a large step ladder and carried it back through the cave to the high spot. Adam climbed it and was able to light up one ledge before he came back down. Ashby went up two side passages looking for anything burned out. Adam and I moved the ladder just as Ashby came back. We had to level up the ladder. Ashby looked around and found three stones that worked. Ashby then climbed up and replaced two lights that were

right over the passage back to Father Time. Ashby moved on down the passage toward the lake and replaced a bulb in a side passage. Adam and I moved the step ladder around and I climbed up to see if I could reach a light on the wall at the end of the Father Time passage. I had to stand on the very top of the ladder and hold onto the wall across the passage. I was able to reach the light and replaced it.

Debbie showed up and said she had a very large group, and could we take a tour for them. We told her ok. She said she would take the first group and we would take the second. We had run out of spotlight bulbs, so I ran back to the cave house for some more. Debbie had just started the tour and was in the Entrance Room. I hurried back and put the bulbs in the canvas bag, and we went out the back door so we wouldn't have to pass the tour group. As we got to the Cave House the door was locked and Cassie had taken the tour down. We were locked out of the cave.

Eventually Debbie's tour came out and she shut the door before we could stop her. Luckily Debbie had a key to the front door. She unlocked the door and asked me to go and relieve Cassie on her tour. I said OK. I went through the cave fairly fast and saw the tail end of the tour headed out the back passage. I let it go and turned around and came back up to the Cave House. I told Debbie, that the only thing left for Cassie was to open the back door and stand there and collect her tips, so I let her be.



That little break when we were locked out was the only break we got all day.

Adam and I headed for Crystal Lake and I had Ashby tag along on Debbie's next tour so she could point out any burned-out light bulbs.

Adam got into Crystal Lake and walked across it replacing light bulbs. Debbie said we needed to climb up at the Alligator to replace a light or two up there. Ashby was back with us and he made the climb. He replaced a bulb or two there. Now Crystal Lake was really lit up like it used to be.



Ashby told us about some burned out lights in Crystal Palace. Adam and I headed back out to get an extension ladder so we could reach up higher. Arriving back at Crystal Palace, we threw the ladder up and Ashby climbed it and replaced two spotlights. On the opposite wall we needed to replace two bulbs. As we worked on one, we realized the outlet was shot. I went back up to the cave house looking to see if Jerry had any fixtures lying around. I did find one and an outlet box, some wire nuts, and some screws to hold it all together. While I was looking through things, I found some quartz light bulbs. I grabbed a handful of them. We didn't have any and several of the quartz lights were out. I also found a large red bulb. It was a heat lamp. I showed it to Debbie, and she said that was the same as the one that was in there. I carried all my findings back to the Haines cousins.

They got to work on things and sent me back to look for more boxes and fixtures. There weren't any. They went on the list of things to pick up. We joined back up and started with the quartz lights; one as you come around the King Passage, and two

more at Father Time. We replaced the red light as we went by it.

As Ashby was working on the quartz lights, a tour came through. When Debbie turned on the circuit for the Father Time passage, it lit up the red light and Debbie cried out, "Oh! My dragon is back!" Oh, so that's what the red light was. The fire from the Dragon!



We finished there and moved to the High Spot. Putting up the ladder, Ashby climbed up the ladder and kept going. He made it to the second ledge and replaced the quartz lights there. Now the High Spot looked great!

We were finished for the day. We still had three lights out. We would need parts for those. We cleaned up and put things away. We told Cassie we would be back another time to replace the three lights. *(All photos by John DiCarlo)*

Caving in central Tennessee

In my on-going quest for as many new-to-me hundred foot-plus pits as I can visit in my lifetime, things seem to have stalled in West Virginia during the past couple of years. In fact, there have been no new additions since I wrote the last update to the hundred-foot list for the West Virginia Caver last year. With this pit "drought" in the Virginias my mind (and body) tends to drift southwards to TAG. Within the past twenty years there have actually been more new hundred foot-plus pits found in West Virginia than in TAG, thanks to Pendleton

County's Germany Valley. Perhaps inspired by the successful dome-climbing exploits of a small core of Germany Valley cavers, several TAG cavers have taken up the challenge, and indeed the results have been impressive. In West Virginia 22 of the 79 total hundred footers, including eight of the ten 200-footers, have been dome climbs. In addition, over a dozen others have been discovered as a consequence of aide climbs.

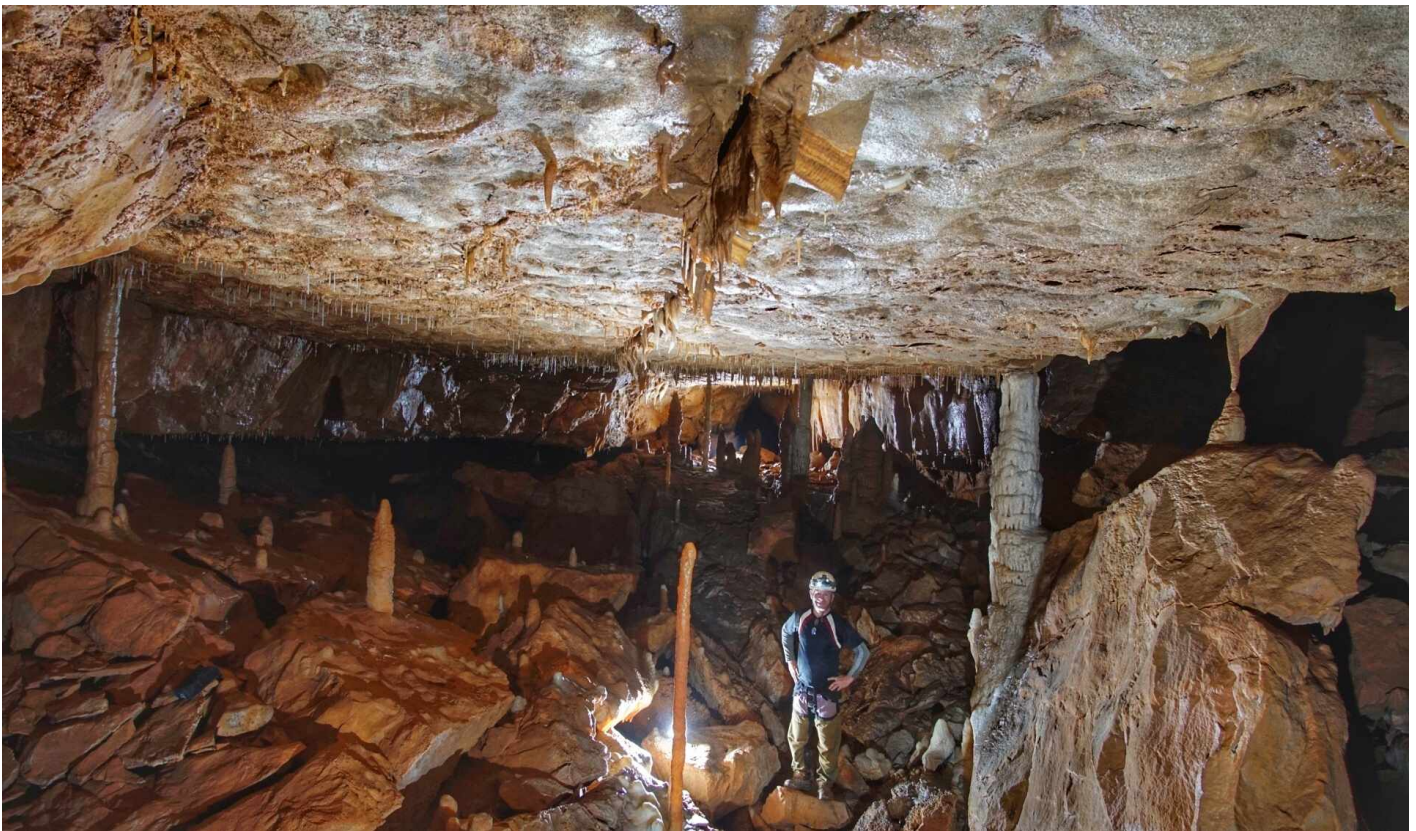
The pace of discovery for deep pits in TAG found in the traditional manner of ridge-walking or cave exploration may never equal the standard set in the period dating from around 1960 to 1990 when nearly two hundred new ones were added to the list, however, to anyone who has caved in TAG extensively, one thing has always been obvious; there is no shortage of high un-climbed domes. Until only five or six years ago there were only a handful of TAG cavers who routinely engaged in dome-climbing. Today there are more than a dozen TAG cavers who have become quite adept in this endeavor. Fortunately for me, most are friends of mine and they seem willing, once the domes have been completed, to leave them rigged long enough for me to venture to TAG in order to tape and "collect" the "new hundred-footer. Eleven of my last eighteen TAG hundred-footers have been dome-climbs.

Central Tennessee caver Jim Fox, assisted by Zeke McKee and a couple others have been doing some high dome climbs in two different caves within an hour of Marion's residence. One was completed nearly a year ago and the second more recently. I hadn't been down to TAG but one other time during the past year due to COVID, so it was a rather nostalgic drive to Marion's last Friday night (April 16th). Marion has some severe respiratory ailments and catching COVID would have dire consequences for him, so he hasn't been going to any restaurants for the duration of the pandemic. Sharon fixed us a nice hearty breakfast Saturday morning. For the Saturday we were going in different directions, with Marion meeting some folks for a Blue Springs (TAG's longest cave at over 40 miles) trip and I was meeting local caver Zeke McKee for a fun day in two neighboring White County caves.

First Zeke took me to Chisum Chasm. I had taken Pennsylvania caver Todd Dishong there in 1995 to bounce the 117' entrance pit, but had not been back since then. Around that same time (1995) a small group of Atlanta cavers led by Alan Cressler and Andy Porter did some original exploration near the bottom of the entrance pit. Andy traversed around a shallow pit and put in a J-rappel to make the maneuver safer for everyone else. Zeke and I negotiated the J-rappel which put us at a large window overlooking a moderate-sized breakdown room. A steep descent into this room followed by a few other smaller rooms led us to a high dome. Jim Fox climbed this dome to a height of 116 feet during 2019-20, and it was named Lee's Dome after the late Lee White who was supposed to be the original climber before his untimely death two years ago in a traffic accident. On this occasion the pit was a bit drippy, but really just enough to keep you cooled down while climbing so no problem. It was a very nice smooth-walled pit, totally free except for

After bouncing this, Zeke offered to take me on a tour of the nearly 3000-foot long cave to see what he said was an impressive formation room at the far end. Once past the dome area the cave was essentially linear with most of the passage consisting of a high body-width canyon which

could be traversed standing up. At one point an obscure tricky climb led to an upper-level continuation of this canyon which eventually morphed into a long, flat-ceilinged formation room. Zeke had not exaggerated when he said the room was impressive. Its dimensions were approximately 400 feet long and averaging 20-40 feet wide, with ceiling heights ranging from stooping to well over your head. The room was festooned with a wide variety of nearly pristine white columns, stalactites and stalagmites, head-high broomsticks, draperies, glistening flowstones, and with a ceiling covered with thousands of delicate translucent straws. It was one of the more well decorated rooms I've seen in



*Jim Fox in the Formation Room in Chism Chasm
(Photo by Jim Fox)*

quite a few years.

one hanging rebelay near the top, and about twenty feet in diameter.

The second cave we visited was on the same mountain but the opposite side. It was called Heart of Gould. Marion had taken me there in 2013 and



*Zeke McKee with draperies in the Formation Room
in Chism Chasm (Photo by Jim Fox)*

we'd bounced five pits ranging from 20 feet to 58 feet in depth, and all within a couple hundred feet of the entrance. Zeke gave me a brief follow-up history on more recent exploration in the cave, resulting in nearly two miles of mapped passages and the discovery of dozens of pits. Most of the new stuff was found in 2019-20. The effort was headed by Jim Fox, with considerable support from Zeke, Marion, and a couple of others. The major breakthrough occurred when a low, somewhat grim crawl of about 100 feet was pushed near the bottom of the double entrance

pit. This was followed by a series of high domes and pits up to 77 feet deep. One of the domes extended up above the 58-foot pit which Marion and I had done years before. This was climbed by

Jim to the ceiling almost 50 feet above and resulted in a total drop of 107 feet to the bottom of the 58. I bounced this for my second new-to-me hundred-footer for the weekend, and 624th overall. After this Zeke showed me a higher dome (distoed at around 150 feet) which he said Jim was planning on climbing this coming summer.

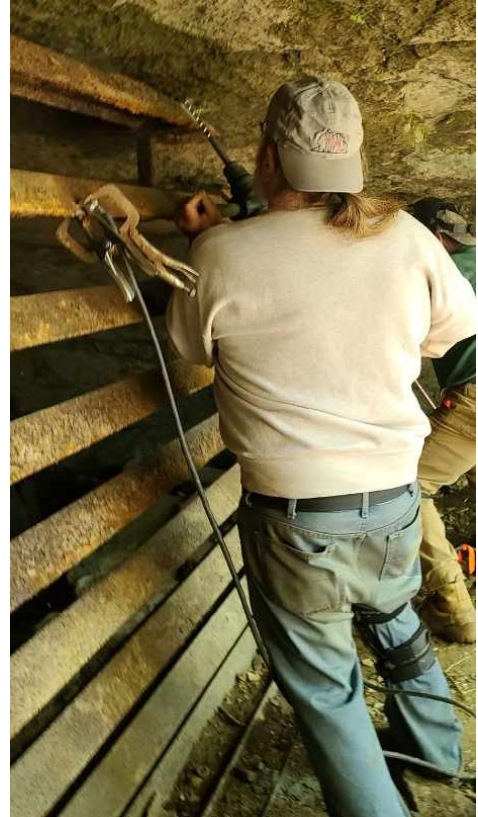
It was a great day of caving with a couple of new hundred footers and a tour of a real fine cave. Zeke went home (he lives nearby) and I went to Marion's house. On Sunday Marion was taking me to some small things on Bone Cave Mountain which is less than five miles from where he lives. We visited seven different holes. Four were pits ranging from 37 to 45 feet deep and the rest were small contact caves from 60 to 200 feet long. It was nice spending time with Marion and Sharon after nearly a year-long hiatus. I hope it's not nearly that long before I see them again.



*Before & After Molers Trip
(Photos by Elysia Mathias)*



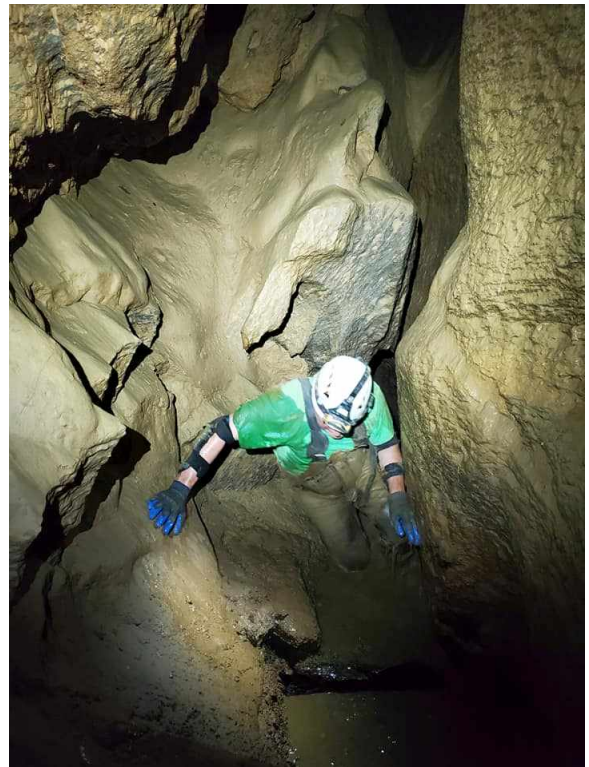
Tom Griffin & Brent Jefferson repair gate on Baker Quarry (Photo by Tom Griffin)



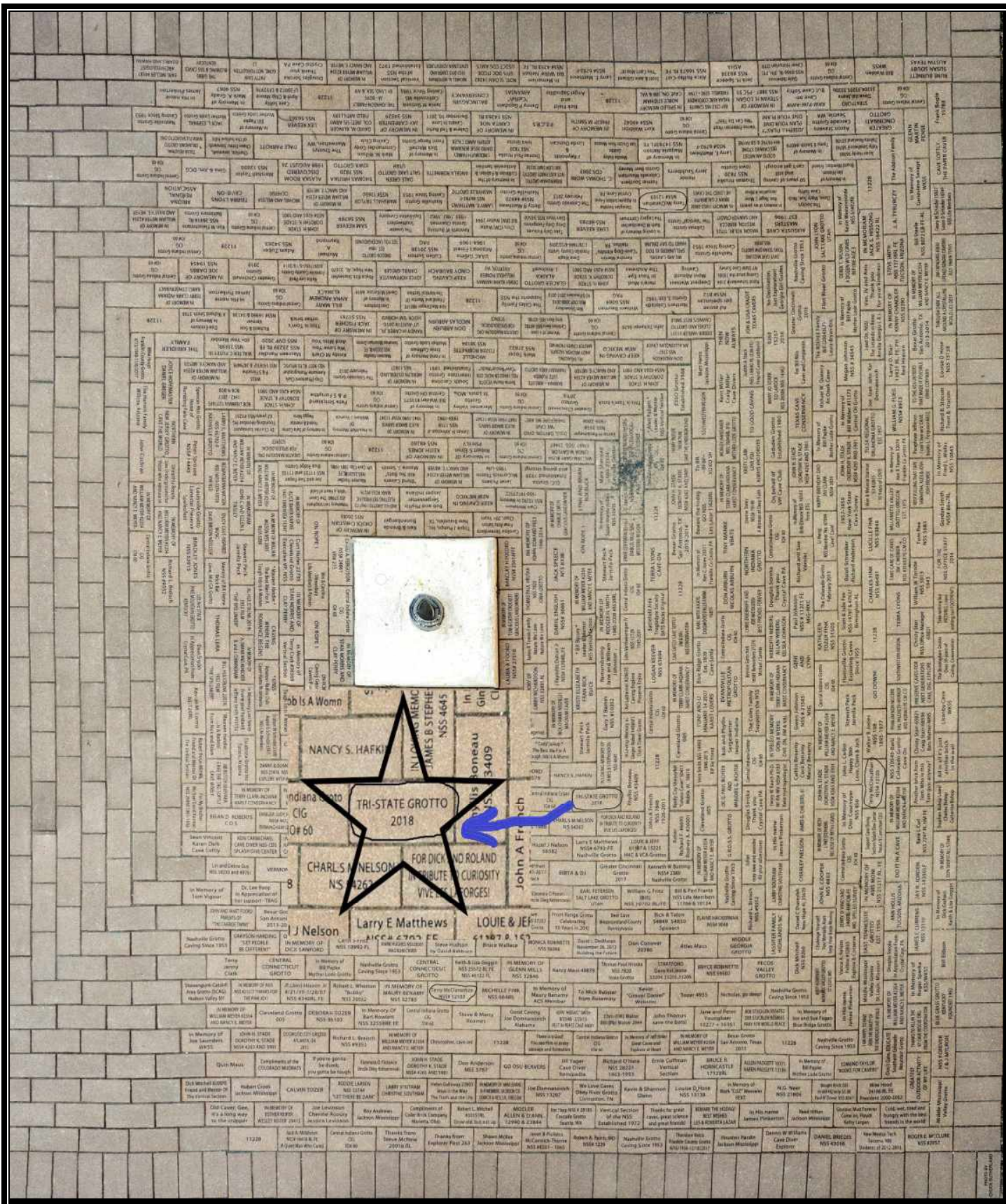
Craig drilling hole for gate Pin (Photo by BB)



Tom unlocking Molers gate (Photo by BB)



Molers trip (Photo by Elysia Mathias)



The Bricks at the NSS Office Flagpole (TSG circled)



CAVIN CALENDAR

MAY 9TH - JUNE 19TH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 9  DAY	May 10	May 11	May 12  Meeting 7pm Virtual	May 13 FRG Meeting 7pm Virtual	May 14	May 15 Armed Forces Day Peace Officers Day Crystal Grottoes 10am - Gravel Challenge
May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22 Baker Quarry - see Brent Jefferson
May 23 Lucky Penny Day	May 24	May 25 National Wine Day	May 26	May 27	May 28 National Hamburger Day Speolofest	May 29 Speolofest
May 30 Speolofest	May 31  MEMORIAL DAY Speolofest	Jun 1	Jun 2	Jun 3	Jun 4	Jun 5
Jun 6	Jun 7	Jun 8	Jun 9  Meeting 7pm	Jun 10	Jun 11  Weekend	Jun 12  Weekend
Jun 13  Weekend	Jun 14  Flag Day	Jun 15	Jun 16	Jun 17	Jun 18	Jun 19 Juneteenth

DEAD DOG DISPATCH



Entrance to Clown Cave (by Beau Ouimette)



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