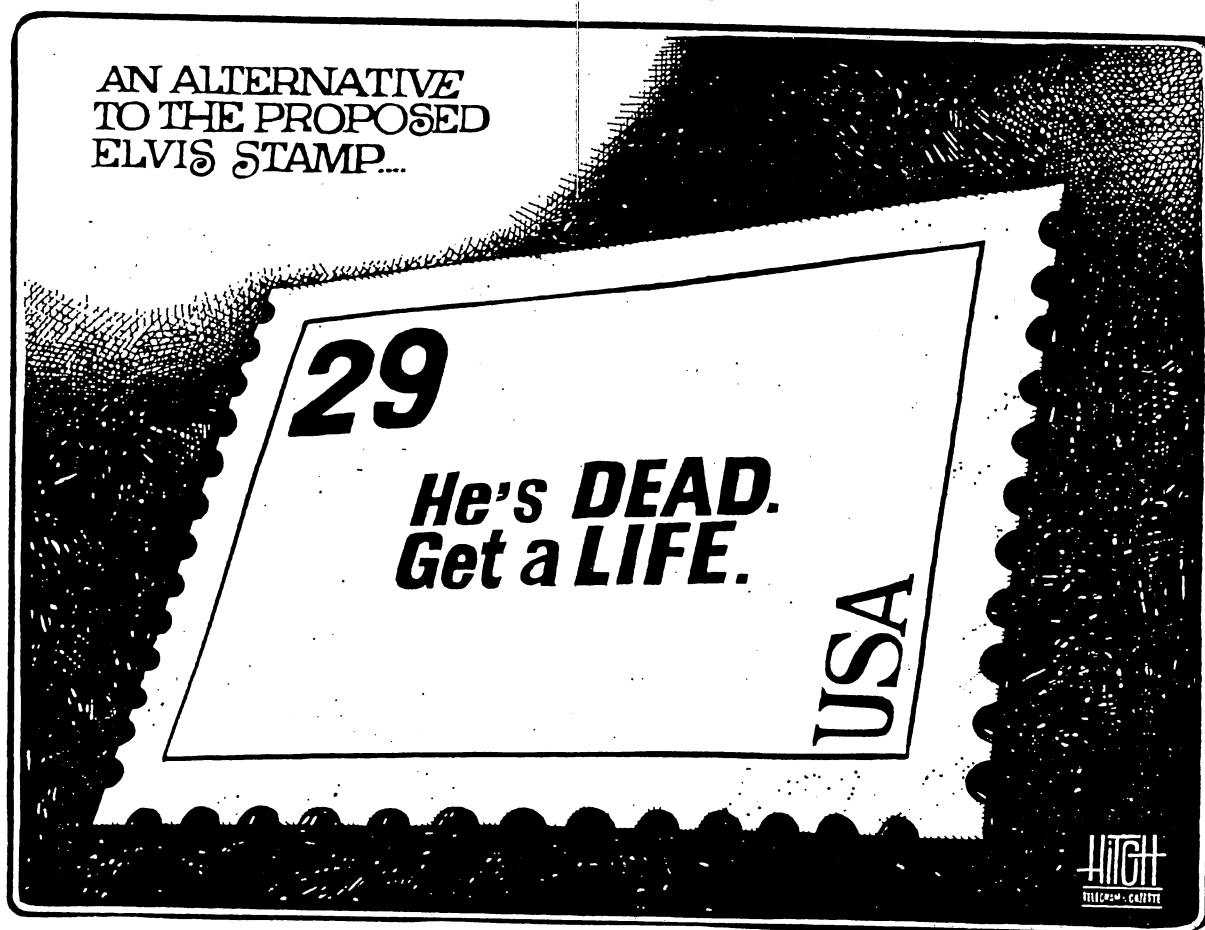


THE TECH TROGLODYTE



Spring 1992

THE TECH TROGLODYTE

A JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA TECH GROTTO OF THE
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Spring Semester, 1992

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President's Column

Since one of the purposes of the VPI Cave Club is to promote cave conservation, let me summarize some of the projects we've undertaken in that area this spring.

- The bat count in Skydusky Hollow was done in February in an attempt to help determine the number, variety and location of hibernating bats.
- The club set up a "hand's on" exhibit in the natural history museum one Saturday in April to demonstrate survey techniques and the use of carbide and other lamps, and to display different kinds of vertical gear (the focus was on safety and conservation.)
- Dave C.'s dream to adopt a highway has come true and is being overseen by Jim Pugh. Already there have been two cleanups of the road in front of Tawney's and Link's and landowners along the road have expressed their appreciation.
- The newest project is the removal of spray painted arrows from New River Cave. Many of you may say "Why bother?" but when you see the results of just a few hours work you will volunteer to help! (HINT, HINT) Let's aim on having most arrows gone by Christmas.
- And lastly there are the ongoing surveys in the many area caves. If you aren't actively involved in a survey, find one!

What are some goals for the fall? Besides continuing the above projects I'd like to see the club more involved in educating people about cave conservation. Perhaps giving presentations (small scale!) in the elementary schools would be a good place to start. I welcome any suggestions in this area. We will also focus on approving the updated constitution early in the semester. That could be tedious so I'll be talking to many of you over the summer to iron out any foreseeable problems and make for smoother sailing in the fall.

Well, we're ending this semester on what I feel is a united note. Many dissensions within the club have been resolved and we are well prepared for any external confrontations that may come our way in the fall. One of my most memorable first impressions of the club is of the closeness, supportiveness and protectiveness within its ranks. It is truly a family working towards the common goal of safe, educational, productive caving. As you all go your own way this summer, let your quality caving show that you are the VPI Cave Club!

Patty Kitchin

President, VPI Cave Club

President of Vice Speaks

Well, here it is... the official and supposedly new and improved views of the Vice President. First of all I want to thank everyone who elected me to this office. It is a position that I have really been looking forward to doing for a couple of years (usually something came up to keep me from running). I am looking forward to a great year of "trainees". Congratulation also to all of the newly elected officers.

The VPI Cave Club recently spent Spring Break '92 in Daytona? Yeah, Right. We were in TAG. We had a great time and were able to test our vertical competence on all the deep pits and bask in the sun.

Congratulations to newly elected members Chris Brown (no not Jake), Kevin McElroy, and Bob Cosby (recently elected into membership at picnic weekend). Now I have to fill in Mike³'s shoes and find more potential members out there. Oh well, at least I have a year. Scott Rapier and I have begun to restock the club gear and by the fall of 1992 the gear should be fully repaired, coded, and ready to go for all the trainee trips. One request I make is that if you use the gear TAKE CARE OF IT. The money you gave us for dues paid for it all. Maybe it's ok to trash your personal gear, but are you willing to trash someone else's?

Using this gear will be the usual influx of new trainees and interested parties. As I mentioned election night it will be my responsibility to introduce the people to the art and science of caving. It is up to all of us as a club to then expose them to the full array of caving (photography, surveying, long vertical trips, landowner relations, and conservation). Remember the more Crazy, Arrogant, Versatile, Experienced (CAVE) dwellers they see the more like us they become (wait! should we do that?)

Anyway, no more lecture. Thanks to everyone who has already pledged their support for next year and (if possible) let's try to top this past year's amount of new members. As final thoughts:

- Stress team work while underground (and parties). Communicate and enjoy.
- Active cavers need to participate. Between GCCS, landowner relations, conservation work, surveying, practice rescue, bridge sessions, we all have a lot to do. Also, Mike and I are currently working with Craig county landowners for the APCO power line.
- Cave hard, party excessively, politic, anarch, don't stress over school and enjoy. And if it is nice out, bridge sessions will run from 1 pm to 5 pm-ish on Fridays.

Yours In Caving,

Adam Hungerford

A 5:00am Bedtime and a 7:00am Wake-up

Well, now it's time for us to get creative, as if we haven't done enough creating for the rest of youse guys already. As our eyes glaze over for the umpteenth time and we just catch our heads from slamming down on the keyboard again a solitary thought echoes through the brain: Ya'll really need to take some remedial English classes. I mean it. Really. There we were, stuck reading what you called articles and trying to make heads or tails of them. We finally did, using a marvelous method that is known in the editorial trade as completely deleting what you wrote and writing what we thought you meant. If you like it, great; if not then you'd better express yourselves better next time. Getting the point across is what it's all about folks. Think about it. Our idea for future Trog's is that Trainees should have their articles published prior to membership. This would weed out those who are planning to become full time butchers of the English language. Enough said. As usual, the Trog was a lot of fun to put together, if you think that becoming punch drunk is fun. With Fatim as our co-pilot we soared gracefully through the evening cutting and pasting, organizing and straightening, cursing and pulling our hair out to the tunes of Bob Marley and the redemption song. This is our redemption and I'm outa here. Kill the lights and hand me a beer; I'm all finished cleaning my room, ma.

i heard it through the Grotto Grapevine

Well, it's that time of the year again when my mind turns to mush and I remember back to those lazy, hazy days since the last Trog came out. I remember Captain Ed's and the Nudist Ko Bash, The Ambush at Mint Junction during banquet, and The Great Flood that turned The Sauna into something from The Muck Lagoon. But more about that as the article unfolds. It has been a rollicking semester, so read on McDuff, read on!

This Trog's story begins early in the year at Banquet. Mr. Chris Stine made an appearance as our guest speaker, and up until the last minute it was anybody's guess as to whether he was actually going to show up. Chris provided an entertaining speech for us along with what I'm sure was only a small amount of the thousands of slides he must have had from his recent caving trip to China. Meanwhile, a small group of renegades in the back of the room kept those of us who couldn't hear him occupied with a barrage of *complimentary* after dinner mints. Rob French got an award for most likely to stay

a bachelor, he won a microwave. For Disco Fever the Elvis Grotto recieved a large syringe. Jim Washington got the Brain Bucket, and Doug Perkins was rewarded for his efforts as the VPI entertainment division. Trainees of the year were Patty Kitchin and Jim Pugh. The food this year was provided by the Tech Catering Dept, and after about twenty of us complained about food poisoning they admitted that it wouldn't be the first time. The party afterwards was held at The Farm, and people other than VPI attended. Most notable among those present were some of those NNJG folk, Mike and Bob, who brought along a 330 milliwatt laser and proceeded to illuminate the clouds. Another important player in the game who shall remain nameless stopped by at around midnight in a patrol car - good thing Jim was still lucid.

Weddings this semester appeared to be the 'IN' thing to do, seeing as how several of the folk around got themselves hitched. First down the list was Sug and Do's wedding. Let's just say that if you were a minute late you missed it, as did several of the people who came to see them say their vows. Yup, in only about 10 minutes the whole thing was over. The same is not to be said of the reception, however. It seems that they rented the Red Lion Inn's pavilion from 3:00pm until midnight, and it was utilized right up until the final minute. The music was provided by Elvis Grotto and ranged from the down-to-earth tunes of Louis Armstrong to the somewhat more raw sounds of Nirvana. The bartenders made us a bet that the twenty or so of us left couldn't kill the newly tapped keg by closing time. They lost.

Koan and Jo were married next, the marriage that was to take place at Wind Rock was re-scheduled due to blizzard - 5 inches of snow made for a white wedding, as Billy would say. The lucky duo had their service take place in the War Memorial Chapel, there was a large turnout even with the snow. The reception for them was also held at Red Lion after much haggling with the Manager and a quick call to the A.G.'s office. This was for most of us a first glance at the rest of the Takamizawa family, they flew in from Japan for the ceremonies. I hope we didn't frighten them too badly! As a prelude to this particular wedding, a bachelor party was thrown for Mr. Takamizawa that just couldn't be beat, according to some participants. Said Doug Perkins "I've never been to a Cave Club party that could compare". After much cigar smoking and porno movie watching for the guys, the ladies decided to drop by and show off a little. In actuality, they showed off quite a bit, when you consider the fact that they wore almost nothing, only their lingerie, and proceeded to strip the guest of honor and all those around him. Wildness abounded, that can be assured - as they say a picture's worth a thousand words and I bet we've got enough words to write War and Peace. Joanie also had a little get-together that was held at Bogens, much to the embarrassment of their poor waiter. It seems that some of the ladies there got a little

out of hand and decided to see just how red they could make their waiter. Very red, according to eyewitnesses.

Also married were Hugh Beard and Karen Little and Craig and Helen Roberts. Folks went down and frolicked with both the couples prior to their fateful days. I understand that Mr. Beard's wedding was almost postponed due to lack of groom. Hugh, it seems, was quite incapacitated from the previous evening's entertainment. As for Craig, he had a large turn-out, and a continual party was kept at the Elvis Grotto's room...Club 201. Beer was always available, the talk was lively, and if you got hungry you could always brave the elements and run across the highway. Even Kat Teten did the ceremony thing, she went and married herself a Hsing I student. Ben and Lesley haven't got married yet but there is still hope, once again they are a couple.

In other news, a large group of VPIers went to TAG for spring break. Some of them had brief encounters with the law enforcement agencies. Scotty Boy and Brigitte both got speeding tickets, much to their chagrin. After the five car, eleven person contingent arrived in 'Bama they decided to get lost, or at least some of them did. The Scotty Boy and Kirk vehicle and the Dave C. and Scott B. clunker made it to the rendezvous site at Stephen's Gap Junkyard/Campground, at which point they looked around and said "Where'd they go?" It wasn't until the following morning that the other three cars caught up with them. By that time they'd also been met by Doug and Pete Bruce, who awakened them with the sound of car against tree. Pits were bounced, tyrolians were created, Hoss holed his gas tank again, and sunny skies prevailed. To a point. After that point it thunderstormed, it hailed, it sleeted, and then, dammit, it SNOWED! Jeez! Can't cavers ever go anywhere without that little black cloud following them around? I guess not...

Elections were held, people were voted on, against, and finally in as the debate reached into the evening shadows. Our new officers are: Patty Kitchin, President; Adam Hungerford, VP; Chummer, Treasurer; and Admiral Kirk as the secretary at the helm. Let's all try and give them as much hell as we've dished out in the past. The Constitution has been revamped but not yet revealed, pending more revampings. The Elvis Grotto still hasn't been caving (so they say), but everyone else sure has. Trips still are going out like clockwork, and some damn fools are going at weird times of the night.

Picnic was indeed held this year at Buddy's field, he was glad we all could come out. A barn was torn down to create the fire that sustained us through the night, and many people were seen as usual taking the two wheeled route. Koan and Jo were very noticeable on their wedding gift, a tandem bike. Rumor has it they only fell over once.

Much beer was consumed, but just like last year we ran out of folk before beer. As a result the last keg was saved for a rainy day, and brought to Jim's for the beer hunt. As picnic wore on people were seen smooching in the dark and doing the generally naughty things they shouldn't be doing. The Elvis Grotto again played tunes through the wee hours trying to keep the party atmosphere alive. All in all, a good group get together.

Easter Beer Hunt went off without a hitch, the Sauna was red hot and glowing for a good many hours; Jim had stocked up on pressed logs. The NNJG's made for the suitable party atmosphere while the Geeks clustered around Falcon 3.0 running on twin machines. Watch that INS! Beers were found from a good many years past although only the hearty dared drink them. The Easter Bunny was also observed to have dropped several bottles of Easter Fosters[®], which was enjoyed by those who found them. Luckily, this time there were no problems with the law, though they were seen patrolling the area at frequent intervals.

The old farts and the out-of-towners have been relatively quiet this semester, with some exceptions. Jean Hartman is the jettsetter of the club; I bet your frequent flyer mileage really adds up fast going to Turkey for a guy. Sandy Peterson turns forty June twentieth; a party is to be held in Seaford and everyone is invited. Pete Sauvigne's little girl is now big enough to go to college and that's just what she's doing; the Simonds are going into the llama business - a new form of Picnic transportation perhaps. A warning to Joe Zo, you'd better be prepared to kill the next time at OTR - remember that loose lips sink ships. Linda Stoutenberg is preggers again, do you think it will ever end? Jerry probably had some explaining to do after his fortieth birthday party; it seems that the great balloon expedition was successful except for the marring of the wall.

Things to be on the lookout for in the near future: The marriage of Brian and Kathi, it's going to be in Tawneys. Be aware of women that seem a little too wild - all might not be what it seems. Fifi just bought a house and a party is brewing, he's also Admiral of Float Trip this year. The Elvis Grotto is hosting OTR's sound entertainment, a cool group is playing. Rob French is going to Alaska for the summer to work on fishing boats. This is the last year of VPI running OTR, let's make it a good one. Try and check out Craig Ferguson's new wheels. Kinda new. He picked up a 1960 Plymouth Fury, blue with a white top and major wings. Looks like the Elvis Grotto got a squad car! Keep in mind the river is dropping and it's getting warmer, so hats off to summer and we'll talk again when the next one of these comes out. Remember, if you don't want it in the Grapevine - Don't Get Caught!

A Few Words On Landowner Relations

As Keith Goggin wrote in a recent Trog:

"Caving is a privilege - not a right as some seem to think. It is essential to note that no matter where we choose to cave, we are the visitors not the guests."

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It is disturbing to think that some of us are taking landowner permission with a grain of salt. This is wrong. Our responsibility is to heed the owners' rules and do all we can to keep them happy. Always obtain permission to enter a cave. Most caves in this area require landowner permission prior to entering. Yes, some caves do have blanket permission (we can enter at any time with little or no previous contact with the landowner). We all know which caves need landowner permission and which don't. I was recently on a trip in which the landowner had requested that he be home for us to enter the cave (Newcastle Murder Hole). The landowner was not home when we arrived on a Saturday morning, and one member on the trip assumed that we could go in anyway. This was just after a group meeting in which we as a club had discussed the fact that we weren't to enter the cave if the owner didn't want us to. This member wanted to - BAD MOVE.

We also had a problem at the same cave this past winter. A member of the Cave Club put ruts in the field on a trip. I was unfortunately involved in the sticky maneuvering that took place for the following six weeks. Many of you did not understand the severe nature of the incident. Mike³ was repeatedly told he was over-reacting. I was with Mike³ when he went to talk with Mr. Sizer, and it was obvious he was not over-reacting. What Mr. Sizer was most upset about and "will never forget" is that whoever made the ruts did not come in person to apologize or amend the damage immediately. Mr. Sizer did appreciate us coming by to see him and check for erosion. (Well? Was he eroding? --Eds)

The moral of this story is if you do something wrong (no matter what) on a landowner's property, always admit to, fix, or apologize (preferably all three) to what you have done. If you don't it causes problems for everyone. One caver's actions can

affect the general well-being of caver-landowner relations for all.

When talking to landowners (discussing their well-being, caves, or general gossip) never bullshit them or make promises you can't keep. They are not stupid. If you promise to come back the next week to say Hi!, map their cave, or even do some work, DO IT!

I have found cases in which members have promised the landowner something and then never followed through (thinking it's no big deal). True, some landowners don't care - but some do. If you think that a jilted landowner will later believe anything you say, think again. I know I wouldn't.

Just because we're cavers doesn't mean we have to cave and party all the time. What's wrong with taking one out of fifty-two weekends to help out a landowner? I'm sure they'd appreciate it. If you weren't at Picnic, ask someone about the great amount of work that was accomplished at Buddy's. He appreciated it. So would anyone.

A few last reminders:

1. Always leave the property with what you came with (or leave with more if you see some trash lying around).
2. Leave gates as you found them. Even an open gate (if you are unsure about a gate you found open - ask the landowner, never assume).
3. If you get out of a cave at a decent hour and you know the landowner has an interest in his cave stop by and tell them you're out, thank them, and tell a few highlights of the trip. Some photos of their cave would really brighten their outlook on caving, caves in general, or the club. (But if you get out late, remember to be QUIET --Eds)

Use your head and play it safe, don't do something you know is stupid. Think ahead about your actions, most mistakes can be prevented that way. Good caving to you...

Adam Hungerford

Yufus

Being Yufus isn't easy, and if Yufus thought it were, it probably wouldn't be. When the adventure began, reality hit Yufus like a six foot duffel dropped down Drinas by a stealth pelican.

In Tennessee, Moni told our mission. We were to travel deep into Mexico to find a small village located on the border of a dense jungle sinkhole valley. Past the fifteenth gate, where the muddy road ended, we would ask the natives to show us to the opening of a Grande Sotano. If the hiking were grim, and the Sotano big enough, we would call it Sotano del Moni. This could be a big find, since road travel was the main way for ridgewalkers to find virgin Sotanos in Mexico, and this road was fresh - it was not around in 1977.

Yufus did not go seeking glory, he sought in desperation for answers to his questions. The travel thrilled him, and the rappeling aroused him, but his presence and being revolved around getting those answers only The Cave Mother could properly reveal. "Why is this happening to me? What can I do to make it right? Tell me the answers, Cave Mother," persisted Yufus, "I have to know."

The reply Yufus got after four days of begging puzzled him enough to stop asking for a while. "Just wait. That's all you can do now, Yufus." So Yufus went away to mope. Moping became as routine as asking "Why?". Whenever moping and thinking caused to much confusion, the others were questioned and the moping continued.

When, after two weeks Yufus was still lost, he discovered how lost he really was, or at least he thought he had. "To be, I must ask why!" said Yufus to himself, but he was gone. No answers surfaced and he denied being. He was to told to be, but Yufus couldn't "just be." There had to be something more, something better, some amazing reality, but there wasn't.

Even today, Yufus asks everyone he meets "Why?" but no one knows the answer. Even if someone could explain everything to Yufus, he still wouldn't understand. If Yufus ever were to think he was being, he probably wouldn't be and if he actually were being, he wouldn't realize it until too much time passed for anything to matter.

Bryceeeeeeeeeee

RABANITOS

Charles Schulz



A Reason to Live in the Big City

When I arrived here at Virginia Tech, I wondered what I was going to get involved in for recreation. I first heard from another student about a cave club, so I had to check it out. I had no idea that this cave club actually caved. (No, we actually just party.--Eds)

My only experience with caves were those glorious commercial cave tours. Before the club I thought that they were the greatest thing on earth, well, under the earth. I would go to every commercial cave I passed when on a trip. I thought they were the only caves. Being from Southside Virginia where there's no limestone, I had no idea of areas such as Giles county (swiss cheese). On the commercial tours, I was really bored with the walkways and the railings. However, I was impressed with the natural part of the caves. I really just liked being underground. I always wanted to check out the hole that they wouldn't let you near, and the lead that you could see disappearing into the shadows. At commercial caves, they always told the story of how the caves were discovered and explored. I used to dream about cave exploration and finding a cave. I had no idea that one day I might even consider calling myself a caver.

Now I think I will never go to another commercial cave, because it would be a disappointment. Caving has become a big part of my life. It has changed the way I look at things, especially the way I view the outer world. (How? How, dammit? --Eds)

The Trainee Program is very good for people who know nothing about caving. I want to approach every trip as a learning experience. Any cavers out there, if you see me doing something stupid, yell and bitch at me, tell me what I am doing wrong; all suggestions and advice will be appreciated. Thanks to all you members out there who took me caving. I really enjoyed it!

I will return to the farm after school because I can not stand big cities like Blacksburg. However, caving has given me a reason to live in this metropolitan area and attend school.

Jim Pugh

Life at the Signout, or Help, Help, I'm Trapped in Your Bathroom

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live at the Signout? Ah, that place of refuge for homesick students, that site of many a party, that meeting place, that rendezvous, that sewing factory, that home brewery.

Yes, the Signout has many faces. Like the ocean, it has tides and like an erratic but faithful heart, it is arrhythmical and pumps. And man, it pumps. But the pulse of people and noise comes to a dead stop for two hours every Friday evening at 7:00.

From the wind chimes next door to the sewing machines humming; from Suki's "Rrrr rrrr"ing and sneezetalk to the sound of Cecile's near-constant hammering, pounding, and circular-sawing, the Signout has its familiar music. In my basement room, I am treated almost daily to Joel's marvelous discourses in the back yard as he admonishes the dogs.

"Now, Ronald Ann, I don't want to have to talk to you about this again. You know you are not supposed to get in the garbage can. We have talked about this before. I don't know what I'm going to do about your behavior." As Joel continues with great seriousness, I know I am not listening to Joel, but to Joel's father, or his father's father, or a teacher, or someone from any of our distant pasts... Looking out the window, I can see Joel with both arms extended in the universal gesture of helplessness. Ronald Ann sits quietly, cocking her head and looking at Joel with reciprocal seriousness.

Ronald Ann! Part child, part goat and part Terminator, compressed in the witty body of a dalmatian! Ronald Ann, brimming with enthusiasm, wagging her whip-like tail so hard her rear end threatens to fly off her bony body. Ronald Ann, eater and destroyer of calculators, shoes, rollerblade protective gear, special pens from Japan, watches, seam rippers, knee pads, cans of spray paint, and brassieres. Ronald Ann, delighter in bathroom trash can strewing! Ronald Ann, now banned from many parts of the house by means of barriers. According to Cecile, heaving ourselves over the Ronald Ann barriers all the time increases our flexibility. We're darned lucky to have that Ronald Ann.

And then there's Cecile. Living with her is easy, and refreshingly unpredictable. It's kind of like being in the eye of a tornado. A good tornado eye, that gets a lot done. An eye that rips me up with constant humor, sometimes subtle, often wry.

Cecile enjoys catching me eating when she empties her mouse traps. "Look, Laine! Two in one trap. Snapped both their heads off together. Ever see anything like it?" "Thanks, Cecile, I'll just finish this pizza later. Maybe." Of course, she's not limited to exhibits. "Hey, Laine, did you ever watch a mother dog eat her young? It's great." I didn't want that TV dinner anyway.

I'm descended upon. "Laine, Laine! You stole the sand worm! You stole the sand worm! Why did you do it?" I'm clueless. I've never even heard of the sand worm. Cecile often accuses me of lying as well as theft and sneakiness. (That's because Laine lies, steals and is sneaky--Eds)

Another time, just up, I'm groping for that coffee cup. My forearm is seized. "Laine, Laine! Which is colder?" My forearm is plunged into a cooler of ice water. "Ce--" I croak. "My coff--" My other arm is plunged into a different cooler of ice water. Yikes! "Which is colder?" It is demanded of me. "This--" (Plunge) "or this?" (Plunge) "Cecile-- my coffee first --" I stammer piteously. Wunderwear is testing cooler covers, and let the passerby beware!

From my bedroom to that first morning cup of coffee is a gauntlet to be run, between the dogs, the occasional customers, the UPS guy, Cecile's secretary's small child, and the seamsters. Mainly, it's the seamsters. Bless their ubiquitous hearts. They are prone to observations about the life I can't help living in front of them. "You're always cooking something," observed one. (You're 10 feet from my kitchen all day. Of course I'm going to cook a few things.)

"You're so funny the way you come out of your bedroom first thing in the morning and head for the bathroom." (If I had been in your hallway when you got up this morning, where would you have been headed?)

One worker doesn't have a phone at his house. He arranges to receive calls while he is working here, adding to the general confusion of a house with three separate phone lines. He says it saves him money and besides, he finds a phone ringing at home annoying! This particular worker (not a caver) says, "That sure smells good," every single time I fix something to eat. I have gone upstairs to cook, just to keep from hearing him say, "That sure smells good."

Before heaving myself over the Ronald Ann barrier into my kitchen/sewing factory, I can usually tell who is working there. Country music--it's our cutter, easygoing Hoss Cut-Right. Classical music...it's Eleanor. WUVT or rock and roll and it's a good bet the Chum is generating kneepads. 1960's and '70's tapes that drag

constantly--"Downnnnnnn beeeooooooy the rihhhhhhhhveor, I shot my baoaoaoaby..." and it's the aforementioned non-caver from Moochland. Redheaded Judy just listens to whatever is already on.

Late at night the sewing shop takes on a calmer character. WUVT or NPR and nobody in sight means that Cecile is in and out. Now's a good time to bounce ideas with her, or study at the kitchen table.

The Signout is a great place to live if you like to be up on the Cave Club activities, and your constitution is flexible. I take it in stride now when I come home--at 2:00 a.m.--and 8 people are baking 22 apple pies, or Cecile is tearing out a wall. I wasn't surprised to wake up one morning after a big party to someone's pleading, "Help, help, I'm trapped in your bathroom." (The lock mechanism had deteriorated). I remain unfazed at meeting interesting cavers from different parts of the world while clad in my bathrobe with my hair doing the bed thing. Certain times of the year, most notably before TAG and OTR, the upstairs living room resounds with hordes of folks running rope. I like the commotion.

Often I find a pleasant scene: the wood stove going, a movie on and the living room pit full of people sacked out relaxing. Ko and Scotty-Boy--well, that's a whole other story. In the summer, there's usually a choice of sunny or shady decks, and all the tomatos you care to eat. Cave trips coming and going provide excitement and confusion. All things considered, the Signout is a lot of fun. And here's a secret. About midsummer, if you pick the raspberries for Cecile, she will reward you with a little pie. We're talking heaven. And you don't even have to live here.

temporarily ex-trainee scum

Laine Buckwalter



Photo by Bryce Bolton

Food For Thought

What is a good food to take underground? This is a question asked by most new cavers when they go on a trip that is a couple of hours long. Usually they will go to Radford Brothers before leaving Blacksburg and get some assorted foods, watching what the members and more experienced trainees are buying to determine what they should get. I have seen people get sandwiches, bagels, crackers and cheese, tootsie rolls, chocolate, and hard candies. The candy gives you sugar boosts necessary for instant energy, and the complex carbohydrates are required for long term energy consumption. Now that we have some examples of food to bring underground, how do you take it with you?

Well, you need a container that is going to fit in your pack and will hold the food. I first used a cookie tin, but found it would leak on any wet trips. Now I use a quart Tupperware[®] container which works well because its rectangular, it is water resistant, and the food compacts in it well. An important thing to consider when buying food is to think about what type of container you have, and always buy what will fit. My sandwich always gets crushed, but the crackers and cheese fit perfectly; it is possible to fit them two high and four across which takes up half your food supply. Then I put Toosie Rolls[®] in because they stand up perfectly in the container and can fill all the cracks and spaces too small for anything else.

Lets review what we've learned... Remember to get simple sugars for the quick burst of energy, and complex carbohydrates to sustain yourself for the long trip. The container you should use for your food should be of adequate size, and being water-resistant is a big plus. And don't forget, Tootsie Rolls[®] fit anywhere!

idea by: Robert 'BOB' Cosby

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Evidence of Previous Exploration in a S.O.C.'s Cave

One of the most exciting facets of caving is surveying nice virgin cave. In fact, it is probably the single largest reason we go caving. One of the most depressing possibilities in caving is to find that someone has been in your virgin passage before you. This is where that nasty word scoop comes in. Therefore, you can imagine our surprise and dismay when we recently found evidence of human activity in what we had previously thought to be virgin cave.

I know you're going to ask me "How do you know the cave was previously unexplored?" Well, let me back up in my story. First, the only possible entrance to the cave was dug open by ourselves. Second, a short overhung pit further in required us to set bolts. Thirdly, a complicated route through a massive breakdown collapse must be negotiated before reaching the main cave passages. All of this leads us to believe that whoever entered the cave did so after we had commenced exploration.

We were happily surveying down a stream passage when we encountered two slabs of breakdown. It was necessary to crawl between the slabs before continuing. The lead tape set a station on the lower slab, we did the shot and moved on. As I sketched the cross section at the slab crawl I noticed a small lock of hair stuck in a 'V' where the slabs came together. I yelled, "Hey you buffoon, did you get your hair caught in the crack?" Then I realized my lead tape had blond hair, this sample was black. We discussed how it could have gotten down here, maybe a raccoon, or maybe it was cow hair washed in from the surface. Someone as small as myself could easily fit through the crack, but a larger person would have to position their head awkwardly up in the crack. Upon further examination we noticed the hair seemed greasy, not just wet, (which it was) but greasy - like Dippity Doo or something.

We got back to surveying down the stream passage and more or less forgot about the hair. Several hundred feet further the stream flowed into a massive breakdown pile on the right. As we went up the rock and mud slope on the left we noticed skid marks, then footprints! Somebody had definitely been here before. We had been scooped! We set two more stations up to where the breakdown met the ceiling. Not finding any way further on we sat down for a snack and discussed our situation. While we took turns proposing various tortures for our scooper someone said, "Look, a crystal!". I reached over and picked up the shimmering white object from the dirt. It was plastic! There was a small hole...it was a sequin! We made a joke about what kind of caving fashions

Cecile was sewing. Then we found another...and another.... We didn't know what to think. I mean some people wear some really strange caving attire. We started crawling over the rocks looking for more evidence. While observing the strange flat soled boot prints we found what we were looking for. Right over by a small block of breakdown it glistened in the light of our carbide lamps. A rhinestone, still in its delicate brass setting. If anyone knows the whereabouts of the scooper please contact S.O.C.s.

-S.O.C.s



A Different Clover Hollow

On Saturday, February 29 I went on a trip to Clover Hollow Cave. The trip consisted of Kirk Digby, Steve Wells, Chris (the cadet), Kevin McElroy, and myself. After Steve, Kevin, and I pulled Kirk out of bed we signed out and headed for the cave. I was the first one to change into my fashionable cave attire (obviously a trainee --Eds.) so I decided that I would walk to the entrance and start rigging. As I walked to the pit I noticed that the little trickle of water that usually runs down the wall had turned into a decently sized stream, hence a nice sized waterfall. When everyone finally got their act together we gathered around the entrance trying to decide if we really wanted to go. We made drysuits from our garbage bags and headed into the pit praying that the rope we brought would be long enough.

With everyone safely down we looked back for our last glimpse of sunlight and saw a spectacular sight. The sunlight shining down the pit turned the falling water into gems. It looked as though diamonds were falling all around us. I wished I had brought my camera.

After taking in the sight for a while we lit up our lamps and headed into the darkness of the cave. We strayed from the normal tourist route and followed the stream at the bottom of the canyon drop. It was interesting, we saw things like a 4 foot soda straw. We then went to the library and played a couple of rounds of hearts, a newborn tradition on Kirk's Clover Hollow trips. By this time we had killed six or seven hours in the cave so we decided to head towards the surface.

Descending through the waterfall proved to be more fun than climbing back up it. By the time we reached the surface we were all freezing and soaked but despite that it was a good trip. We all got to see a different Clover Hollow from the one that usually presents itself.

Chris Brown

The Rules of Bedroom Golf

1. Each player shall furnish his own equipment for play, normally one club and two balls.
2. Play on a course must be approved by the owner of the hole.
3. Unlike outdoor golf, the object is to get the club in the hole and keep the balls out.
4. For most effective play, the club should have a firm shaft. Course owners are permitted to check shaft stiffness before play begins.
5. Course owners reserve the right to restrict club length to avoid damages to the hole.
6. The object of the game is to take as many strokes as necessary until the course owner is satisfied the play is complete. Failure to do so may result in being denied permission to play the course again.
7. It is considered bad form to begin playing the hole immediately upon arrival at the course. Experienced players will normally take time to admire the entire course, paying special attention to well formed bunkers.
8. Players are cautioned not to mention other courses they have played or are currently playing to the owner of the course being played. Upset course owners have been known to damage a player's equipment for this reason.
9. Players are encouraged to have proper rain gear, just in case.
10. Players should assure their match has been properly scheduled, particularly when a new course is being played for the first time. Previous players have been known to become irate if they discover someone else is playing what they consider to be a private course.
11. Players should not assume a course is in shape for play at all times. Some players may be embarrassed if they find the course to be temporarily under repair. Players are advised to be extremely tactful in this situation. More advanced players will find alternate means of play when this is the case.
12. Players are advised to obtain the course owner's permission before attempting to play the back side.
13. Slow play is encouraged; however, players should be prepared to proceed at a quicker pace, at least temporarily, at the owner's request.
14. It is considered outstanding performance, time permitting, to play the same hole several times in one match.
15. The course owner will be the sole judge of who is the best player.

★Players are advised to think twice before considering membership at a given course. Additional assessments may be levied by course owners and rules are subject to change. For this reason, many players prefer to continue playing several different courses.

NEW!

From Vinnie's Motorcycle Repair, Firearms, All-Nite Nude Revue, and Caving Supplies comes the CAVEATRON®! As cavers and follows of the Elvis grotto, we here at Vinnie's believe that caving would be a very enjoyable, safe recreational activity, were it not for a few minor inconveniences:

- Having to walk, climb, crawl, or chimney.
- Having to carry a pack.
- Having to wait for slow trainees.
- Having to wear clothes.

Therefore, our Research and Development team decided that something had to be done to improve the enjoyment and safety of caving today. So they set to work. They labored long and hard through minutes and minutes of Star Trek episodes, war movies, and beer. Through their long, hard, arduous labor, they discovered it is possible to drink a minute of beer, after enough drinks beforehand. Additionally, this labor produced a substantial byproduct: the CAVEATRON®.

The CAVEATRON® is revolutionary, and will set the standard of caving for years to come! The CAVEATRON® will not only change the way you cave, it will change the way you live! Not since the inventions of beer and miniskirts has there been a recreational device so well suited for the human race!

The CAVEATRON® is a simple device which works on the basic principle of matter to energy conversion. This principle can be seen readily applied in the transporter on Star Trek. The underlying equation of this principle is:

$$E = mc^2 \quad (1)$$

where

E = Energy

m = Mass

c = the speed of light

Here's the deal: You supply the m , and the CAVEATRON® will accelerate you to the c^2 to convert you to E .

The basic components of the CAVEATRON® are:

1. 10 metric tons of C-4 plastique explosive
2. Navigation device

Simply set the destination coordinates in the CAVEATRON®'s navigation device to the desired part of the cave you wish to be in, and activate the CAVEATRON®. Voila! In a matter of milliseconds, you should be in the cave passage you originally programmed in!

Is the CAVEATRON® safe? We have tested the CAVEATRON® with two of our research scientists, Fred and Bob, and the results of both tests confirmed that neither man was anywhere to be seen after using the CAVEATRON®. Therefore, we conclude that they both must be underground, exploring their favorite cave passage. So, as you can obviously see, the CAVEATRON® is perfectly safe!

And the CAVEATRON® is cheap too! Right now, we are offering the CAVEATRON® for only \$19.95. That's right - \$19.95! Did you hear that? - \$19.95!! (What--no Ginsu Knives? --Eds)

Due to federal illegal arms sale regulations, we can only offer the CAVEATRON® for a limited time. Act now, and you can get your CAVEATRON® today!!

To get your CAVEATRON®, please send your check, money order, or Harley-Davidson parts to:

CAVEATRON®
IBDUM
P.O. Box -6
Radford Army Ammunition Plant
Radford, Va.

WARNING! The CAVEATRON® is not recommended for small children, heart patients or pregnant women. Only use the CAVEATRON® in a large, open, unpopulated, seismically inactive area.

Pool-Caving-Darts-Beer [The all inclusive]

The purpose of this paper is to note the behavioral traits of the subjects within the subculture defined herein as the VPI Cave Club...of the NSS.

Many observations have been compiled by my fellow Research Supervisor of the Unbeknownst (yet, known to us) Research Technicians of the Observational Research and Data Gathering Grotto of the VPI Cave Club of the...nSS and I.

To our unbeknownst dismay, however, all relevant research data was tragically begotten by a plague of alcoholic consumption. And unbeknownst to your faithful Researchers...of the NSs, the technically superior than thou computer on which we are dissertating appears to be under the influence of some techno-acid in its own right, hence the lack of coherent alignment and data procession.

As to the previous points, the rite of caving, as it is alleged or apparent call of the club, as seen by the official name of the organization, is by no means the sole conglomeratory factor of the Organization...of the NsS. Although it may be politically uncouth to acknowledge the prevalence of alcohol, pool, and sharp tiny metal objects in association with many of the subjects within the subculture of the...nSSs, it be there!

In order to research this topic thoroughly, due to the apparent loss of the apparently pre-collected data, your ever-reliable Research Technicians...of the Nss have spent many long and tedious, although rewarding, hours penetrating your SIN-driven Organization to research the benefits of the combination of caving, beer, pounding little balls into various other little balls and thusly into various holes, and darts.

The Researchers of This Highly Intense Study...of the nsS, officially deem a correlation between the above variables, those being crawling in small dark muddy holes, *lots of beer*, pool, and darts, is positively present, but because of the

multitudinous hazards involved in the collecting of this useless data, we will conclude our Research and Data Gathering of the...nss, but continue the participatory section of the experiment in full force. Any of the previous subjects of this observational experiment who are interested in this data or the further research into these correlations, please contact:

Dr. Chris McGeehan

Dr. Steve Wells

Our current office hours: The Ton-80; any Friday night or by appointment.

CAUTION
TEST IN PROGRESS
DO NOT DISTURB

Murder Hole

It was Saturday, March 28 and we were going to Newcastle Murder Hole. The name itself gives a feeling of danger and difficult caving. It was going to be a small trip consisting of Mike Mike Mike, Adam Hungerford, Chris Brown, and myself. Chris and I were almost ready to come up for membership. All we had to do was take the written test and pass our climbing test. Adam thought that the climbing section of Murder Hole would be perfect for our test.

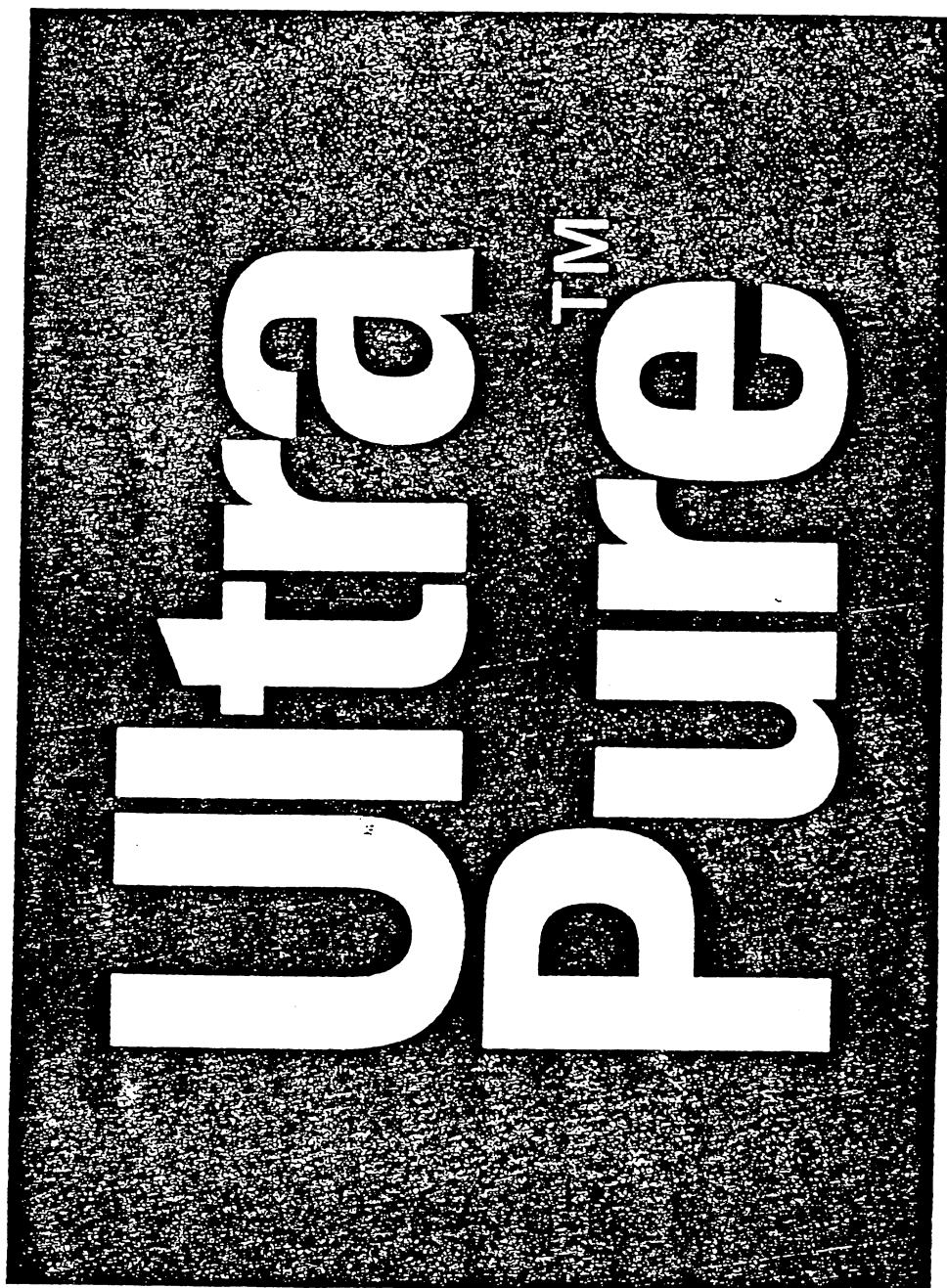
Since it was a typical cave trip we didn't get to the cave until about 12:30. We then talked to the landowner, Mr. Sizer, for a little while. We were worried that Mr. Sizer might not want us to go into his cave, but he was in a good mood despite having a cold. We finally got to the entrance pit, and after Chris and I rigged it to everyone's satisfaction we rappelled in. We all had been there before so we were quick in getting where we wanted to go. We decided to take a look at Double Wells before we did the climbing section. Chris and I were sorry that we hadn't convinced Adam and Mike Mike Mike to bring enough rope to rappel it.

We then all went to the climbing section. I found it difficult to get down, but presently we were all accounted for. We decided to look around awhile before going back up to the top. Someone found a passage that led to a small room. That in turn led to another room. The passage was situated in such a way that we could chimney up between two rocks. Chris was first, followed by myself, Adam, and Mike Mike Mike. On the way I noticed a survey marker on the wall and pointed it out to Adam; it was survey station #43. Adam immediately concluded that we were near the famous Slot 42, at which point Mike Mike Mike told Adam the name was Slot 43 and we had found it. When we asked why it was famous Mike Mike Mike said it was just a very difficult slot to fit through due to the fact that it is only 8 inches high.

After we decided to try and fit through it we quickly realized that Chris was too big. Mike Mike Mike fit through with ease, but I found myself too large also. Chris told me to take off some of my clothing. After shedding much clothing I managed to squeeze through, much to my amazement! Adam tried next, and got through with only minor scrapes, yet Chris still wasn't able to get through. We played around for some time, then decided to go to the climbing section. After all I'd heard about it, the climbing section wasn't really that bad; especially if you are tall like Mike Mike Mike.

The weirdest part of the whole trip was when we climbed out. It was still light outside. What a strange concept, a quick trip. Needless to say, Chris and I got our climbing signed off and we were ready to take the test. I'll always remember that trip though, the trip where I climbed through Slot 43 and felt like a real caver.

Kevin McElroy



OVERHEARD AND OUT OF CONTEXT

B.G. before trying on a wetsuit: "As bad as this crotch smells, my curiosity is killing me; I've gotta try this."

L.B. to C.J.: "I don't know, Cecile, I'm pretty desperate for sex."

C.J. on C.B. radio: "Gerald wants to get off."

M.F. to P.K.: "After all the years of French I've had I should be able to do just about anything with my mouth."

P.B.: "Nothing but almost the best for Sandy."

K.D. to R.G.: "My balls are still in Mexico. Pull forward."

U.S. customs official to R.G.: "Are you bringing anything back from Mexico besides dirt?"

B.B. to crew: "Coors Lite sucks, it tastes like a hangover!"

N.S. to J.G., D.W., J.W., and B.B.: "Does anyone have a stiff tool?"

H.L. to D.B.: "We'll just pick up some more jiffy weld in the morning."

From the Blacksburg Alternative Dump

The VPI Cave Club logged 1806 caver-hours in 60 trips between 1/11 to 4/26.

Warm River	P. Kirchman, M. Eisnebies, M. Fisher, J Yienger, K. Brenneman, R. Snyder	Is that a flashlight in your Speedo or are you just happy to see me?
Spring Hollow	P. Kirchman, B. Keller, M. Fisher	Complete waste of time! Not one <u>CAT</u> in the entire cave.
Junior Ferrell	D. Bruce, D. Cinsavich	Is he a caver? I didn't know he caved?!
Newberries	P. Sauvigne, E. Fortney, K. Ireland, D. Washington	Boltin' is Revoltin'
New River	M. Horne, D. Warren, P. Miller, J. Robinson, P. Kitchin	Removed a bunch of arrows and we all smell like douches!
Yer Cave	D. Colatosti, S. Wells, J. Pugh	Trying to kill off leads, but they would not die. Some horrible shit too.

VPI Cave Club
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