

The Tech Troglodyte



Spring 1995

The Tech Troglodyte

A Journal of the Virginia Tech Grotto of the
National Speleological Society



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Thanks to Lawrence Britt for
computer advise and to Dave
Shantz for late-night trips to work

Editor's Note	Eileen O'Malley	2
1995 Convention Update	submitted by Bob Hoke	3
One Memorable Excursion to Clover Hollow	Mark Ruocco	6
Caves Words Search	submitted by Chris Brown	8
Caving vs. Sex	M. Ruocco & C. Beasley	9
My First Caving Trip	Allison Dineen	10
New River Cave 4/1/95	Carl Bern	11
Grotto Grapevine	A.I. Cartwright	14
The Great Calf Rescue	Dave Colotosti	16
The Rest of the Story	Ray Sira	22
Tough Calf Cave Map	Ray Sira	25
Quotable Quotes	various folks	26
Smoke Hole	Nathan Sharp	27
Huntin' for Zirkel's Cave in No-ing Land	Cecile James	30
Clover Hollow Library Register Excerpts	submitted by Ray Sira	33
From the Signout		37

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Editor's Note

Many thanks to everyone who helped me pull off Picnic this year. Nathan Sharp was a first rate Hot Dog Guy and collected money so well that he ought to go into politics (but please don't!). Thanks to those who brought beer out (all six kegs) and to those who carried kegs home.

That's all. See, I didn't even beg and plead for submissions!



1995 NSS Convention UPDATE

submitted by Bob Hoke

[The following material was sent to the NSS News for publication in the June 1995 issue]

It's not too late! You can still decide to attend the one-and-only 1995 NSS Convention in Blacksburg, Virginia. Unless you have been living in a cave or something for the last several months, you surely know about this major speleological event occurring on July 17-21. The following are some last minute tidbits and a brief overview of the Convention to help persuade you to attend. If you want to get more detailed information, please consult your NSS News issues from February through May.

Blacksburg and the surrounding area are in the heart of Virginia's cave country so a Convention attendee interested in caving should have no problem finding a fascinating and challenging caving experience. If caving isn't your thing, this year's sessions are sure to be both educational and entertaining. There are activities geared for everyone in the family at this year's Convention, and the Convention staff is hard at work to make sure that things run smoothly and your stay in Blacksburg is as fun-filled as possible. And, if you pre-register, you will spend less time taking care of the boring business of checking into the Convention and you will get to those exciting activities immediately after you arrive in Blacksburg.

PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Although the deadline for getting the pre-registration discount is past, you can still pre-register by mail and avoid most of the waiting when you arrive. However, act fast because your pre-registration

must be received by June 30. Any that arrive after that will be returned to you when you arrive at registration. Also, please remember that credit cards will not be accepted for on-site registration.

REFUND POLICY: If you find that you cannot make it to the Convention, call or write us for a refund. Anyone whose refund request is postmarked prior to July 17 will receive a full refund after the Convention. If you just don't show up we can't give you a refund, but we will mail you your Guidebook and program.

DIRECTIONS TO REGISTRATION: Convention registration is easy to find. The exact instructions are in the May NSS News, but in case you can't find them, take Business Route 460 into the center of Blacksburg and turn on College Ave. Registration is in the Donaldson Brown Center that is on your right after two blocks.

DAY PASSES: Day passes are available for \$25/day. The pass includes the day's sessions, access to all the vendors, and access to the evening's non-dining activities. You can attend Monday's Howdy Party for an additional \$5 if you have a day pass, or for \$10 if you don't have a Monday day pass. You can attend Friday's banquet for an additional \$10 if you have a day pass, or for \$15 if you don't have a Friday day pass. However, we must have your banquet reservation by Tuesday, July 18. You can pre-register for day passes or purchase them at registration during the week. Day pass pre-registrations can be sent to P.O. Box 311, Burtonsville, MD 20866 before June 30. After that you will have to register when you arrive.

COMMERCIAL CAVE DISCOUNTS: Several of the commercial caves along I-81 and I-64 (on the way to the Convention) are expected to offer discounts to Convention attendees. When you visit one of these caves, just ask whether they are giving NSS members or Convention attendees a discount. You may be asked to show your NSS card.

CHILD CARE: We are still investigating ways of providing child care during the Convention. At a minimum we hope to provide a baby-sitting service during the Photo Salon and the banquet. Additional information will be available at the registration desk.

CAMPGROUND: The campground is a large, open athletic field. It has good drainage (for the inevitable Convention downpour), but there is almost no shade. We suggest bringing a tarp or other man-made shade. We expect to have bags of ice on sale at the campground throughout the week.

HANDICAP ACCESS: Most Convention facilities are handicap accessible. However, if you need any special consideration, please let us know ahead of time so we can insure that your needs are accommodated.

AUCTION & NSS MUSEUM ITEMS: Do you have lots of speleo-stuff cluttering up your house? Are you wondering what to do with those old items you used many years ago in your early caving days? Well, why not bring them to the Convention and donate them to the auction or to the NSS museum? Items donated to the auction are sold to raise funds for ongoing NSS expenses. If you have publications, memorabilia or equipment that is historically significant, this is a great time to cart it to the Convention and donate it to the NSS Museum. There will be a selection of

museum material on display during the Convention.

SPECIAL RUSS GURNEE

PRESENTATION: There will be a special presentation entitled "The Expeditions and Explorations of Russ Gurnee" on Monday at 2 PM. This will be a slide program describing the late Russ Gurnee's long and illustrious career as a speleologist and conservationist, both in the U.S. and throughout the world.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

RECEPTION: The Cave Conservancy of the Virginias' large exhibit on caves and cave science will be on display at the Blacksburg Natural History Museum throughout the Convention week. On Tuesday evening at 6 PM there will be a reception at the Museum to give the townspeople an opportunity to view the exhibit and to meet some "real" cavers. Everyone is invited to attend the reception.

VENDORS: Indoor vendors, including the NSS Bookstore and consignment sales, will be located adjacent to the primary Convention auditorium in the Donaldson Brown Center. The outdoor vendors will be located immediately adjacent to the campground.

In addition to the on-campus vendors, Blacksburg and the surrounding area include many stores that can probably satisfy any shopping need. This is a prosperous and growing region. ATM machines and other "big city" conveniences are readily available.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE

NUMBER: The Convention registration desk will have a telephone, and the registration staff will take emergency messages and post them on the bulletin board. However, the telephone number will not be known until registration is set

up. When registration is not open, emergency messages should go through the Virginia Tech Campus Police at (703)231-6183. Needless to say, this number should only be used for true emergencies.

HAM RADIO FREQUENCY: 147.48 Mhz seems to have become the de-facto standard simplex frequency used by "ham-cavers". There is no official Convention "talk-in" frequency, but you can probably find some cavers monitoring this frequency.

Don't miss out on the 1995 NSS Convention in Blacksburg.

Remember . . .

Virginia is for Cavers!

One Memorable Excursion to Clover Hollow

by Mark Ruocco

February 26, 1995, was an unusually warm and bright Saturday for winter time in the New River Valley. Naturally, ten VPI cavers headed straight underground to escape the scourge of sunlight and good weather for the comfort of darkness. Ray Sira brought along his camera and his expertise at cave photography, while a couple of trainees hefted the tripod and some rope for the drops that lay ahead. Once in, Ray set up his equipment to capture Susan Vermeulen's skillful glide down into the entrance hole of Clover Hollow. Nathan Sharp was asked to rig the first short drop inside the cave as a demonstration of his newly acquired skills. Three members drilled him on spotting the best rig point and the worthiness of his knot. Here, several trainees took the lead and did their first arm rappel, each skeptical that it really could be done until they each tried it and succeeded. Once at the bottom, Carl Bern took to rigging the next drop over the waterfall as the remaining veterans filed down behind.

Beyond lay the Canyon, which was rigged in two places by Ray and Carl with Mark and Nathan looking on with nervous interest. After what seemed an eternity, the group made it safely to the bottom and took a well-deserved break. Anxious to see the sights, the troop set off to conquer Dragon's Tail which turned out to be quite a challenge for trainees and members alike - mostly due to bats hanging in the most inconvenient places!

After sliding down the Dragon's Tail, Susan, Greg Frohn, Carl, Bill Brown, Nathan, and I sat down and scarfed up some lunch to refuel tired muscles. Carl's dark chocolate M&M candies seemed to be the most coveted items of the trip. Damn, they were tasty little things! Ray and the others wandered off to scout some more photo locations and set up down toward the library. Meanwhile Carl and Greg introduced trainees to the wonders of the thistle tube. Being cautious and tired at this point, I went feet first and was left wondering how to get back out. Carl came to the rescue, only to drop his lamp down the tube with me still wedged halfway inside it. This was a welcome turn of events since it diverted my attention in a hurry from my worries of being stuck! No harm done. Nathan and Jason braved going in head first and did considerably better.

The last adventure was to the library before beginning the five-hour trek back to the entrance (for all you speed climbers - it was a photo trip, okay!?). Susan, Corwin, Nathan, and I perused the wealth of "reading material" just waiting to be admired. I found a particularly amusing issue of High Society dating back to the 1970s. Being all a little weary, the crew of "researchers" gazed in delight at the feature article "Circus of Lust" which had seriously deranged-looking models engaged in some majorly weird circus poses. This quickly became the joke of the trip and later made it to comments at signout. Three quick photos by Ray and we

returned to make the dreaded ascent of the Canyon.

I snuck in on the trip not having learned my prussiking technique beforehand, so Carl accompanied me on tandem ropes on this first attempt at ascending. We stopped, suspended a third of the way up, and turned off our lamps so Ray could work his photo magic. Twenty some minutes later (a credit to everyone's patience with the unprepared trainee (self-admitted)), we both crested at the top. The trip back to the entrance was a slow process and it was close to midnight by the time the last rope was hauled up and a few warm beers were downed by a bunch of weary cave people. This was one trip to Clover Hollow not soon forgotten!

excerpt from The Caver Dictionary:

carl, v., to drop your light, especially down a pit, ie. "This would be a bad time to carl; the pit is 70 feet deep!"

See if you can find some of the words that describe caves.

CAVES WORDS SEARCH

The words go forward, backward, diagonal, and up and down.

C I T A E R H P E T I C L A C F E E R U
T C H I S V D G K X P D E M S Y U S A N
G J A P G W Y E J L Q N A M Z E B T T D
N T C R W X T P K N O W E F N D Q N D E
S U N M L A H S E T Q H D O Q R O I Z R
P W X A C S L E S R T Q T P Z A M O U G
Y N A I W A B W C O M S J G V P G J K R
K E L R R E O A E S E I N E W E O O H O
O E S E T L G L D M T I A M C R J G V U
D C N P F S E W I C N A I N O I O W J N
C I N A A P A L S O A V L V O E E M H D
M E E N S L W D I L F V T A S S A V L L
C L H O M A L T O P O S E K G S E H A T
W Y N X T U U O I S X O L R A M V M I C
M V T E L L L C C E C W P I N C I D S E
K C R U O J X O P E L X Y Y S S I T G T
Z Z R S F M W K C R X Q X V P S I D E O
E T I T C A L A T S D I Q J R M O I S R
X W R T X A H S P O P C O R N C N F P P
L I U J G S E T I T C I L E H Q C T W J

LIST OF WORDS

SPELEOTHEMS
HELICHTITES
SODASTRAWS
COLUMN
CARLSBADCAVERNS
MINERALS
SOLUTIONING
DELICATE
COLLAPSE

STALACTITE
FLOWSTONE
POPCORN
DRAPERIES
UNDERGROUND
WATER
JOINTS
PROTECT
POOLS

STALAGMITE
LIMESTONE
ACIDS
CALCITE
FOSSILS
REEF
PERMIAN
PHREATIC
CAVEICE

Submitted by Chris Brown

Caving vs. Sex

By M. Ruocco & C. Beasley

1. You always need ropes for caving.
Only sometimes do you need ropes for sex.
2. You can buy better equipment for climbing.
3. Caves always look better in the light.
4. It is good to have gas during caving.
5. You can easily leave a cave.
6. There are maps to caves.
7. Caves don't mind if you stop when you are tired.
8. You can get shots for what you catch in a cave.
9. It is understandable if you go down the wrong tunnel while caving.
10. In caves those formations are suppose to be there.
11. When caving, the more friends you have with you the more fun it is.



My First Caving Trip

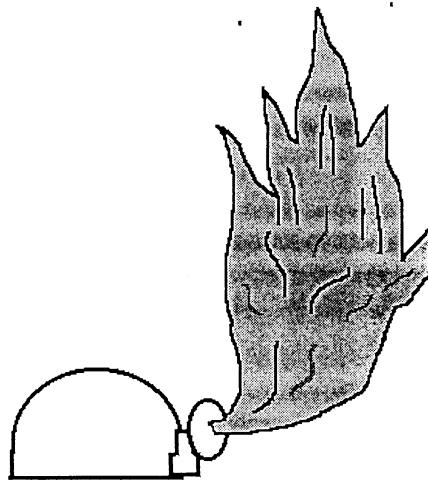
by Allison Dineen

I've always had an interest in caves for as far back as I can remember. Unfortunately, growing up in Western New York, there wasn't a cave within a hundred miles so I had to make do with what we had. When I was younger, about ten years old or so, I would drag my little brother into every crawl space and drainage ditch that I could find. We would occasionally come across a rat or a snake, but it only added to the excitement of the trip.

The first time that I saw the inside of a real cave was during the summer after my freshman year in high school. I was staying with my Aunt and Uncle in Salt Lake City and they took me to Timpanogos Cave National Monument one day. We turned down the "wild" cave tour for the more affordable commercial tour. The cave actually consisted of three small caves connected by manmade tunnels and the entire tour took a little under half an hour. The tour guide seemed to know very little about caves except for what he was taught to say, and he couldn't answer any of our questions. I was determined to go to a cave someday where I could explore wherever I wanted without having to stay on a cement walkway.

When I first came to Virginia Tech, I saw some fliers hanging up around campus inviting everyone to "come out and check out the Cave Club". I went to my first meeting and hooked up on a trip to Tawney's with Bob Cosby, Adam Hungerford and Leroy Burch. We got into the cave around 3:00 after a big misunderstanding about the designated meeting place and a short seminar on carbide lamps in Jim's driveway. Sadly,

most of my memories of my first trip are of how miserable I was. My lamp leaked the entire time and I managed to catch everyone on fire at least once. I swore to myself that if I ever went caving again, I would never use a carbide lamp.



I quickly learned why boots are recommended as I tried to climb a mud bank while wearing a pair of white Keds. By the time we got to the sinkhole, I was completely soaked from continuously sliding into the stream. We had a tremendous battle in the Phallus Room that left us all coated in mud and looking like walking sculptures as we emerged.

Overall my first trip was exciting and fun, but the most enjoyable part of the trip was eating stale bread in the back of Bob's van. I was amazed that something so horrible could taste so good after five hours underground.

NEW RIVER CAVE 4/1/95

by Carl Bern

The first time Mike Mirro mentioned this trip to me, we both agreed that it was the type of trip that actually required planning and strategy. We also had an unspoken understanding that only by a minor miracle would that planning be accomplished anytime sooner than twenty-four hours before the trip. I was more amused than surprised, therefore, when I saw Bob Cosby getting directions to the back of New River Cave at the Friday night party before the trip early the next morning. As Lawrence Britt related the various twists and turns and grim spots which make you wish you were above ground, Bob copied them down on part of an empty sixer of Sam Adams. He claimed he would transfer them to another piece of paper, but when we consulted the directions in the cave they were still on that same piece of cardboard. As word of the trip spread around the party, other cavers offered us encouraging words such as, "Don't be upset when you don't make it", or simply laughed. I left the party early, not wanting to miss out on my three hours of sleep.

We brave seven met at the new signout at 7AM the next morning. Bob Cosby, Steve Lepera, John McKenna, Mike Mirro, Steve Wells, David "Digby" Empson, and myself all milled around, filled up on carbide, piled into the vehicles, and headed out. We made the mandatory stop at Wade's on the way out of town and proceeded to the cave. Somewhere around 10AM we headed into the

cave. We made it to the waterfall, which I had not seen since my very first cave trip, without incident. Now we made our way into the section of the cave that includes Tuxedo Junction and other tight crawly things. This is where my helmet began with its familiar trick of letting my carbide lamp pop out of its bracket at inconvenient times (thank you to all who assisted with retrievals). I should mention now that I had borrowed my roommate's lamp for this trip. My own lamp was patiently awaiting rescue in Links Cave after problems similar to those I experienced on this trip. That, however, is another story to be told at another time.

The group pressed on, passing The Devil and Miss Jones and other landmarks on our journey to the back of the cave. After two wrong turns we arrived at a large room at the top of which is Parrot's Roost. At this point the group was divided as to which way to go. While Steve Wells scouted the other side of Parrot's Roost, I found myself looking down the 50' drop from this cross-over. As I leaned forward over the drop I felt my roommate's carbide lamp shift in its bracket once again and I watched as it tumbled into the black space below. It hit bottom with what I assumed was a \$40 bang and I cursed my luck with as much enthusiasm as I could muster. The lamp was retrieved later with only a cracked base to show for the fall, and was still functional, although it remained in my pack for the rest of

the trip. Having been thus inspired I began considering what it would take to construct an effective lamp belay system.

The group now split and Bob, John, Digby, and Steve Lepera arm-rappelled on webbing down from a ledge consisting mainly of loose sand. They were pursuing a large passage that rejoined the stream. At the same time Mike and I crossed Parrot's Roost on belay. This crossing is interesting because you are straddling a 50' drop from the top of a dome and you have to step-step-step-lunge to get across. I was now impressed that Steve Wells had gone across first without belay. On the other side of Parrot's Roost the three of us proceeded through some gloopy passage into what is easily the most pristine and beautiful section of cave I have seen in my short caving career. Soda straws beyond number, unblemished rimstone pools, and dry depressions filled with tiny white crystals were only some of the pretties we saw. We had to move slowly and carefully to avoid damaging the fragile formations that surrounded us. I urge anyone who visits this part of the cave to be careful to preserve it in its present condition as much as possible. I am sure that if this section were less remote it would have been trashed years ago. After moving through the pretties, we found that the passage rejoined the stream and at first seemed to end in a spherical room. Before we turned around we found an easy-to-miss slot in the wall that brought us into a thin passage with the stream in the bottom of it. We chimneyed along for a while in a vain attempt to avoid walking in the

stream. Before long, though, we were splashing in the stream trying to avoid the deep spots. With water flowing around our ankles we began to consider turning back, because it had been about an hour since we left the rest of the group. Fortunately, we pressed on and less than ten minutes later we reached the breakdown pile at the very back of the cave. A mere six hours and ten minutes from when we entered the cave we had reached our goal.

Our mission was to retrieve the register placed by Lawrence Britt in 1984 and replace it with a new one. We eagerly cracked it open and our hearts skipped a beat when Steve read the first page of the register stating that we were only half-way to the back. Locating the terminal survey point did put our fears to rest. Adding our names to the register brought the number of people who had reached the back since it was installed to fourteen. We could not install the new register because that was in Bob's pack, but we packed up the old one which was now our trophy. The three of us now splashed back into the stream discussing how best to present the old register to Lawrence.

We ran into the rest of the group in the glop just past Parrot's Roost. After giving them what directions to the back we could, Digby told us that we could not have any hints on how to get up the climb with the arm rappel. They headed for the back while Mike, Steve, and I crossed the Roost and went to the section they had explored. Later, when we began our attempt to get back up the sand ledge, we understood how helpful some hints might have been.

Steve managed to scramble up the drop with some difficulty, but Mike and I ended up using a technique that involved swinging on the webbing from a large rock on the floor across the face of the climb. The danger factor was increased when Mike detected movement from this huge rock when I was simply smacking my crusty gloves against it. We both made it up, though, and the rock is probably still sitting there waiting for time or heavier cavers to shift it.

The group was reunited again near Parrot's Roost. We felt bad when the others told us that they had not been able to find the back of the cave. They did not seem too thrilled about it, either. We began the return trip with little delay knowing that we had at least five hours of cave between us and the vehicles. After much grim caving we reached the waterfall again. As we dragged our weary bodies towards the entrance, we found tell-tale scat (cigarette butts) that told us of some nerd cavers were also in the cave. At 1:30 AM after fifteen and a half hours of caving, we emerged bone-tired under open sky.

At the bottom of the hill we changed out of our muddy clothes and I noted how well my new Wunderwear suit had protected me on its rigorous virgin trip. Everyone enjoyed a hard-earned post-cave beverage while we watched the nerd cavers come down the hill. After chatting with them for a bit we were amused to see them all hop into their cars without bothering to change clothes. I'll have to remember them the next time someone tells me that my truck is too dusty.

One would think that somewhere on this trip a truly funny April Fools joke would have occurred, since we were caving on April Fools Day. Alas, I must tell you this is not so. Some might say, however, that for missing a sunny spring day and spending fifteen hours underground we are the April Fools. Personally, I would reserve this title for Bob and Steve Wells because they were the ones who led a training trip the next day.

Grotto Grapevine

by A.I. Cartwright

This semester's Grapevine starts on a somber note. Don Davison, a VPI caver, went off to tackle all 22057 feet of Mt. Llullaillaco on the border between Chile and Argentina, hoping to complete the first solo climb. He was due back in March, but remains missing. Search efforts continue, and folks in Blacksburg are passing on information as quickly as it comes.

Ed Richardson's mom, known to many of the old farts, passed away in April. She will be missed by all the cavers she'd befriended over the years.

Let's move on to some typical caver gossip. As usual, Banquet brought out many long-unseen faces. The old folks were surprised to see Chickenwing (Mark Honosky) and his wife Margaret with a little boy in tow.

Ray Sira was the proud recipient of the Flame-out Award, although he doesn't remember the party at which he earned it. The P.W. Award went to Sarah Ludeke. She was given a leash which was placed around Bob Cosby's neck and attached to her finger. Taking advantage of the situation, she made him propose before letting him out of the collar. The wedding is planned for July 29, 1995.

On April 1st, Les Good and Berta Kirchman snuck off to the courthouse and made their cohabitation legal. So which one is the fool?

David Shantz and Kim Hanson celebrated their mutual birthday on March 19th. Given both of their fondness for beer and socializing, perhaps they were twin siblings separated at birth . . .

The club elected new officers this

semester. Alison Williams is now President, Carl Bern is Vice President, Jen Savage is Secretary, and Steve LePera is Treasurer. Best of luck to the new Cabinet; may they manage to interest more prospective members than they scare off.

Speaking of new members, the club gained a whopping two voting trainees this semester. Allison Dineen was voted in after several years of caving with the club, and Nathan Sharp just snuck in before the semester came to a close.

Glen Davis celebrated his birthday on April 11th. He claims he turned 39 (or is that the 39th time he's turned 19?).

Craig Ferguson landed a job working in Roanoke. He's amazed that people would pay him to do the things he did in his spare time for fun (which means either the job is really cool or Fergie's a total geek). Hard as they try, though, they still haven't gotten him into a tie.

Dave Colatosti finally managed to graduate, and promptly ran off to work in Maryland. Just as this occurred, Dave Warren, living in Maryland, decided to take a job in Alabama. Perhaps there's a cap on the number of Daves that are permitted to live in Maryland (obviously Virginia hasn't yet adopted this rule).

Paul Kirchman is making future plans. It all started with setting up a weekend love-nest in Richmond with Dabney Hammer. It seemed harmless enough at the time, but the next thing he knew, they were engaged! Rumor has it she plans to sweep him off to some exotic land, perhaps Kansas.

He's not the only crazy one with marriage in mind. Cecile James and

Gerald Moni are planning to tie the knot. Strangely, ever since the engagement was finalized, Gerald has been unable to see Cecile due to "leg pains." Sounds a bit psychosomatic to me

Lots of folks came out to Picnic this year, and most of them on Friday night. The club managed to polish off five kegs by Saturday night, more than what was finished all weekend in the previous few years. Jerry and Joan Redder and Alison Hedrick made an emergency trip from home to bring the 6th keg, but Sunday morning rain sent folks packing for home before folks could do it justice.

Perhaps the best contribution to the Picnic potluck came from Bill Stringfellow, when he unloaded boxes and boxes of Girl Scout cookies onto the food table. Several fights almost ensued as people scrambled to grab some of their favorites.

Club T-shirts sold like crazy prior to and during Picnic. Laura Ludeke has taken over T-shirt organization and is doing a great job. Check out the latest combination of Lawrence Britt and Pam Mohr's work!

Speaking of T-shirts, you may want to be careful about hanging around with Craig Ferguson. Apparently, while at picnic, he sold the Elvis Grotto shirt right off Paul Hess' back! I'm not sure the purchaser got such a good deal, since Paul had just cycled 45 miles in it.

It seems more and more people want to ride out to picnic nowadays. The bikers this year were Craig F., Paul H., Jeff Jablonski, Nathan Sharp, Philip Balister, and Bob Simonds. Bob was definitely the most stylish, riding out on his recumbent bike.

Don't forget about the NSS Convention on July 17-22! Lots of folks in Blacksburg have been working hard to bring about this summer's excitement. Try not to make their work in vain; everyone is encouraged to participate and assist whenever possible.



The Great Calf Rescue

by Dave Colatosti

I was lying in bed pondering the feeling one gets after sleeping twelve hours and waking simply by opening your eyes at no particular time. I was noting to myself that it was much better than being jarred out of a restful slumber by an obnoxious alarm, when I heard the rapid beeping of a distant cordless phone ringing. I had developed the habit of turning off my bedroom phone because of the hours my employer forced me to work, and, indirectly, sleep.

My initial reaction to this distant but annoying interruption of the morning silence was to roll over and ignore it, chasing my thoughts back into the smoky realms of dream. But a thought occurred to me. Since my long awaited graduation had come and gone, many of my resumes were now finding their way into some desk jockey's hands. I considered this and then it dawned on me that it was Friday and, at this time, the normal people of the world were up and about, tending to their own wants and whims, or rather to those of their employers. And with what seemed like a millennium of time while wiping the haze of sleep away from the recesses of my rested mind, I answered the phone, making an attempt not to sound like I was just torn away from sleep. The ruse worked.

Ray was on the phone. I decided that my vocal disguise of my early morning mental condition was no longer necessary and so I quickly lapsed back into that slurred and

sometimes incoherent voice of the waking mind. It is amazing what liberties we take with our friends, simply because they are our friends.

He informed me that a newborn calf had managed to find its way into the dark twisted recesses of a small cave. I made a quick assessment of my state of mind and upon deciding that I had slept enough to make up for the thirty eight hour sojourn without sleep, I agreed to participate. I informed Ray that I would get out to the farm as soon as I grabbed a quick bit of food and organized my necessary, implying clean, gear.

As I was sitting at the table enjoying my small bowl of frosted wheat puffs, an adequate and far less expensive alternative to *Super Golden Crisps*, reconstituted powdered skim milk, a serviceable and longer lasting alternative to whole milk; and a glass of *Drink-Aid Orange Drink Mix*, also reconstituted and much cheaper, in both price and taste, than real orange juice, the phone rang. As I choked down the last few drops of the thin milky white liquid masquerading as milk, Glen, who was on the phone, informed me of young calf that had found its way into a cave. I briefly wondered if there might be a market for a rescue group specializing in retrieving farm animals who seemed to think they were bats. But my early morning brain was beginning to spark to life and I quickly realized that Glenn's calf and Ray's calf were one and the same. I thought, "So much for the N.C.R.C. - The National Cow

Rescue Committee." Glen instructed me to meet Bill Steier and Don Anderson at his house. From Glen's house we would travel straight to the scene of the incident.

We three arrived at the Williams' farm around 11 a.m. and were directed to the cave by Jim Washington. As we reached the area, Ray was heading towards the cave with his cave suit on and cave gear in hand. We quickly followed him to the hole in question and arrived just in time to see him disappear into the warm darkness of a cave whose entrance seemed like it would be very difficult for anything to fall into. According to J.C. Links, they had discovered the mother cow standing by the entrance the night before. They could tell she was distressed by her loud and constant mooing. They soon realized by the presence of the nearby afterbirth the fact that this was one of the pregnant cows that was no longer pregnant, and by her persistence in staying by this cave, her offspring must currently be residing in this small hole in the ground. After a night of restless broken sleep worrying about the young calf that was sure to perish, they gave Virginia Tech's Geology Department a call. The department, apparently unaware that Carol Zokaites, a veteran of the cave club, worked in their geology library, instructed the Williams' to contact Ernst Kastening at Radford University. Being too busy with teaching his classes, he in turn passed it on to Don Anderson, a fellow caver in the NRVG, to handle. After Don had contacted a number of people in the NRVG who couldn't miss work or change their affairs, he

gave Glen Davis a call, figuring that the VPI Cave Club would have the people and desire to change plans and act on the incident. Meanwhile J.C. Links had driven by the farm and essentially accomplished the same thing in a minimum of time.

By the time the particulars of the story had been told, Ray called out from the dark nothingness indicating that he had located the young calf. After traveling approximately thirty feet into the cave and down two small drops and one not so small drop, the young animal was alive, and to the surprise and great relief of us all, uninjured! Bill, Don, and I returned to the vehicles to put our gear on and obtain some ropes, slings, and pulleys to aid in extricating this young fellow. Back at the cave, Ray informed us that the three drops were easily climbed, and so Bill and I joined Ray in delving into the place where calves dare to dwell. Don remained at the entrance to support our efforts from there.

In the cave, the three of us assessed the drops and how we might rig it to get our four legged friend out. He was situated at the bottom of a narrow twenty five foot pit. About six feet above the lip of the pit down a thin canyon was a small pinch which appeared to be smaller than our patient. We figured that we would rig up some kind of harness around our friend the calf and rig a pulley with a safety around a conveniently placed stalagmite located on the wall just above the pit. Don would haul from the entrance side of the pinch and we three would direct and assist our load as necessary.

Bill and I took to the task of

fitting some kind of harness to the calf while Ray rigged up the ropes and necessary equipment for safely hauling the calf out. I put this question to you , the reader, because Bill and I asked ourselves this question several times as we began working on our task at hand: How do you rig a harness to a creature about the size of a large Saint Bernard dog? We initially decided on using the components of Bill's sewn harness. But we still remained puzzled as to how to proceed with this adventure in creative rigging.

Bill and I were concerned that we might hurt the creature by our lack of knowledge in the area of "cows and harnesses that work well for them". After a few fruitless, and what appeared might be painful solutions, we sought some suggestions from Don and Ray. After some discussion and advice, we ended up tying a Swiss seat around the hind legs of the calf and using Bill's sewn harness around the front legs. Bill's waist belt on his harness served as a safety backup around the animal's abdominal region. We then linked the components together.

At this point we were still unsure of the gender of our patient. This information was not known since it had gone caving before anyone had seen it, and we had not made any effort to determine this. Apparently aware of our ignorance, our patient decided to inform us by relieving himself, and just to make matters complete, perhaps sensing what we were about to do to him, he had opportunely positioned himself on top of my rope. After what looked like gallons of urine had passed out of our uninjured and obviously functioning

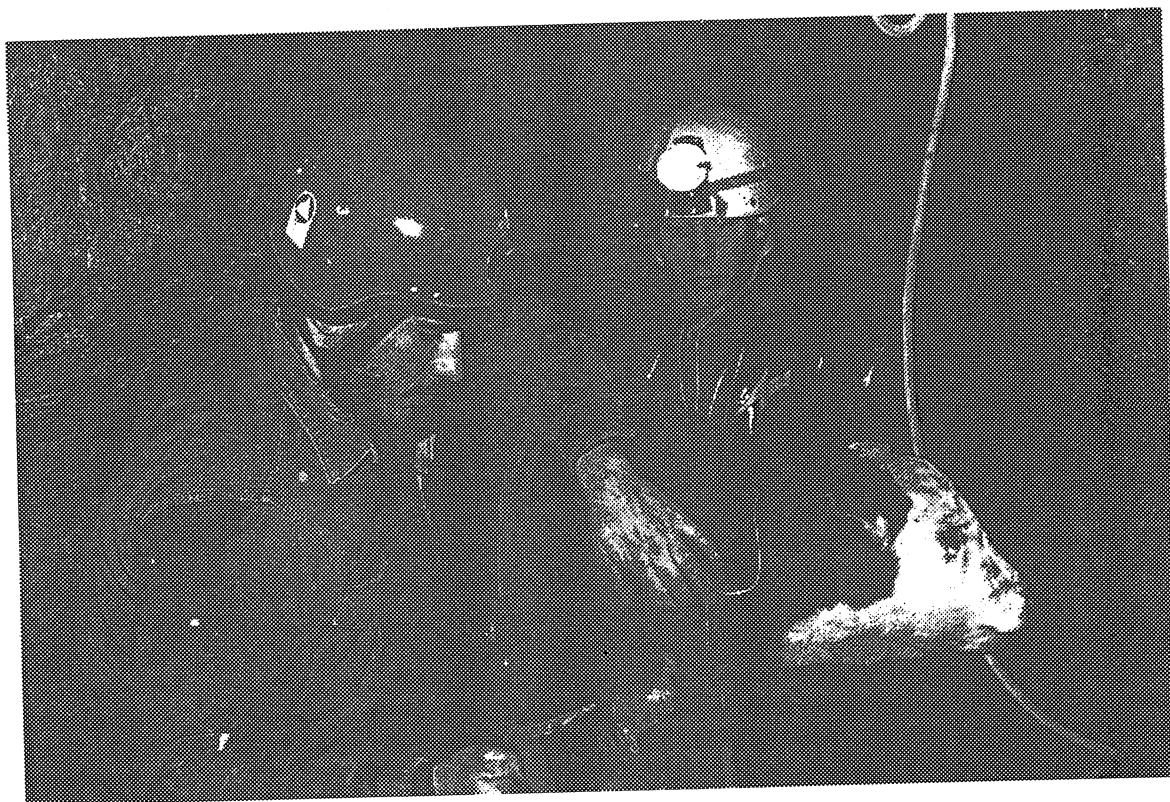
four legged caver, we made some final adjustments to the rigging and harnesses and attached him to the rope.

I positioned myself on a ledge about three fourths of the way out of the twenty five foot pit. Ray was in the narrow canyon above the pinch, and Don prepared to haul on the rope from beyond the pinch. Bill remained at the bottom with the young bovine to help him begin his ascent.

Sensing the upcoming situation, our friend tried to get away, but to no avail. Don and Ray had begun to haul and the calf was effortlessly moving up the pit. He gave one final "moo" of desperation in his inability to change the situation and then went completely limp and ceased struggling. I helped guide the bull away from the walls as he hovered above Bill, who expressed his relief that the young fellow had already taken care of his "business".

The bull was pulled up to the pulley and deposited in the narrow canyon with Ray. In its limp state, which one could not call uncooperative but could certainly not call cooperative, we often had to lift its head up over ledges and around rocks, since all he would do is hang there. Once we accidentally banged his head pretty hard against a ledge, but this didn't seem to phase our young friend. He didn't even blink an eye or make a sound, except for the thud of its thick skull against unyielding rock. This kind of reaction tends to lend credence to the belief that cows are not very bright creatures.

Once he was in the canyon, I repositioned myself just below the pinch at the end of the short canyon.



Photos by Ray Sira



Bill stood at the lip of the pit at the other end of the canyon, and Ray squeezed through to the other side of the pinch. Don had retreated with the rope to outside of the cave and began hauling. Bill navigated the calf as he slowly rose up toward the constriction. I was working at getting the calf's head out of a corner when I had the unfortunate luck of him stopping his ascent toward the pinch right at my eye level less than an inch from my face. His breath was heavy on my face and the odor was so horribly distasteful that a case of *Certs* wouldn't have helped make its breath any less hideous. His large brown eyes stared blankly into mine and I hoped with all my might that he would not suddenly stick his tongue out and lick my face. Little did I know, prior to brushing up on my Far Side reading, that the young bull was also secretly hoping that I would not do the same to him. Stuck in this terrible predicament, I urged the others to continue hauling on the rope. After Bill and I exchanged our positions, we gave the calf a final push through the pinch.

After the calf arrived in the twilight region, Ray exited the cave to prepare to photograph the momentous occasion of the young bovine's new found freedom. Bill and I had managed to lift the calf up the last four foot drop into the small entrance room. When the young calf saw the light of day, he began to stir and struggle. Bill and I made a quick move to calm the excited fellow, so as to make it easier for us to push him out the small entrance. With a final heave on the rope by J.C. and Mr. William's son, the young bull slid out of the entrance into the

comparatively bright gray of a cold January day. His eyes immediately brightened knowing he was freed from his black dungeon.

Bill humorously noted that the lucky guy had spent half of his life in a cave, and it was indeed true. The owner, amazed and relieved at the freeing of the uninjured animal, reached between the bull's hind legs and I half expected him to tell the calf to turn its head and cough, but he said to us, "This one's a keeper. Any guy that can survive that has got a set of balls. I am gonna call him Caveman and we're not gonna snip him."

If young Caveman had known what his underground adventure had actually earned for him, I think he wouldn't have minded it a bit. I think Caveman will have a long, healthy, and fruitful life and definitely stay far clear from caves, especially the one name in his honor, Tough Calf Cave. Hopefully his offspring will develop a similar distaste for caves and prevent the rise of NCRC. It would probably be a horribly political group with lots of bull being said, and not many being rescued. As for us, the real cave men, we ventured back into the recesses of the earth to gather up the gear left behind and see where this apparently virgin cave went.

And go it did; but that is another story . . .

The Rest of the Story (Following the Flowstone)

by Raymond Sira

Having left the calf safe in its mother's bosom Dave, Bill, and myself headed back into the cave to retrieve the gear and have a quick look around (scoop booty). At the bottom of the drop where we had found the calf, the only lead was a small hole 1 foot wide by 2 feet high that sloped downward for about 5 feet before opening up again. We pushed through to find ourselves in a room about 20 feet long by 6 feet wide and 8 feet high. The room was dry with a dry dirt floor, hundreds of crickets on the walls, and appeared to be virgin. It continued over a breakdown block and under some mud bridges to where it opened up again for another 30 feet. At this point the passage makes a turn to the left and as we peered around the corner we were greeted by two 4 foot high broom stick stalagmites with hundreds of soda straws in a small alcove behind them.

After few minutes of patting each other on the back and gazing in awe at the sight before us we continued on. Directly underneath the two stalagmites a narrow hole dropped down through some flowstone-covered breakdown. It dropped 10 feet straight down but was found to be easily climbable. We climbed down to find ourselves standing in a room where I was afraid to move for fear of soiling forever the beauty of the pristine formations which lie before me. Surrounding us on all sides were formations of all kinds. The near wall was covered with small delicate white helectites that curled

out from it in all directions. The entire floor was covered with a cascade of flowstone, rimstone dams, and stalagmites; in front of us almost cutting the room in half was a line of stalagmites, stalactites, and two columns more than 10 feet high.

As we carefully chose our path through this wondrous place we passed a crystal clear pool of water on the left that descended a series of tiny rimstone dams and then at the far end of the room, standing like the monolith from 2001, for the first time ever a giant column was touched by light, having quietly stood guard over this dark place for millennia. I stood there and as I admired the beauty all around me I thought to myself, "This is why I'm a caver."

We had seen enough for this trip and as we turned and headed out of the cave there was much discussion over what we should tell the others outside. In the end we decided this would not be a secret cave; something as beautiful as this needs to be seen and admired in person and with a little cooperation it can be.

A few weeks later, on a bitter cold February morning, I again found myself standing at the cave's entrance. It was time to survey this cave and see what else was waiting to be discovered. Dave C. was doing sketch, Bill Steier was lead tape, and I was reading instruments. We reached the point where we had turned around on the last trip in 14 shots, and as Dave tried to catch up with his sketching I took a look around.

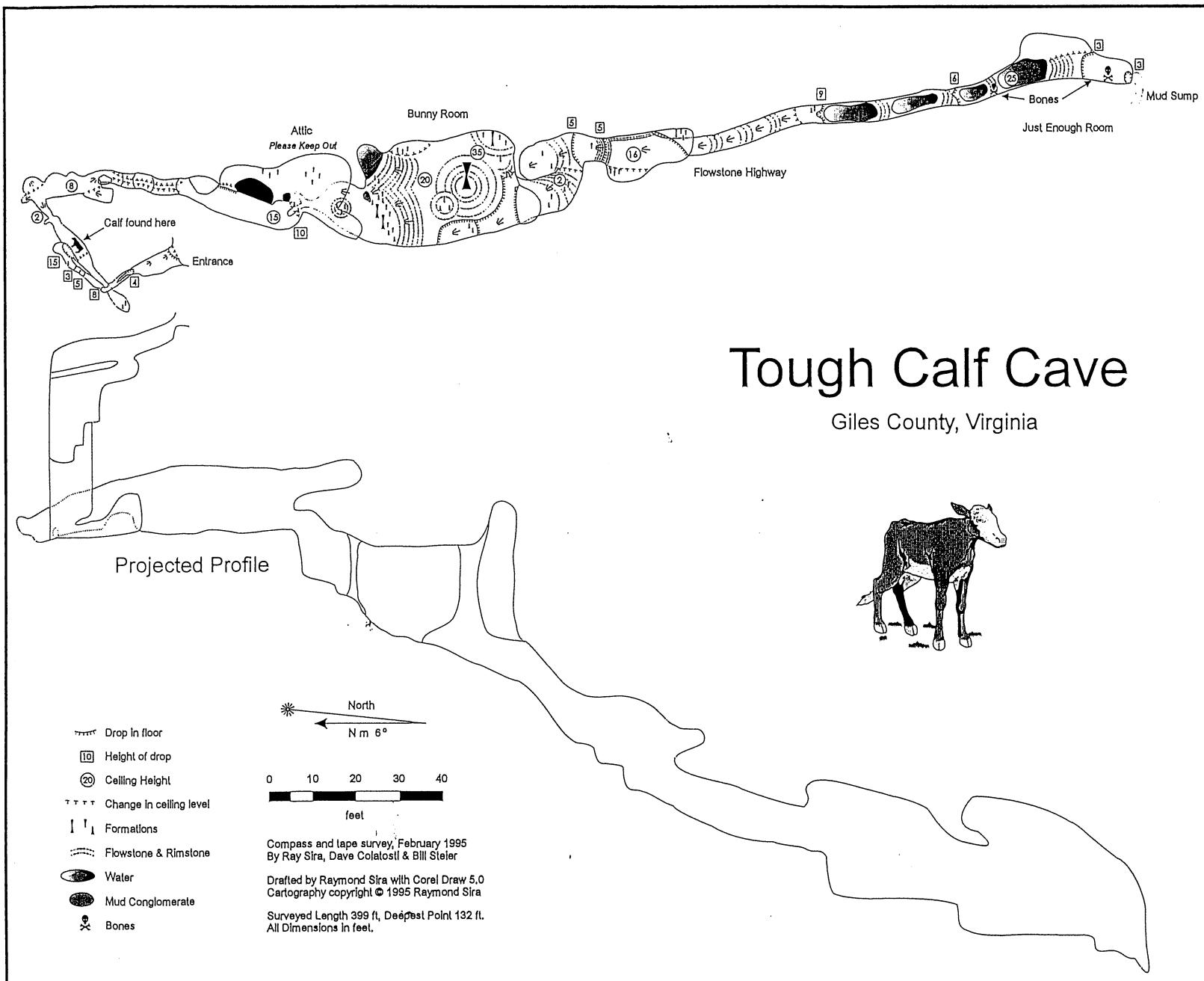
The room measured 50 feet long and about 25 feet wide. At its far end the large column appeared to be flowing out of a dome about 35 feet high and the flowstone around it created a frozen waterfall flowing into a two foot high slot at the end of the room. On the other side of a tight horizontal slot the passage continued as a tall, narrow, perfectly straight canyon and descended rather steeply. The passage was beautiful; every visible square inch of wall, floor, and ceiling seemed to be covered with flowstone and formations. We continued the survey down a number of flowstone cascades, one being almost 10 feet high, and across a number of shallow pools. At one point we saw a small animal skeleton imbedded in the flowstone floor. The passage continued for just over a hundred feet and ended in a small room where the water trickled down through a small muddy hole in the floor. We stuck Dave down it with his rubber suit on but it turned out to be a mud sump.

We searched for side leads but did not find any, and at 399 surveyed feet in 24 stations and a depth of 132 feet we ended our survey. We never found the big mother borehole we had hoped for but in all honesty I can say we found the prettiest little cave in Giles County. If you would like information on how you can see this very little cave just give me a call; however, I would like to set a few ground rules to help preserve it. First I would like to limit access to experienced cavers only, in other words no beginner trips. Also, trips should be kept small; 3 - 4 people per trip would be ideal as there is not a lot of room were groups of people

can stand without doing damage to the formations. Please do not enter the area above and directly behind the first two broomstick stalagmites. This is a very delicate area; it lies directly above the main formation room. Anything dropped from this area will damage the formations below. I plan to flag a trail through the main formation room to minimize caver impact; please stay on the trail. The cave's owner has been very cooperative and with some cooperation on our part we will have use of this newly found wonder for years to come.



Photo by Ray Sira



Quotable Quotes

BB to SS: "You know, it would be pretty fun to use Magic Shell in bed."

CF to LB: "You made my thingie wiggle today."

PM to AD: "Doing things on your back is always better than doing them the other way around."

LB to CF: "So, do you want my stuff or not?"

SS to SR: "Do I look like a blond with big tits and an ass that tastes like French Vanilla ice cream?"

PB to BS: "I laid down to put on my pants and I couldn't get up."

PK to DS: "All my stuff is good stuff."

SV to ML: "I don't know the names of a lot of people here, but I do know their measurements."

RS at
Banquet: "I don't remember getting real drunk and sick . . . oh, yeah."

SMOKE HOLE 4/9/95

by Nathan Sharp

It is really something unexplainable. Asking, "What is it like underground?" is like a blind person asking what the color blue looks like. It's just something you have to experience to fully understand, and I think that you need to do it more than once.

My first trip was a long, involved, crazy trip with lots of people - hence slow moving. Even after all 9 hours of being underground I still didn't appreciate the subtlety of the experience. While I was sure that I enjoyed the occasion, something hadn't clicked, and I noticed the disparity between how I thought I should feel about the trip and how I did feel about it.

About a year and a half later I was sitting in the shade of Smythe at noon on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon joking, "Man, we gotta get out of this ugly sun and find a nice dark, cold, muddy hole." It always seems counter productive to evade a warm spring sunny day by exploring the underneath of a mountain, but to me the underground is just as peaceful as above.

This was one of those days where there are lots of cavers going out, about 10 or 15 - many of whom are first timers, so there is mass confusion and general slowness. I have learned to just relax on days like these and enjoy the last few moments in the light while we get everything together.

It is not until two hours later, after splitting up into two smaller trips and racing over the mountains of 460 stuffed in a little old stick shift, that we dress in our warm clothing and smell the scent of acetylene.

We were headed into Smoke Hole

with hopes of going the Water Exit way out. Since it was hot, Mike Mirro and Andy Sabalowsky decided to go in the Water Exit. Allison Dineen, Matt Barnett, and I decided against it and hiked up the hill to the normal entrance.

Just inside the cave, almost in the way of a crucial butt hold, was an orange with black polka dots newt which we stopped to watch for a few seconds. Caves are so relatively devoid of life that anything seen usually becomes a spectacle.

Allison had slid down the first hole and I was in the middle of it when Mike and Andy showed up behind us. It turns out the water was high and there was not enough air in the Water Exit to get through. Even more unfortunate was that they got soaked, head to toe, in order to discover that.

We were thus entered into this other world, one I can't really explain except on the surface. I can tell about things like the little mass of white mold encompassing some unlucky bug just inside the cave attached to the chert on the ceiling above a small, cold, underground creek. It was just past the first room where some formations had been, shiny wet but brown as everything else. Our legs stung with the cold of the water. By simply descending a few feet we had left the normal world for a 3-D world that could be in Giles County, or it could be on the moon; you really can't tell down there.

You do a lot of 'duck walking' in Smoke Hole through the stream, which takes a lot of energy. One of the differences between my first caving trip and caving now is physical ability. I've

gotten used to the awkward positions and the crawling, thus I'm more comfortable in the cave and I can enjoy the experience more.

Mike and Andy were getting cold so they decided to run ahead to the Big Room. They told us, "Go up the breakdown pile and when you come to an intersection go left." We headed up the breakdown, which is the last place we saw Mike and Andy for a while. At the top of the breakdown was a junction so we went left. Allison didn't think it was right but we explored it anyway. We found one dead end that had some pretty crystals and some deep mud. I explored off another lead and ended up going in a big circle and coming in behind them.

We weren't really sure what to do. We didn't want to just go off exploring too much because Mike and Andy would probably come back wondering where we were, but we didn't really want to just sit there, either. We tried the passageway off to the right. This time Matt explored off ahead and found a dead end after down climbing a while. When we came back I found another lead in a strange direction, but Matt and Allison were just going to wait. I decided to explore the lead for a short distance and come right back. I found a short but wide passageway with the stream meandering around in it. In the distance that I was willing to go without my partners it didn't open up into anything.

Shortly after I returned we heard Matt and Andy returning, coming from the passageway I had found. It turns out "left at the split" was actually much past the breakdown pile and Mike had forgotten that the entrance from the breakdown was difficult to find.

Standing around talking to us had left Mike and Andy cold again, so we got

better directions and they headed out. I am reminded of why the caving club exists as it does, and why we follow all these silly rules. If anything were to have gone wrong Mike and Andy could have ended up standing still for quite some time, and they could easily have become hypothermic. A carbide lamp, a trash bag, and some cave food could be a lifesaver.

Off we went duck walking through the creek. The ceiling became flat except for long rows of small stalactites that join at cracks in the ceiling in big upside-down cities of stalactites. When the ceiling sloped up small pieces of bacon reached down. There was a couple more duckunders of chert before we reached the rimstone pools. Matt and I searched all around and he took pictures - which he was periodically doing the whole trip. There was some slippery going in the mud after that, and Matt found a hole to explore which ended up going over the passage we were in and back down on the other side. The Big Room was pretty dull compared to the trip there, but it was a good spot to stop and feed ourselves and our lamps.

We had a small experience that emphasizes the importance of being prepared yourselves. The only tip cleaners that had come in on the trip were with Mike and Andy. Both Allison's and my lamp needed it. Mine fortunately just needed a little blow in the water lid to fix it, but Allison ended up using our light and her electric flashlight to get out because her lamp would not burn right.

The trip back was less eventful. Allison continued to tell us stories like she had been doing most of the trip. I lead the way and we stopped a few times for Matt to take pictures.

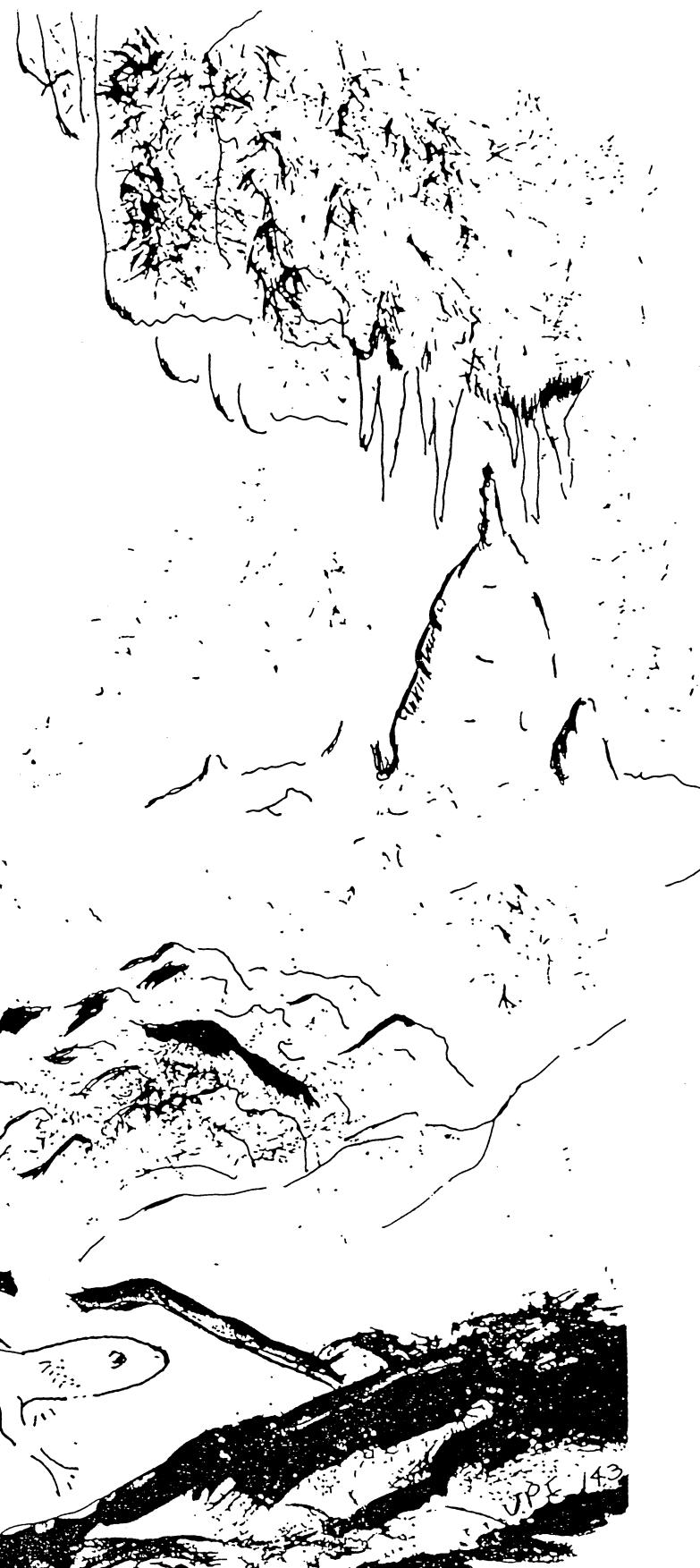
We got good and confused right

near the entrance. The exit we needed was behind a rock and we didn't see it. We knew we were in the right place because Matt had noticed the moldy bug that I had noticed on the way in. For a few moments we were very confused.

Back at the Bat Ranch I thought about all the reasons that I cave. The biggest one is that thing that I tried to talk about at the beginning of this story, the one I can't explain. It certainly isn't the only one though. I enjoy the physical exercise, especially since it is a different type of motion than most anything else. It can be hard on your knees and hands, but that is ok.

There is so much to learn by and about caving. The older cavers have a lot to teach me and at this point I have a lot to teach newbies. It feels good to be part of this.

The other cavers and members are one of the best reasons. They are all good people. We are all different, maybe compatible, maybe not, but we are all in this hole together, and we all help each other out.



Huntin' for Zirkel's Cave (a most obscure cave) in No-ing Land

by Cecile James

In 1869, a Professor Cope, probably from the University of Pittsburgh, began a search for signs of Early Wo Man in North American caves (since many European caves revealed artifacts of Early Wo Man, his hypothesis was that if Early Wo Man had existed on the North American continent, there would be relics in the caves). He found many bones of animals of that era, but was unable to find any of Early Wo Man. However, he did leave behind him records of his search, and in his records were reports of caves in the state of Tennessee.

In 1896, Professor Henry Mercer of the University of Pittsburgh followed in Professor Cope's footsteps and rediscovered the caves he had visited. Well, it may have been easy in 1896 to find Zirkel's Cave, as Professor Mercer described it, on the left bank of Dumpling Creek about 5 miles above its mouth in the French Broad River near Knoxville, but in 1995 it is about as easy as untangling a 1200 foot rope made up into four coils which are then passed through each other in order to stabilize them (Trip to Cepilla, 1992).

On a recent sunny Saturday, Gerald Moni and I set off in his Nissan truck from the Walker Springs' Shoney's in Knoxville for Dumpling Valley to find Dumpling Creek to follow Professor Cope's and Professor Mercer's trail. Gerald had found all the other caves that the two had shared in the 27 year span in Tennessee, and this was the last one on the list. Gerald was as usual well armed with his area topos and TCS notebooks and the historical report. As we headed South from I-40, I realized with great trepidation that we were

headed towards DollyPartonLand, and sighed with relief only after we turned around in less than half a mile because we had crossed over the used-to-be ridge (cut away from the maze of motels). We went back to Dumpling Valley Road which is now home of the Greatest Craft and Flea Market in Tennessee and cut over the ridge where it had not been destroyed and found our first historical search victim readying himself to spray weevils in his alfalfa, overlooking Dumpling Creek. We exchanged pleasantries about alfalfa and he admitted as how even if he sprayed his alfalfa real good, it still wouldn't be as good as the Iowa alfalfa I had helped my father and brothers "put up". Then we began discussing all the caves in the area and Potato Cave (of which Gerald had a record) and then he offered to meet us in an hour over a couple of ridges at a real cave that as far as he knew wasn't mapped or discovered (by real cavers). But seeing as how we were looking for Zirkel's Cave, we talked to his partner across the field who said we needed to talk to Earl Jones, who owned all this land up and down the creek. He also accused Gerald of being a lawyer because when Moni is looking for caves, he is relentless and the questions are hot and heavy, hence the victim status of the questioned.

Armed with the topos we took another road in Dumpling Valley, sort of following Dumpling Creek, drove past our goal and back again and found ourselves in front of a locked gate and overlooking I-40. We had, of course, stopped a couple of times on our way and quizzed more historical search victims, talked to

their vicious dogs, and heard more about Potato Cave where their Grandmas or old neighbors had stored their potatoes to keep them from freezing, because of course that was all the refrigeration they had. And we heard about Earl Jones, who owned all the land up and down the creek.

Also, we heard tell, after much questioning, that there has been some Zirkels living on further up the valley. After deciding that maybe in 1896, Professor Mercer really hadn't known how far five miles above the mouth of Dumpling Creek on the French Broad really was, we drove a few miles on. It was pretty clear that this valley wasn't the same as in 1869 nor in 1896 with all the house trailers and boats and such, but even back then Dumpling Creek wouldn't have been easy to follow.

In following Gerald's topos, we came to the homegrown T.R. Truck stop where I had an emergency visit. We decided to eat and hashed over the historical account and topos the 50th time. Then we headed across the road to ask the people who lived there if they knew about any caves. Of course they did, but they sent us back to the Truck stop because T.R. owned all the land. We got lots of information, then a very stern-faced elder announced, "There aren't any caves around here and T.R. wouldn't want you in 'em anyway." Well, we could take a hint, and we headed further up the valley.

Driving 'round about we ended up at the Ponderosa, which, of course, belonged to Earl Jones, where several young people were fixing up an almost unfixable old homestead. Hah, four victims in one blow! We walked into their freshly spackled kitchen and trapped them. But they cleverly referred us on to Earl Jones on the old Ashville Highway,

and we re-entered the Nissan. Up drove the biggest, reddest Ford pick-up I had ever seen, and we knew -- it had to be Earl Jones. We jumped out of the Nissan a lot faster than we entered and here was our next very willing victim, who, though he protested how much of a hurry he was in, told us how much history of the valley he knew -- how Dumpling Creek had been named because this was an area where the Indians of yesteryear had hung out and one day when some of THEM were crossing the creek, they dumped their dumplings right in. And then there was Potato Cave and lots else, and he sent us on our way.

We wended our way up the valley, keeping an eye out for the creek, and into the yard of another old homestead where we found several more-than-willing victims (and the sucker who is writing this was victimized). Oh, definitely there was more than one cave on the opposite hill, definitely a Potato Cave where the old folks had kept their potatoes because, of course, that was the only refrigeration they had, over the double log bridge that had double action as one bounced across it. And so up the steep slopes through the brambles with a couple of 12 year-olds. "You know there is water in that thing on your waist?" "Can I work for you? You do interesting things." "Is that a Coon lamp?" "Will you bring me out some of that purty limestone?" "How do they make those caves, anyway?" "I'll come right behind you and catch you if you fall."

Forgetting to take off my Claus long-sleeved shirt, I donned by helmet and dived into the 18" high slot, kicking leaves a lot because I am ever aware that I do not want a cave named Sesile-Sudden-Sink, and slid down towards the drop-off. Peering over carefully, I recognized the scenario -- a great funnel

for water but I could hardly put a knee in it. We scoured the rest of the sinkholes on the slope and came down again to experience the unforgettable bouncing logs.

Back into the Nissan and down the road to our next victim who was bush-hogging and delighted to quit and talk history. He assured us he'd been in every cave around as a kid and had had to go to T.R.'s land back at the truck stop to find them. Of course, he'd been in Potato Cave. But his Daddy would know more 'cause he had been caretaker of a lot of Earl Jones' land before it became Earl Jones' land. But we were welcome to go and look at the century old mill he owned down the road.

And we did.



**Clover Hollow Cave
Library Register Excerpts
1984 -1994**

9/29/84 This register was donated by Michael King and Carl Shytle on Sept. 29, 1984

We figured it was about time to start a new one. Carl got so interested in getting to the library that we declared the hell with Andrews drop.

This porn gets better as the years go by the wine. (especially like "young pussies").

Did some serious caving as usual. This will probably be my last trip caving for awhile (mike's) because I'm getting married in November. Damn I've been engaged since January. Thats fucking eternity. Will be back probably in march. So until then keep the mud off your balls.

9/29/84	Ed Fortney Philip Balister John Lohner Mary De Hart	Paul Soboleski - (<i>Trainee</i>) Craig Burkhead - (<i>Trainee</i>) Kyle Leonard - (<i>Trainee</i>) Anne Marie Little	
		We made it, but no librarian was in, so we couldn't check anything out. (Paul) Thistle Tube in 3 minutes. (Craig) Thistle Tube in 2.5 minutes.	
		Some really fine gypsum flowers in there - just gotta see um to believe it! Philip's reading "A new look Beastiality". Says it's real good. I (Paul) should make member any time. Got knots & requirments & after this trip, 60+ hours. Love those comments in Penthouse about "Dusty". Time to go. Ciao! V.P.I. & S.U. Grotto.	
10/6/84	Mike Futrell Tammie Heazlit	TSK TSK TSK. What a shameful cave club library! Not a single copy of Forum. What's a library without good disgusting reading? Pictures alone, short articles, no depth, no depth at all and we all know how important that is! Such Amatures... All this pornography... Look folks what you gotta do is just bring somebody with you. Why occupy just one sense when you can please all 5. Great sport cave.	
9/15/85	Well, WE rearranged the library a bit today - Lets try to keep it in order. If you see something that is rotten and worthless, leave it, but if you can't tell what it was anymore, please take it out with you. We welcome any additions that are in keeping with tradition here. Serubifals, Jim Washington VPI 247 NSS 22333 Christopher Smith		
9/27/85	Mike Fiore Beth Witcherman	Paul Hess Rob Hills	Craig Roberts
	V.P.I. Grotto	What a cave! Who needs aerobics when you have the "Thistle Tube"! Hey guys, the gypsum flowers must not be in bloom this time of the year.	
11/23/85	RSRICE Ken Bonenberger Bill Ekhaml Jerry Redder	I was tubed in the thistle tube & totally edified in the library. Next trip will be a library restocking	Send all smut to PO Box 309 B'burg, VA & we will restock. VPI Cave Club Library Committee.

11/18/86	Kay Jacobson Sue Setzler	Joan Johnson Beth Wichterman	Sue was set on fire, but Joan just had hot flashes. We tried to arrange the porn with priority porn on top. Kay the new librarian really knew her way around, said that Craig just didn't measure up! We've all seen better porn before. Get some real porn!
10/5/86	Keith Smith Rodney Smith	Ko Takamizawa	Gerrit Mellen
		It took four tries to find a mag that I hadn't seen or didn't want to see. NOTE: Cans should be properly marked by preference. Vi Ritchie is a whore.	
01/17/87	Paul Hess	Jeff Jablonsky	Marvin Fuqua Love that thistle tube. Interesting library, we will have to resupply it soon. All and all an interesting trip. P.S. Please excuse the sticky pages.
7/25/87	Paul Kirchman Berta Kirchman	Miles Drake Kevin Breneman	Miles got through Cigar Room squeeze. Doesn't recommend a repeat. Gets too small even for him - and the squeeze is a one way hole - we almost left him there - By the way I think we're going to have to leave Kevin here. Quote Roberta to Miles - "Would you like me to take all my clothes off and follow you in there". -There was no reply as Miles went into shock temporarily-. WE CAME WE SAW WE CAME
4/2/88	Berta & Paul Kirchman	- Some things I just like to do over & over again!	
5/11/88	Dougo Bohn - VPI 303, VPI Secretary. Doug Dodd - VPI Trainee.	Doug Bruce - VPI 302. Will someone please get an original name?!?!	
8/5/88	Doug Bruce Dave Colatosti Laine Buckwalter	Did the thistle tube upside down. VPI 304. Did the thistle tube upside down. Settled for right side up.	
10/16/88	Koichiro Takamizawa	VPI 293	
	Dave Warren Jerry Redder Brian Cruikshank	This is a better place than the "gypsum flowers" VPI 166 NSS 14016, Trainee trip in the fast lane. Disorganized but decent Library - Who's the librarian?	
2/11/89	Doug Perkins Bob Alderson & Chris Alderson	Let's use the "Old Book" - after all, we're all "Old Farts"! Just another tourist trip. To read porno! (look at pictures).	
11/4/89	VPI Cave Club, Virginia Tech's Hard Corps Mark Eisebies	VPI 313, We did some naked Yoga - We saw some flat things with lines on them (Gypsum Flowers).	
	Regina Madaline Brian Bachmann	"If I only had a brain" Love them gypsum flowers. Again and I did see the lovely flat things with lines on them. I yam a chicken.	
	Scott "Hoss" Leiffer	Not fooled by the flowers. "Bigger is better" "Smaller sucks" (not very well either) <i>not the size of the ship, but the motion of the ocean.</i> (This man has no Finesse).	
	Brian Cruikshank	They don't seem interested in the library. New people saw the flowers.	

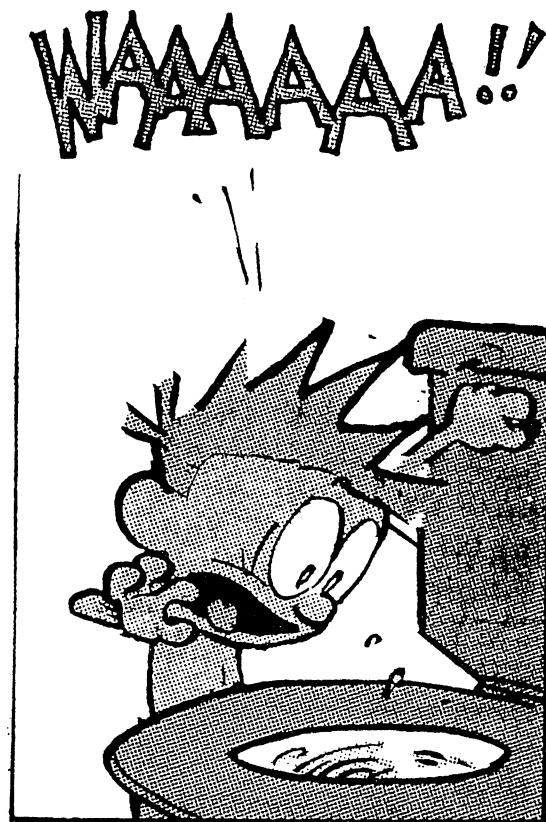
1/5/90	Mike Horn Dave Colatosti Lesley Colby	Hay Adam I beat you in the race to get here! VPI 305, Lesley REALLY REALLY enjoyed the flowers!!! I am glad she did! VPI 312, I'll never trust Dave C. Again! Nice flowers Dave...Really Nice!
1/20/90	Natalie Serbu Brian Cruikshank	VPI, Well, at least they didn't lie about the naked men! This is the closest I'll get for a while unless I slip going up rope. ...Was too sorry about the gypsum flowers. NO NO
2/10/90	Kristen Posson Mark Eisenbies	I'm sitting here, alone with three men and all they want to do is look at pictures. Oh well I guess I'll go slide up and down the dragons tail while I wait for them. VPI 313. I came after Kristen and all I can say is that she took her clothes off at the gypsum flowers but now she won't even untie her shoes for us. I guess I'll go to the thistle tube and wait for them.
3/24/90	Hoss Leiffer Rich Geisler	VPI 320, "I thought there were some tight crawls in here! I just can't find anything!! So this is the library..... <i>Hoss you just ain't big enough. Too much room to play with.</i>
5/12/90	Jim Washington Jim Gamble Tom Spina Ollie McKagen Mark Eisenbies Chris Brown Maurya Fisher	Been a long time - still the same. Becoming less pure by the minute! I hope when Ollie gets horny he farts less!! Nice stock of goodies in here. Allright, I'm here for the last time in a while. Maria now hates me and "Jake" Isn't going to get any for 1 month to a year. She was none to amused with the thistle tube, but just a little gullible as any trainee. Chris first time down it too. he was much more impressed, but he admitted he didn't know exactly what to look for. Clover still my favorite cave.
9/22/90	John Morada Steve Wells Scott Broadwell Mike Horn Dave Colatosti Judy Jeter??	First time here. Most excellent formations. Vertical climb is going to kill me! My first vertical. Going out will be hell but it should be an excellent experience. Life is life - My first vertical too - fun stuff - Gabba Gabba Hey. VPI 316 VPI 305, Can't wait to show the flowers. The great escape on parents weekend. The lone woman and belch queen.
11/11/90	Sandy Knapp VPI, Eric Walman CT, John Morada VPI, Dave Colatosti VPI. Dave, once again did the thistle tube backwards. Can you believe it, he took 1:15. Boy he's slow. Cool crew, let's do this trip again. Fine by me! Let's rock-n-roll.	
11/13/90	Kirk Digby Rich Simpson Jason Sullivan Bryce Bolton Adam Hungerford	Literature was educational. I didn't know they could do that! How did she get so big? Have to make a return trip. Damn, I didn't know they could stretch like that! Blonde's do have more fun.

	David Colatosti Jarrod Leland	Know any loose ones. Good trip. Monkees?? Come on guys.
2/22/92	Susan Vermeulen Bob Cosby Kirk Digby Mike Horne Rakonezay Zoltan	VPI old fart trainee. Gypsum flower - BAH!! I owe some people some beers for those *@#% flowers. VPI 328 NSS 34781, WOW FREE BEER! VPI 316, Some guys can't take a joke. Ke't Okbo'l Ivok 1) Hogg tudd meg, mar jart it mas magyar elotted. 2) Ki ne hagyd a gipszvira gokat (gypsum flowers) . Azokat latnod koll - pu szagolni. All I know is that when I got to the gypsum flowers room, I saw Arnold (Arnold Schwarzanager) and he told me "It's not a tumor". I'm way to sexy for the gypsum flowers.
2/29/92	Steve Wells Kevin McElroy Chris Brown	The mags make me miss Sarah!
9/12/92	Alison Williams Jen Savage Greg Nicull Amy Stirgwolt Bob Cosby Patty Kitchin Bobby Monds	1st Vertical trip! Down the gypsum flowers! A groovy trip from VPI. WOW. Gypsum flowers suck ass! 1st vertical trip. What a long strange trip its been. 1st vertical cave. Great trip w/them. The library needs an applause. The library wasn't the same w/out Kirk, Leroy & Jim. VPI 339, Party flowers. My want book - gimme gimme gimme! The library is most excellent
11/15/92	Kirk Digby Spotty Dog Joel Maynard Bill	VPI 328, It's amazing how quiet it gets in here on an all male trip. VPI 317, Well Posson - I finally made it cum possible. VPI, Boy, I really enjoyed the "gypsum flowers", they were real pretty. As was the reading mater. Boy this cave's got it all. Rappels, Porno, Gypsum Flowers, Porno, Chimneys, Rocks, Porno, Bats, Porno, Notepads, Porno anyway I'll be back with the...
4/24/93	Mark Eisenbies, Carol Zokaites, Madeline Li, Reter Penczer, Paul Gillis They told me it would be a hard core trip, but I didn't understand till we reached the library.	
4/10/94	Bob Cosby <i>Unknown</i> Carl Bern Jonathan Brown	Best heat rescesive flowers I ever saw. Recede into wall when warm, hmm?? I should be studying...Instead I'm studying " <u>Cumming with my Collie and various other assorted livestock</u> ". Not to be outdone by pictures of women with breast the size of important geological formations. Oh heck! who needs to graduate anyway? VPI, Much better than last time, no one has sprained their ankle yet. VPI, (<i>Ed: Something illegible about Gypsum Flowers</i>)
6/20/94	Mike Mirro Jay Mirro John McKenna Bill Stern	VPI 346. 13 Seconds Gypsum. Beat it Leroy. <i>Asshole It's been done in 8 (12 backwards)</i> . From Idaho. VPI (NOVA) - LIFER

From the Signout

Due to some unfortunate circumstances, "From the Signout" will be postponed until the next issue of *The Trog*. It seems that over the course of several personnel changes at Signout and a move of Signout itself, a large portion of the signout sheets were misplaced. Efforts are underway to track the missing sheets.

Though the above theory sounds very reasonable, some people believe that something much more insidious has taken place:



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