

# The National Troglodyte

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## PREDICTIONS

Cave Club goes sober

Women outnumber men in club

No one breaks up in 1990

Kay Johnson wins world vertical contest

Trainee saves Captain Ed's life in cave



## Worlds Longest Cave

## Now in Giles County

Wizard of GCCS casts strongest spell yet

Aliens eat frat boy in Tawneys



Jim's Sauna Blown up by  
terrorist faction of  
campus crusade.

Elvis Footprint Found in New River  
Cave.



# The Tech Troglodyte

A Journal of the Cave Club of VPI Grotto  
of  
The National Speleological Society



## Fall Semester, 1989

President...Ko Takamizawa  
Vice President...Brian Cruikshank  
Treasurer...Lesley Colby  
Secretary...Mike Sziede

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Joe Uknalis.  
Technical support: Neil Johnson  
and the Apple Company

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# The President's Column

Well, the fall semester is almost over, and it's time for me to write the President's column again. VPI Grotto is alive and well. The attendance of meetings has been high, and there are a lot of prospective members. Despite very wet fall weather, we had many trainee trips. The bridge sessions were held every Friday even in the rain, wind and other obstacles. We also had a practice rescue in Tawneys led by Capt. Ed. We have gained four new members to the Grotto this fall. Congratulations guys! More trainees should be coming up for membership very soon. I would like to thank those people who have taken trainee trips and helped at the bridge sessions.

I hope that this coming winter will be good for the club as well. There are trips planned for TAG area as well as Mexico and Costa Rica in the spring semester. It is great that VPI is represented at many places, but we should also look at our home ground too. Now that the weather is turning cold, everyone should be starting to think about ridge-walking and surveying. It's been two years since we voted to support resurvey of Giles county or GCCS. We are losing the initial enthusiasm that we had. There were few survey trips and ridge-walkings this fall, but they were led by the same people. GCCS is a tremendous job, and VPI Grotto as a whole, should support the program. Members -- take trainees on survey trips. Prospective members -- ask members to take you on survey trips. You will learn so much more about caves and caving.

Cave safe and party hard.

Koichiro Takamizawa

# Vice President's Column

We have started this year with a good group of prospective members. There are many new and old, and they all are participating (caving, partying, four-wheeling, etc.). Like always, everybody has done their part to make the club continue the teachings of safety and conservation. I need to thank Ko, Ed, Paul, Tom, and many others (you know who you are, and there are too many to list) who have helped me greatly at the bridge, and taking training cave trips. Due to this help we have four new members and probably more people coming up for membership soon.

Adam Hungerford	315	October 27
Mike Horne	316	October 27
Scott Rapier	317	October 27
Joe Uknalis	318	November 10

Remember: There is always more to learn, and more time for caving and partying.

Brian Cruikshank

## The Editors' Column

You'd think we'd done enough without writing a damn editors' column that no one wants to read anyhow, but tradition calls for us to have our own B.S. space. By the way, this is Kay speaking. Joe is off in typing hell at the moment.

It's interesting having co-editors. On one hand, it's nice to share the work and blame. On the other hand, it's easy to assume the other editor is or is not doing something editorial, and communication can be a problem. Of course this is the Club publication which we could not do without your help and the trainee article requirement. Thanks muchly! We have received plenty of interesting stuff, and the handwritten articles were even decipherable! The one thing we really need are cartoons and pictures. Any artists out there please step forward. I'd love to have some cave clip art.

So I guess being an editor is a mix of duties. You get to bug people to do things they already know they should be doing. Officers are a particularly troublesome bunch, especially ex-officers. Then you get to spend all sorts of time typing and putting it all together. Now I suppose I should put in the disclaimer about opinions not being those of the Trog and that all information is not real in the first place. I'm glad Kay is on the team, it makes the job easier and fun. Long live Mac's! Well folks, read on and enjoy.

**GRIPE!**

**GRIPE!**

**BITCH!**

**BITCH!**

The Editors

## GROTTOE GRAPEVINE

Since we left our intrepid explorers at the end of the last grapevine, all sorts of stuff has come to the press. Shortly after school ended brave members of the club gathered in Mr. Buddy Pendley's field to celebrate the annual picnic. The bicyclists went on two separate days, neither having much luck with the fierce climate. Meanwhile back at the field the lucky ones went underground while the rest of us were deciding if our immunity would hold up thru the weekend. Mother nature (don't forget your mother) threw all she could at us. But drank we did. Beer combined with a blazing fire, (complete with VW block) kept the happy campers warm. Gale force winds woke few that nite due to the presence of Killians. The survivors were seen the next day gulping down the last keg-lite beer, as snow squalls blew in down the valley. Later in the month Float Trip occurred. Heavy casualties in the armada and cold water forced consolidation of the forces. The summer residents past the time tubing, barbecuing and drinking.

The semester for the Club started the week before OTR, which left some of us explaining to newcomers that we couldn't take them on trips because we all were going to the largest caver party on earth. Jerry Redder and Dave Cinsavich ran OTR this year. Some folks arrived a week early to start setting up. The other 1700+ of us showed up later. Nazi of the year goes to Captain Ed for his efforts as chief gate guard. Much amusement was had at OTR- do-dah parade (we'll enter and win next year), flushing portajohns, bonfires, 4-wheeling madness, 35+ people on Brian's Landcrusher, raging hormones. Dave Warren earned the nickname "Chummer" at the more wine party down at the river. Jerry & Co. will do it all over next year. Altogether a weekend of good clean fun. Most had a mild case of Anheuser's Disease (OTR Disease) which caused beer consumption to be low the following week.

Once back in town the club resumed crazyness as usual. Parties were held (even 1 sauna), and trainees went caving. Mike and Sallie started things off right by getting arrested for being drunk in public the first weekend back. A little communitiy service never hurt anyone. Jean Hartman decided on Turkey (not Columbia) as the place to teach english. Joan Johnson moved to NoVa and is working for the Justice Department. Hugh Beard is teaching in Front Royal. Lee Little might be in VA, & Eric Anderson was sighted at the Dylan concert. Beth Wichterman is back in the DC area and Hillary Minich has moved to New Mexico. John Loner got a real job in Colorado. Lor Windle is leaving the marines. Barbara Graham moved back to Lexington.

On the relationship/baby front- Ed and Linda Devine had a baby girl on October 6, Amanda Muriel Devine. Pat and Chuck Shorten had a baby girl in June, Chilissa Marie Shorten. Randy and Ruth Wood are expecting in January. Nancy and Alan Knewstep are expecting around March. Keith Smith and Mary moved to Oregon. Kent Thompson and Michelle were married November 11. Jerry Redder and Joan Hederick were married over the summer and now live at Joan's down by the hospital. (anybody wanna buy Jerry's old house??) Alice and Glen have announced their engagemente Jenny Ford moved to Charlotte and married Will Allander. Mike and Vi moved to Bath County. Becky Himmelmann finally married Jeff Harding.

Philip bought a new Justy over the summer, and leaves his wagon at home to keep his 7 cats company. Mike Fiore is back from another summer of managing disturbed kids, finishing up research and job hunting. Doug Bruce is not a student, and is surveying for money (above ground). Dave Cinsavich, who rolled his new Blazer off Brush Mt. coming back from a party also happens to be out of a job. Captain Ed is working for WUNDERWEAR (paid advertisement). The homebrewers (Joe, Ko, Chris, Brian, Mike) are brewing up something of massive proportions. Brian got a 4AM call on Monday to rescue stuck 4-wheelers (Scott, Joe, Lesley). Kay Johnson went caving again (practice rescue victim, 2 years running). Joe finally came up for membership.

The Halloween party was at signout this year. A tyrolean over Pembroke Quarry warmed up a few folks beforehand. Chris Stine (North Jersey Grotto transplant-hide your women and children) organized the event. Much liquor was consumed, friends were made and hormones raged. Ben won best costume for being "Mr. Butts". Most radical hair change went to Sara. Scariest went to Sandy Peterson, though many women thought Pyro's gynecologist costume was the scariest.

Caving Briefs-Stompbottom might have a new entrance-surface digs at a blowing hole make folks hopeful. Stompbottom is also being entered onto SMAPS. Ed Devine was seen carrying a scaling pole out of Paul Pendley's. Stay High was extended after some brave folks did a stream dig.

## Rescue Gear 89/90

Hey y'all. Let's get philosophical first. Is it me, or is Michael Jackson prettier than his sister, Janet? Ponder that one.

Now, let's get serious. In the fall of '88, in partial response to the Pighole body recovery, the rescue gear was inventoried and updated. This had not been done since Lawrence Britt had the job in the early '80s. Many thanks to Jackie Hoell, Carol Zo., Jean Simonds (I love this job; it's all women), Ko, and the several P.M.s who helped out.

Overall, the gear was in fairly good shape. We did find some areas for improvement, i.e.:

- 1) The parachute harness is now used for parties only.
- 2) There's a shit load more sling for the stokes.
- 3) Several more wool blankets.
- 4) Addition of sam splints.
- 5) Super cool neck braces.
- 6) 1 body bag.
- 7) Prepositioned bash bags at Jim's house in Newport and at Buddy Penley's house.
- 8) Relocation of the gear from Glen Davis' house to Cecile James' house (sign out).

Let me explain our reasoning for the last two points. In recent years several cavers have moved out of the metropolis of B'Burg and into the surrounding wilderness. Most of our rescues will be headed in these directions. This way there will be medical gear available to people on the way, so that they don't need to come into town for the major part of the gear. These initial teams can locate and start initial treatment of the patient in a shorter amount of time while the rescue gear is in transit. The bag at Jim's house covers the Links, Tawneys, New River, Smoke hole, and Clover Hollow Area. Buddy's bag is in his garage and covers Skydusky Hollow. Jim's bag could be used for the odd W.VA rescue if needed.

As for moving the gear, this was done strictly for easier access. It's not necessary to break into Cecile's place to grab the gear. Also, we can update it much easier. Thanks to Glen for keeping it, and to Cecile for taking it!

Technically speaking, not much has changed. The extra sling was mentioned by Carol as being very helpful in rigging the stokes, guidelines, belays etc. The wool blankets were donated. There are 4 in the stokes, and 2 in the big medical box.

Now a few thoughts on procedure. If it is deemed necessary to get the rescue gear, the best thing to do is take all of it. This includes the stokes with duffel bag, Ked, Sked, and Oregon splint. For convenience, these are all kept together. During a rescue, however, only the stokes and the duffel bag go into the cave. The duffel contains the sling, blankets, biners etc. for the stokes. They always stay together. The other things can go in if needed. The medical gear, bash boxes and box #4 are kept in the large box marked "medical". Hi-line, pulleys, racks, carbide and lamps, helmets, chocks, and that sort of stuff is in a box marked "technical". This is almost always needed even if the medical gear isn't. Finally, there is wire for the field phones (which are in the tech. box). A milk carton contains several thousand feet of wire. There are 2 additional rolls. So basically in a rescue there are 4 things to remember to take: stokes duffel, medical box, technical box, and rolls of wire. Ordinarily, it will take two people to haul all this junk, plus a pickup or hatchback. Study the enclosed gear list to see what we've got. It's good to know, so that you don't use one thing when something better is available. I urge everyone to be familiar with the gear. Just let me know, and we'll take a look at it.

In closing, let me discuss the rescue committee. I basically take care of the technical gear while Jackie keeps an eye on the medical end. It's more or less a gear committee. We also hold practice rescues. Anyone in the club who is an EMT or better should consider themselves an unofficial member. The technical side (Hi-lines, hauling, etc.) can come through your normal caver genesis. The Zo.'s are talking about having a technical practice rescue in the spring; sounds like a good idea.

Well that's it. Cave safe, party hard, and hopefully we won't have to use this gear.

Ed Fortney  
Rescue Gear Chairman

# Cave Club of VPI

## Rescue Gear Inventory

### Ammo Box 1-2-3 for initial teams plus prepositioned bags at 1) Jim Washington's (Links) & 2) Buddy Penley's (Skydusky Hollow):

Small spiral notebook	1 oval eye pad	several unsterile tongue
2 pencils	assorted dressings	depressors
1 ink pen	small box of band-aids, ammonia	green soap
Set of popsicle flags	caps, butterflies, aspirin, needles,	safety pins
1 space blanket	razors	set of message cards
2 small ziplocks	unsterile dressing	2 garbage bags
1 medium bag	2 unsterile triangular bandages	1 pair of scissors
3 alcohol preps	3 gauze wrap bandages	1 sam splint
3 medicated ointment	2 small heat packs	1 roll of 2 inch kling
1 8x7 dressing	1 ice pack	bandage
4 4x4 dressings	1 roll of adhesive tape	

### Ammo Box first aid kit that goes to Found patient:

2 garbage bags	10 antiseptic swabs	1 ice pack
6 triangular bandages	2 wire ladder splints	1 space blanket
3 roller bandages in a box	1 small spiral notebook	19 4x4 sterile dressings
2 scrub & dry pads each	1 pencil	4 3x3 sterile dressings
hold 10 scrubs	2 markers	2 rolls adhesive tape
4 non-sterile tongue	3 band-aids	2 rolls of kling
depressors	4 8x7 sterile dressings	1 large trauma dressing
1 tube of vaseline	1 large heavy plastic bag	1 pair of scissors
1 set of butterfly closures	(extra large)	1 wool hat
(medium and large)	1 roll of duct tape	1 sam splint

### Other medical equipment available:

1 full leg air splint	2 cans of sterno	1 10"x2.5' multi trauma dressing
1 insulated leg splint	2 padded short arm splints	8 sta-tite elastic gauze
1 full arm air splint	2 long arm or short leg	19 8"x7.5" dressings
1 small, 1 med., 1 large,	splints - padded	6 4"x4" dressings
1 extra large foam collar	1 ammo box with a body bag	2 3"x3" dressings
2 bottles of sterile water	2 vertibrae cervical collars	6 triangular bandages
2 sets of goggles	(1-small, 1-regular)	3 3"x360" bandages
1 wool hat	1 box of ammonia capsules	2 2"x360" bandages
1 set of butterflies	1 box of alcohol preps	1 box of scrub & dry pads
1 box of razor blades	1 roll of flagging tape	1 box of med. ointment
2 boxes 10 trash bags	1 roll of duct tape	2 rolls of 6" kling bandage
1 large trash bag	4 kwick kolds (cold packs)	2 linen sheets

### Food stuff bag:

6 packs of instant soup,	2 cans of sterno	toilet paper
assorted flavors	sterno stove	can opener, spoon
6 packs of instant hot chocolate	small cook set	4 candy bars
2 qts. of water	12 dump bags	6 emergency candles

### Stokes & duffle bag: (Always go in the cave together)

stokes	face shield	2 straps with buckles
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In the duffle bag:

2 wool blankets	1 foot board	2 25 ft. belay slings
1 set of goggles	9 patient tie in lines, spider rigging slings, and long tag lines (assorted sizes over 25 ft.)	5 20 ft. or under belay slings
5 locking carabiners oval & D	1 roll of duct tape	1 four point stokes suspension harness (orange)
7 short tag lines under 25 ft.	2 40 ft. belay slings	
1 large sheet of plastic for vapor barrier	3 30 ft. belay slings	

1 SKED (inside golf bag):

1 oregon splint (sort of a KED)

1 Reeves stretcher (long KED)

Technical gear:

2 field phones	4 extra rolls white double strand wire	3 carbide lamps
1 wire cutter attached to primary roll	1 Caves of Virginia -- Douglas	2 empty packs
1 coil of red double strand wire -- primary roll	1 clipboard for entrance with sign in sheets	several dump bags for carbide
1 50 ft. of bluewater rope	4 fiberglass MSA helmets	1 large jug of carbide

Pack #1. Yellow Bag -- Primary rigging bag for high lines & hauling:

2 free gibbs with rigging slings	5 sling runners (short)	2 locking biners
3 rescue pulleys with locking biners	1 rack with locking biner	1 piece of bungee cord

Pack # 2:

4 rescue pulleys with locking biners	2 locking biners	1 5 ft. length of sling
1 Gibbs cam	5 short sling runners	1 long length of bungee cord
	2 30 ft. lengths of sling	

Pack #3:

12 chocks assorted sizes	1 5 ft. length of sling	1 nonlocking biner
1 locking biner		

Pack #4:

Bolt kit with hammer, wrench & driver

\* \* \* \* \*

**NOTICE:**  
(from VARFYI)

On the "limited Access/Closed Cave" list is NEW RIVER CAVE. Tim Kilby bought the land (NSS 27387). He wants people to cave there, BUT expects them to be experienced and well equipped. He also wants you to CALL or WRITE BEFORE you go: 703-273-4870 any day between 8:30 am and 10 pm. The trail on the north side is on someone else's land-- so keep off without his permission.



## Escape From New Jersey

12:20 PM – Finish packing. Dad makes a nice gesture, generously offers to buy a tank of gas for the Corolla while I grab breakfast/lunch before the trip. I neglect to tell him his spare Exxon card has bought every drop of gas that has gone into the car for the last six months.

12:35 – Barely able to move from mom's "light snack", I stagger out to the car, hoping that the repair job I did on the gas tank holds.

12:37 – Just before turning the ignition switch, hope that the repair job on the starter holds. Ditto for the radiator, vacuum hoses, and really, really shiny front tires.

12:38 – As car warms up, realize that my New Jersey passport (the one with the picture of Jimmy Hoffa on the back) is lying on my dresser next to the thank you letter from the Kiwi Fruit Growers Association. Debate trying to fast-talk the border guards with words like Brandenburg and Perestroika. Envision a burly guard tapping on the hood of my car, "What does dat old blimp accident have to do with ya trying to leave da state? I think ya betta just get outta da car, Buddy." I have a brief, cinematic flash of the guard leading me away in shackles past a drug-sniffing dog lying unconscious next to one of my bags.

12:41 – Passport and papers safely on the passenger seat. I gun the car and head out the driveway. Looking back, I can just see mom waving good-bye through a cloud of blue smoke.

12:52 – Just before I leave town, I cruise down Main Street and look around. The garbage is blowing past the prostitutes as the homeless weave down the street, muttering to themselves. Ah, home.

1:31 – As I try to pull out onto I-80, I notice that the traffic is bumper-to-bumper as usual. Bumper-to-bumper going 75 miles per hour, that is.

2:05 – Traffic thins out a bit. I can think a little more clearly. I look in my rear view to see whether I'm leaving a gas slick behind me. Seeing none, I flash St. Christopher the thumbs up and gun the Corolla past a semi loaded with bridge parts on a down hill.

2:24 – Another impatient jerk passes on the right. I comfort myself with the thought that Saab, BMW, turbo, and Mercedes are all synonyms for "asshole" in Swahili.

4:10 – Snap out of a serious case of road-hypnotism as I realize I'm leaving Pennsylvania, and have absolutely no memory of the last fifty miles.

4:16 – Bladder says "Oil!" Realize that I could make a fortune if I could develop a caffeinated coffee with non-diuretic properties.

4:48 – Pull into a place, either in Winchester or in Martinsburg, that is proof that god exists; an Exxon station, a Burger King, and a Dunkin' Donuts, right next to each other, within spitting distance of the highway. Gas, pee, caffeine, water, and donuts, in fast succession. Hell is a long road trip with people who haven't learned to synchronize the needs of their car, stomach, and bladder.

5:03 – Munch donuts, and sip an Ultra Big Dunkin' Donuts Coffee Gulp. Ponder the age-old philosophical question: If a tree falls over in a forest and no one is there to see it or hear it, does it make a noise? No, wait. What if the only person in the forest was Helen Keller... No, even better, if Helen Keller is walking in the forest, going crazy trying to read a piece of stucco tile, and then she falls over....

5:56 – As I watch the odometer turn 167,000 miles, I shake my head in amazement at the durability of this little wisp of green paint and iron oxide. I feel a little strange about driving something that's gone

almost the distance to the moon, mostly on heavily pot-holed roads. The feeling passes, though, when I realize that, in many ways, so have I.

7:08 — I leave most of the lining of my brake shoes on I-81 trying to stop for a monumental jam north of Roanoke. It seems that every college student in the eastern United States, very few of which can actually drive, is passing through this stretch of 81. Since, collectively, they seem not to have figured out the "left side = passing side, right side = suicide" heuristic, it is no wonder this happened. I take the first exit I see, and smiling smugly, bypass the jam by taking Route 11. I later found out that a certain ex-vice president didn't have as many brake shoes as he thought, and after an uncomfortable lesson in inertia on the same stretch of road, drove home with the hood of his car held down by a chain of carabiners.

9:22 PM — I pull into Jim's driveway and look around. The garbage is blowing past the debris on the porch as drunken residents of the Newport Alternative House weave around the lawn, laughing to themselves. One can almost hear the cider perking away down in the basement. Ah, home.

by Michael Fiore

## My Hair Raising Experience as a Trainee

It was a beautiful September day as Jake, Maurya, and myself walked to the footbridge at Tech for our first rappelling session. I was completely prepared to jump off the bridge, entrusting my life to some rope, a few pieces of metal, and about ten people who had spent the last weekend drunk and naked in West Virginia at OTR. We reached the bridge and, as I easily stepped into a sewn seat, I chuckled at everyone else being tied up in endless feet of webbing. Little did I know; soon I would be the source of humor to everyone else present. I was a bit scared as I stepped over the side of the bridge and began to rappel. Of course I appreciated the helpful advice from Jake & Dougo, "If you spread your legs wider, it will be easier... Yeah, just a little wider." Awful nice of them to be so willing to help a naive trainee like myself. I rappelled past the lip of the bridge and continued my descent when it happened. I found myself going slower and slower, then I felt my head and my body being pulled in opposite directions. It was then that I realized my hair had become entangled in the rappelling device. I was lucky our vice-president was present to offer helpful suggestions like: "Just pull your hair out of the figure eight." Yeah. Sure Brian, and how about a nice portion of my scalp along with that? Finally, Tom Bank came to my rescue (sigh...). He rappelled next to me and proceeded to attach us together at the pelvis, while I straddled him. It was a good thing Scott Rapier was there, camera in hand to catch that special polaroid moment. Anyways, to make a long story short (too late, I know.). I stepped all over Tom to release the pressure off of the rope and free my hair. Tom and I were detached, and I finished my rappel. What should have been a one to two minute descent turned out to be twenty minutes stuck in the middle of a rope in a somewhat compromising position with a man I hardly knew. But hey, I suppose there are worse ways to spend an afternoon.

Kristen "Rapunzel" Posson

# NOTES ON A REALLY FAST SRT SYSTEM THAT DOESN'T SMASH, MAIM, AND MANGLE BOOBS, BALLS, AND OTHER SENSITIVE BODY PARTS QUITE AS BADLY AS THE OTHERS DO

by  
Paul (Bertas' husband) Kirchman

Since Berta and I developed our rigs in preparation for a Mexico trip during the summer of '87, I have been repeatedly requested to write it up. Now that Berta holds the womens' world records in just about everything mechanical using essentially the same rig, the requests have become demands, threats, and finally action. Yes action from a lazy slob like me. You see my pubic hairs have been super-glued to this keyboard and a bottle of solvent is mine when I finish. There is a solvent for this stuff isn't there? You know it's not that easy to type in this position but I've got a lot of incentive now. Oooch!!

First, the feet. Gibbs ascenders are used here for their ability to operate consistently while unattended. Also important is the availability of replacement parts as this is the highest wear point in the rig. Both feet are attached as floating points, identical except in length. This technique is not new and is referred to as the double bungee system. The immediate advantage of this system is that a normal stride is allowed without the twisting of the foot that occurs when the gibbs is attached directly to it. The most common complaint of this type of system is that a shorter step is allowed because of the higher foot point. My only answer is that it doesn't seem to slow Berta down too much.

Each foot cam is tied from one inch tubular webbing and no it doesn't hurt my feet. I run in sneakers all the time, Berta set the records in sneakers, and you can't even notice the difference in good caving boots. The basis of our foot cam is the Frost knot. Simply make two bights in a piece of webbing, one up one down, one has the cam on it and the other should be big enough for your foot plus whatever type of footwear you intend to use. The webbing should be laid flat together and in the center will be three layers thick. Make an overhand in this part and you have a Frost knot. Be sure that the big overhand points away from your ankle. Trust me, if you screw it up you'll know in the first ten feet of climbing. Leave the ends long enough to tie around your ankle for chicken loops and you have a foot cam that requires no (yes, I said no) sewing. Berta prefers to sew her chicken loops on but that is minimal. The point here is that spares can be tied in very little time which is important because for Berta these cams are a maintenance item and a complicated sewn foot point would be out of the question.

This brings up a pet peeve of mine (I have a lot of pet peeves but I'm only going to gripe about this one today). Extensive sewing in a rig, no matter how well it is done, eventually becomes a safety hazard. We cavers are, in general, a lazy lot. It may

have taken us years to get around to sewing a vertical rig or possibly writing an article about one. I've seen very nice rigs that took a long time to put together. They also take a long time to fix when worn. The tendency to push this gear further than its normal life expectancy, which can have an adverse affect on your life expectancy, can be seen by taking a close look at as many sewn foot gibbs as you can and noting their general condition. Enough of this, back to the foot points.

Once you've figured out this knot, just make another and the rig is half done. I'm not going to put dimensions in this article because I don't think that is appropriate. Cavers come in too many sizes and flavors to attempt to include dimensions. Just use your head: one should be low, the other should be higher, and the difference is the step you can take. Ain't no big thaing, just fiddle with it.

The roller on our rig is a Simmons racing roller. The nine inch bar allows a more upright stance without squeezing the ribcage. It's aluminum, so it doesn't weigh that much. It's a bit awkward but I have a large vertical pack, (many of us do) and on a drop of any appreciable length I feel the additional comfort and speed is well worth the effort of carrying it. The chest harness is a standard layout with shoulder straps and again a minimum of sewing. The chest strap is one and a half inch solid webbing. A continuous belt is snaked through the two big slots on the chest plate with the buckle on the right side (for right handers). The motion to tighten should be pulling forward so that you can tighten it yourself while on rope. Note that there are secondary buckle plates available which allow the assembly of this portion without any sewing at all. (I really do hate sewing.) The shoulder straps are a continuous piece of one inch webbing running from one side of the chest plate back through a D-ring and forward to an adjustment buckle on the other side of the chest plate. The D-ring is attached to a webbing loop sliding on the chest webbing. This arrangement is completely adjustable to any size person if the strap ends are left long enough.

OK now class, what's missing? Yes the bungee cords. Where do you hook the bungee cords? Well, we use a continuous piece of shock cord. No big surprise yet, but we run it behind our backs to a one inch steel ring hung just below the sliding D-ring on the back of the chest harness. A pulley would just screw up back there and the cord doesn't really slide that much after going around your hips. The ring just makes the system self adjusting. The more typical shock cord attachment to the front of the chest harness worsens the tendency which the roller has to pull down while the back attachment counteracts this. The attachment to the cam is important too. Since the pull is up and to the side, the shock cord should be tied in a loose loop which goes around the cam portion of the gibbs. Not to the shell, not through the cam, not even on the cam, but around the cam. This tends to open the cam as it slides up and close it as the webbing is pulled down. The result is less friction with a corresponding reduction in wear on

the cam and fewer missteps, none on a properly adjusted system.

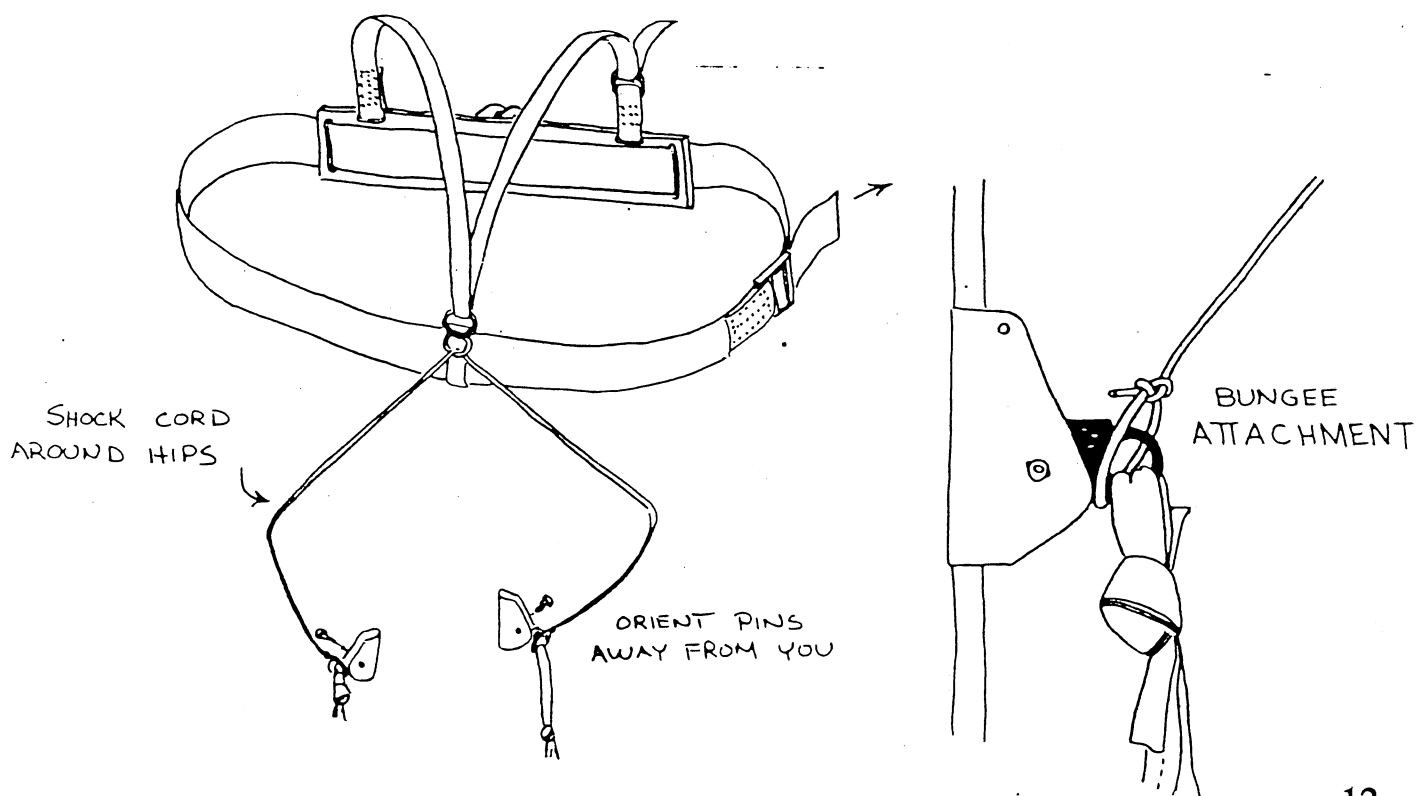
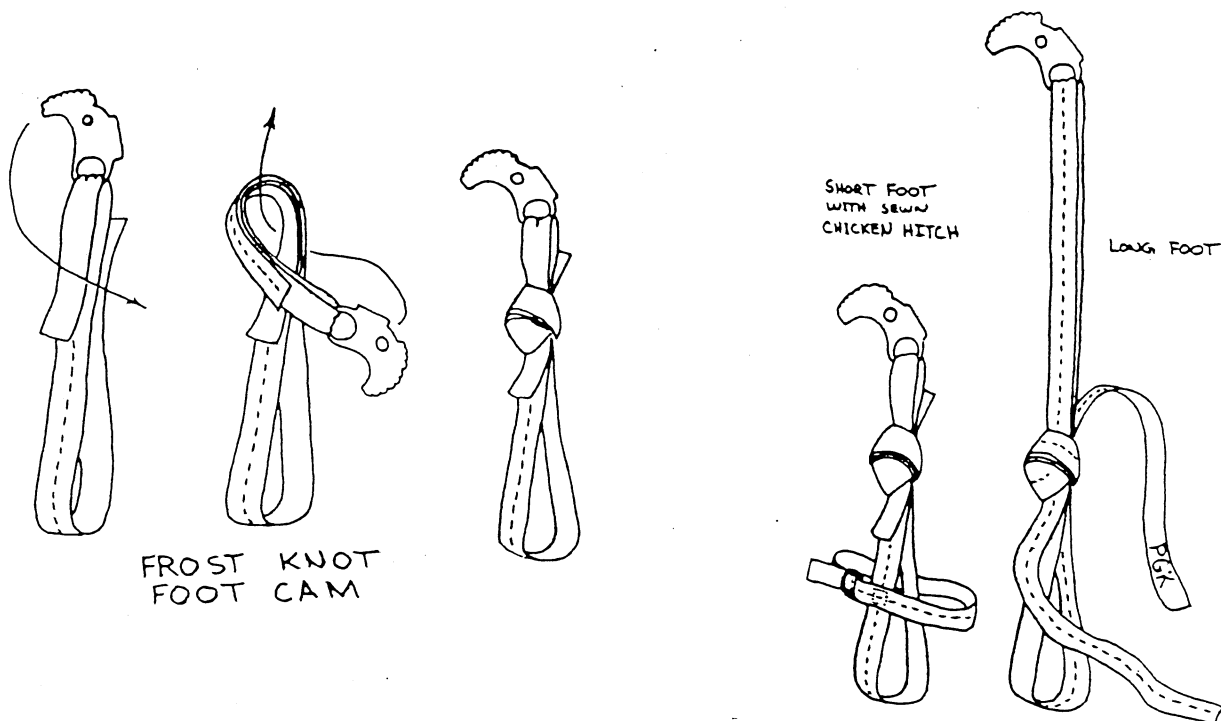
The system can be finished off with the seat of your choice. I personally like a compact seat which holds the attachment biner low and tight to the body. The typical climbing sit harness does not do this, but to each his own. For climbing we require three points in contact with the rope. Since a pulley does not count, we use a long seat point on the rope above the pulley. This can be a gibbs which can ride unattended or a handle jammer for people like me who use their arms a lot. The sling for this point should be long enough to be used to aid in climbing but short enough to reach while seated. A short seat point, gibbs or jammer, is handy for passing obstructions. With the chest pulley disconnected and the short point attached, the long point can be reattached above the obstacle. You can then disconnect the short seat and proceed to move your foot points one at a time past the obstruction all the time keeping a minimum of two points on the rope while in transition. This technique can be used to pass lips, knots, rebelay, other climbers, and possibly gas. A neat trick Berta and I discovered was that by sitting on the long point and reversing the short point below it, slack could be pulled up so that a rack may be threaded in peace without rope weight. A warning though, you must be able to pull the rope up with one hand to release the point. No wimps please.

Just a few more odd notes and I gain my freedom. If you rappel a long drop, foot stirrups are a must. They hang from the rack and support your feet in a sitting position. This keeps your seat from cutting off all the blood flow to your legs and prevents the pain and discomfort of gangrene and eventual amputation. A simple solution if you rappel in your climbing gear, which is not a bad idea on long drops or first descents, is a short piece of sling or utility cord hung from your seat biner. Simply put this through your foot cams and you have infinitely adjustable rappel stirrups.

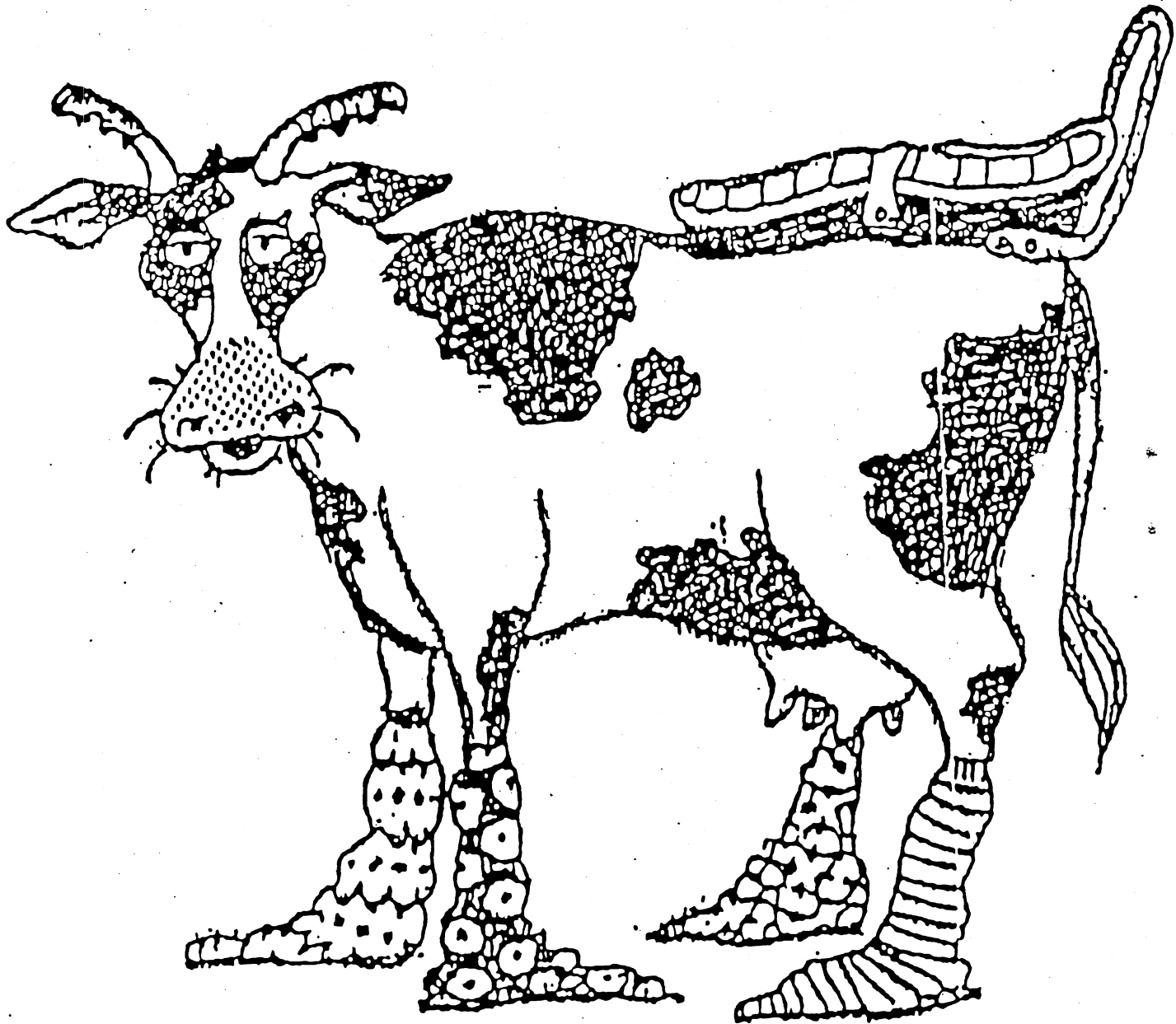
The system described above is a caving rig. It was developed for doing long drops comfortably. Only after two years of constant use in all types of vertical work did we consider the possibility that an efficient comfortable rig would be competitive in timed events. A few minor modifications alter the caving rig into a racing rig. Racing is allowed with only two foot points and a chest roller so no seat is required. With the seat missing, the knee cam can be made longer without risk of fouling and a longer step can be taken. For running in T-shirts, we add soccer forearm pads to the chest rig to make up for the lost padding of caving clothes and Berta likes to use a shin pad to protect her leg from the lower cam.

That's it, all of our secrets, short of diet, exercise, and genetics. It works for us but may not work for you. Luckily climbing rigs are not sold in the Sears catalog yet. Oh sure we all buy the same parts but how we put them together is up to us. The rig described here was made in response to some very specific

requirements; yours may be different. Look at as many different rigs as you can before assembling your own and pick the features you like best or come up with something new. However, no matter what sort of atrocious rig you concoct, practice with it, be familiar with your gear, replace it when it's worn, and help keep alcohol abuse the number one killer of cavers.



# WEST VIRGINIA MOTORCYCLE



## COWASOCKY

## The Exploration of la Sumidera de Juanita

There I was, hanging pendulous above the cleft with only a gossamer thread of 7/16 nylon rope to keep from plunging into the frightful abyss. Noxious vapors rose to envelope me, no doubt the result of decomposing orgasmic matter. The source of the gasses could be seen below. It was a gism slick, the opalescent sheen of the surface broken only by occasional bubbles of methane issuing from the putrescent semen. I was hardly the first to pass this way, the other intrepid explorers had lost their load at this very spot. I struggled to control the spasms in my loins, and slowly the fear and lust subsided until I was able to continue my descent into the void.

La Sumidera de Juanita had been discovered and first plumbed in 1967 by that pioneering French speleologist Norbert "Plumbob" Castyourseed. Following directions given by a small Mexican boy in a parking lot, he ventured toward what he supposed to be a rural brothel. What surprise to discover Juanita, an actual virgin, sequestered in a nunnery. This is the goal of all true explorers, untrodden ground. So it was that the first seed was planted in Juanita. From that day til this, the slick has spread as teams from around the world have come to find themselves poised above the brink and unable to control their lower hindbrain.

I was equipped. Kneehigh galoshes plopped into the glacier of goo. I was undeterred, for long experience had taught me that sperm only lives for thirty-six hours. This was not unlike an experience years earlier in which a mad steer was somehow placed into a huge neoprene body bag, then pitched into the cave which is now known as Mad Steer Cave. The cow's carcass festered quietly until that day when I came to step on that bag which was lodged atop a short drop, followed by what remained of the cow. As I fell, broken bottles and jagged metal lacerated my body. Think of the cow as a form of well-aged Hollandaise sauce and my head as a poached egg.

A new odor alerted me to another pile of festering feculence. A twin chasm in a cleft to the left issued forth a great conical heap of guano. This peculiar geological formation arose as Juanita was giving birth to a grotto. The rupture perforated the perianal travertine membrane. The adjacent tube was inhabited with bats, thus the guano.

The birth was complicated by the fact that the young grotto suffered from hydrocephaly, the head of the passage being filled with water. The air space was bad due to the passing wind from the nearby perianal rent. I wanted to push on, but was stumped where the passage sumped into the cortical void. I peered deeply into the pool of profound stupidity, but could go no further.

Bruce Morgan



## Newberry's -- The Ongoing Survey

After three kids and one MBA the Newberry-Banes survey is again underway. For those who like to know, we have taken 53 different mapping trips for a total of 6.25 miles of mapped passage. That breaks down to 2080 shots with an average of 15.9 feet each. Most of the well known tourist areas are complete, leaving us with the usual large number of leads to check. We also have the problem of working around the large bat population in the winter time.

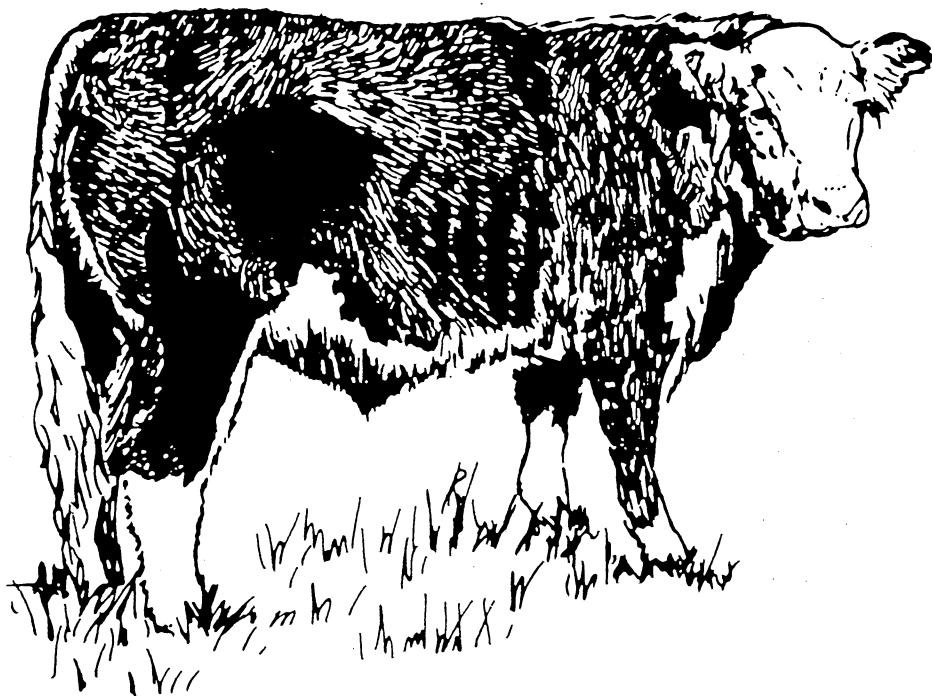
After breaking down about six years worth of data and plotting a working copy of the map by hand, we finally invested in a computer. Now the whole cave is on SMAPS, and we can get a copy of any area we need.

We owe a special thanks to Mr. Buddy Penley for letting us go to Newberry's whenever we can find the time. We have had many wonderful experiences below as well as above his property. We especially enjoy the friendly visits in the warmth of his family room.

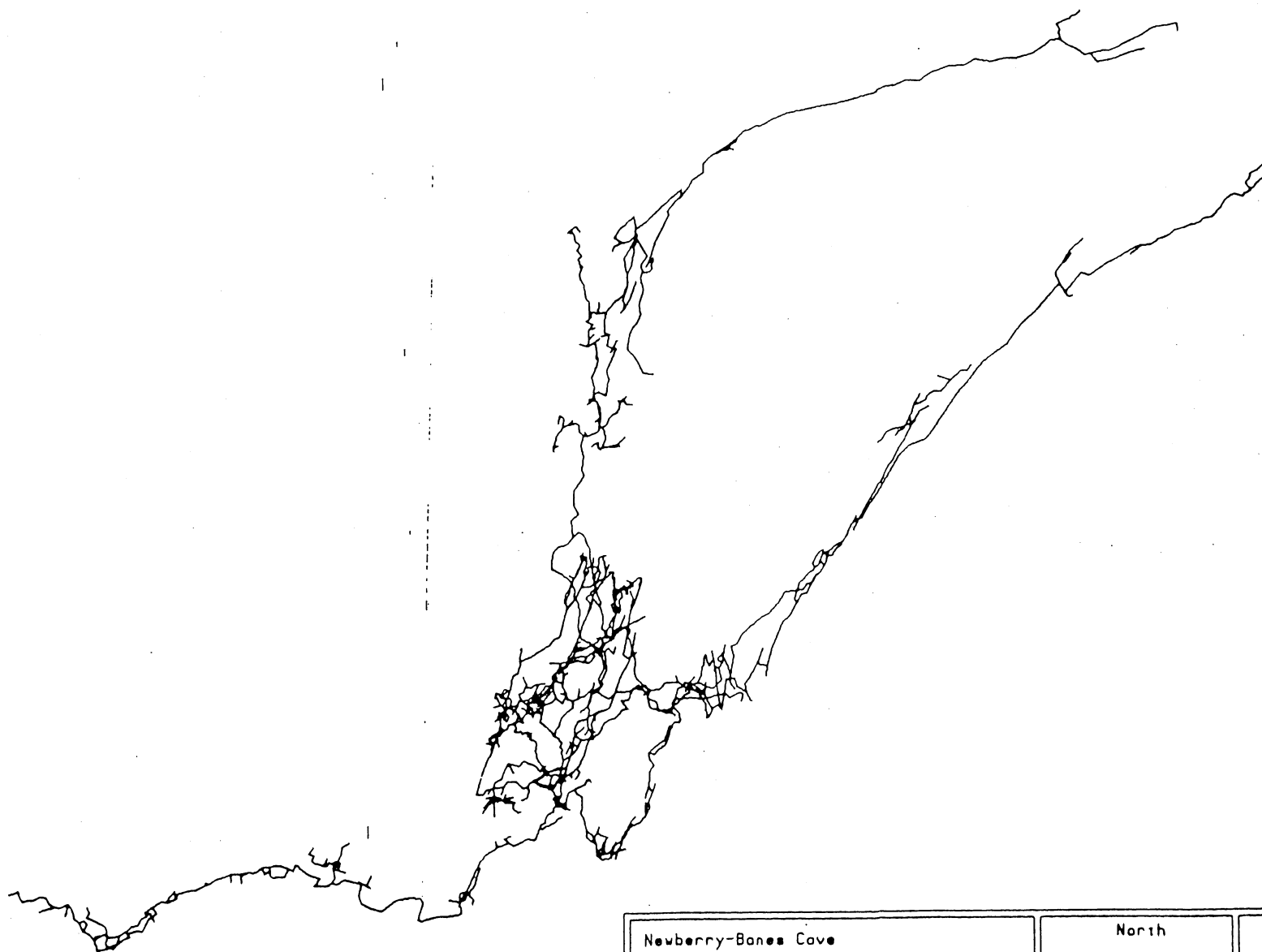
We also would like to express our appreciation to Mrs. Saddle Banes. Although we do not use the Banes' entrance as often as the Newberry's one, Mrs. Banes lets us "cross the fence" whenever we need to.

We have had the help of about 35 different cavers and several babysitters. To these folks we would like to say "Thanks," but to also remind them there is still more to do. We still have all the drops to work on, and who knows, maybe some more virgin passage for a lucky few.

Joe and Carol Zokaite



Newberry's Gate Guard



Newberry-Bones Cave

Plan Map

Date: 11-08-89

Scale: 250.00 Ft

Rotation Angle: 0.0

North



0 250

SMAPS 4.2

## Comfo 3 Point Chin Strap

This is an alternative design for the chin straps that come with the MSA comfo cap and related helmets. This suspension is designed to hold the helmet on more securely than the original two point elastic suspension.

### Materials:

- One 3/4 inch Fastex ladder lock buckle
- Two 3/4 inch D rings
- Three 3/4 inch Fastex tri-glides
- Ideally 4 feet of 3/4 inch webbing (Climbing grade not required)

### Construction:

- Step 1- Cut elastic band from plastic attachments.
- Step 2- Sew buckle #2 as shown in figure 1. Make sure that webbing is attached to proper point on buckle.
- Step 3- Sew buckle #2 as shown in figure 2. Make sure that strap is cut at an angle as shown for easier threading.
- Step 4- To attach to helmet, find middle of remaining webbing, lacing it around headband adjustment on helmet and through the tri-glide. (fig. 3)
- Step 5- Slide on buckle #1 and #2 onto each webbing tail. (fig. 3)
- Step 6- Slide a tri-glide on 7 1/2 inches from headband tri-glide. (fig. 3) Be sure that it is on in the opposite way of the headband tri-glide.
- Step 7- Thread webbing through plastic attachment and back through tri-glide. (fig. 4) Do this for each tail. Make sure that the webbing going from the D ring to the plastic attachment is on the inside. (fig. 5) It is very important that the webbing is threaded right so the helmet will ride right.
- Step 8- Adjust suspension to fit, and trim excess webbing.

### Notes:

To put helmet on, pinch straps at D rings making sure there are no twists in the webbing. Slide helmet on and fasten buckle. After a few times with it on you will learn how it is supposed to feel.

Do not consider this to be equivalent to a 4 point suspension; if any part of the webbing gets cut, the whole setup comes undone. The suspension's only purpose is to better hold the helmet on your head.

To quick release the ladder lock, peel it away from your face with your thumb and forefinger.

I suggest using a small piece of cord to keep the rear point centered. Tie it around the webbing loop and through the holes in the adjustment band.

Also, you can put the webbing in a sheath of 2 inch tubular webbing to help make the whole thing more comfortable. This suspension can be annoying because of the way it rubs the ears.

### Alternate Materials:

In place of the ladder lock you can use a regular Fastex buckle or a Fastex cam buckle, but I've found that the ladder lock is the most comfortable because of its small size.

In place of the D rings you can use Fastex loop-locs, but I don't know how well they would work.

### Alternate Design:

I also have a design for an actual 4 point suspension similar to this one. It requires more sewing, but is a much better design. I didn't publish it because I have not made one yet, but if you would like to try it instead, I can give it to you.

Mark Eisenbies

FIG 1: Buckle#1

Materials

- 1 D Ring
- Ladder lock buckle
- 6" of Webbing

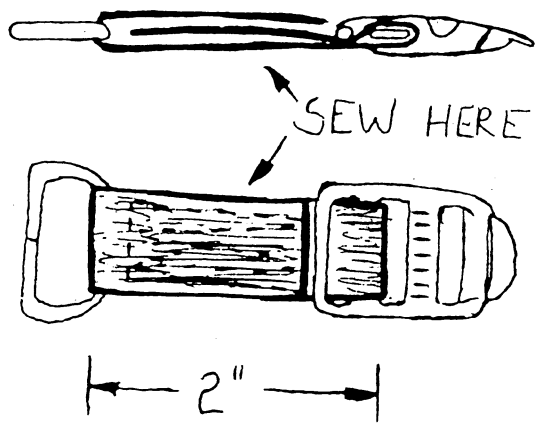


FIG 2: Buckle#2

Materials

- 1 D Ring
- 12" of Webbing

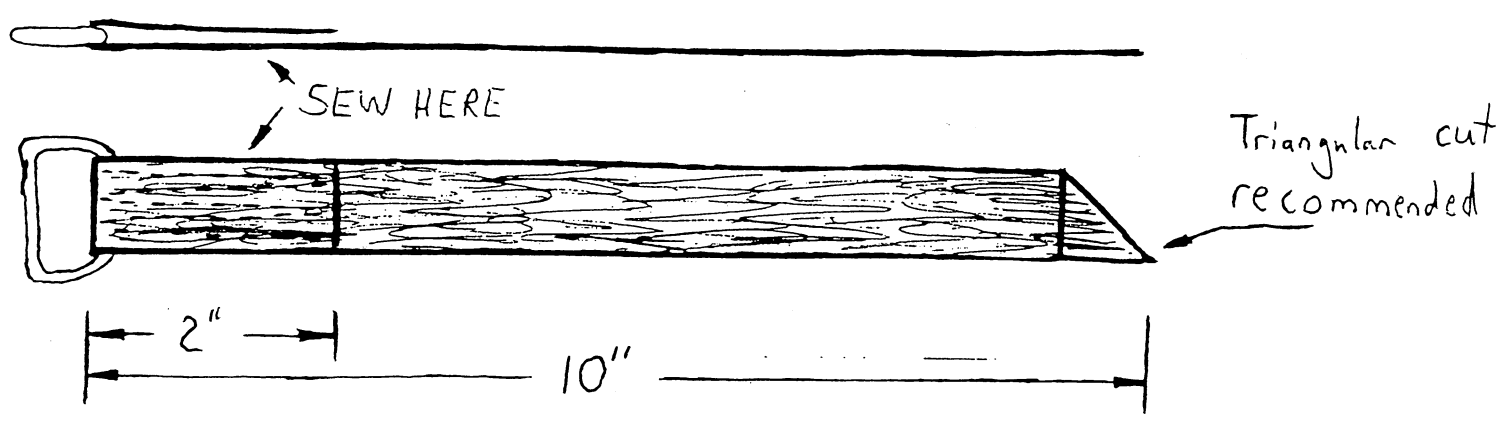
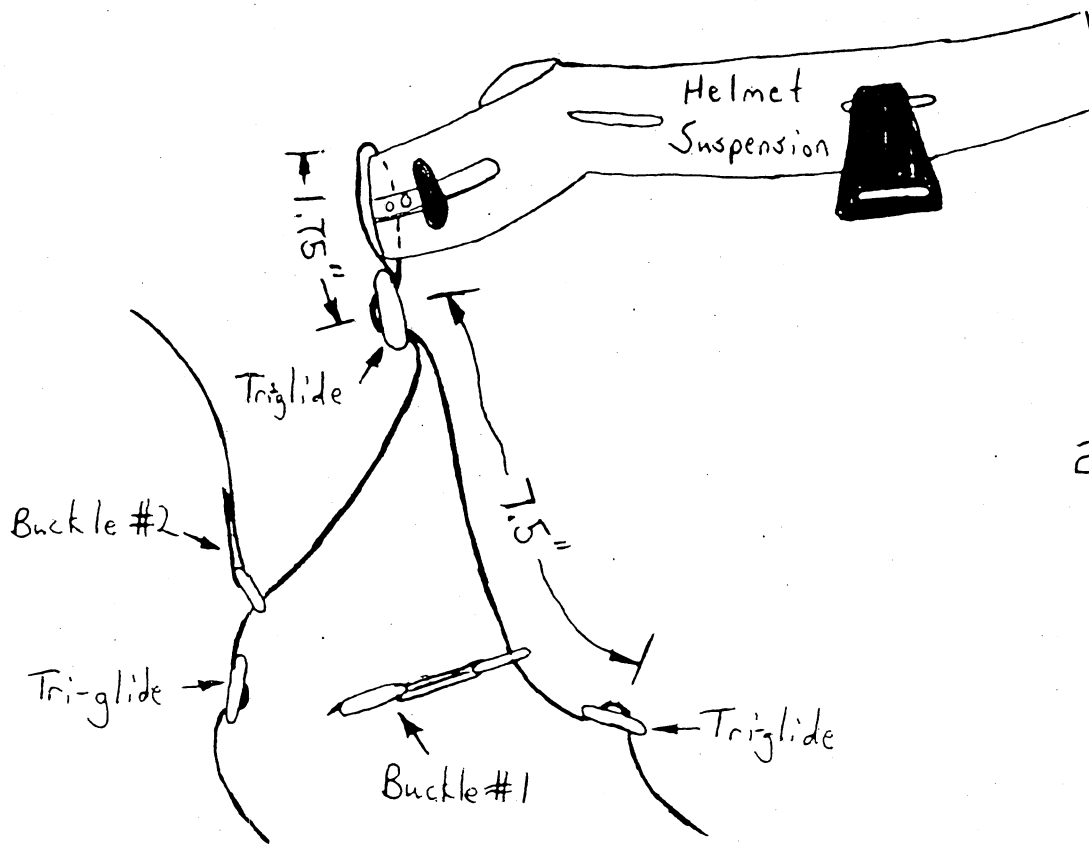


FIG 3:




Materials  
3 Triglides  
28"  webbing

FIG 4:

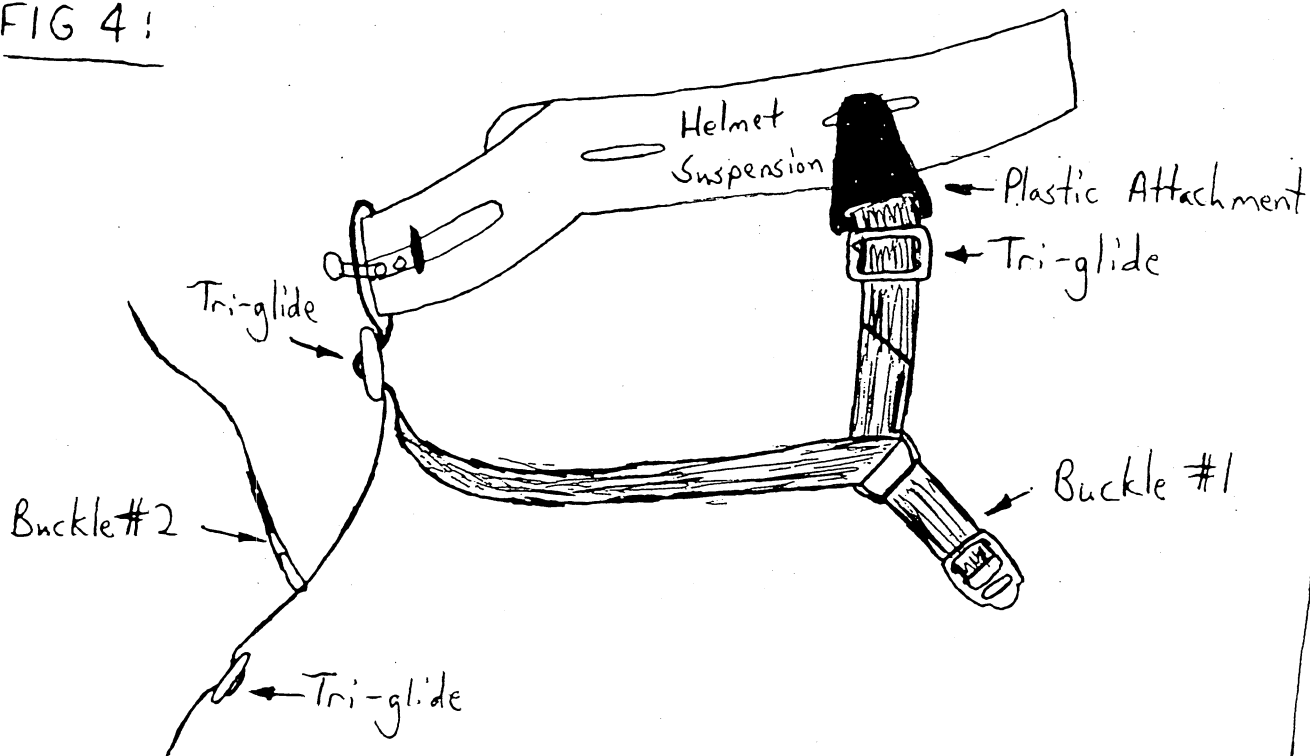


FIG 5:





WEST VA. GAS CHAMBER

## Crusher and Tromper

Once upon a time, must've been round September few months back, two evil 4-wheel drive vehicles set to working on a plot for the exploration of unpaved roads and murky mudpuddles. OTR thus marks the beginning of a new era of cave club off road fanaticism for Brian and Scott. The two vehicles in question, a blue 1970 Toyota Land Cruiser OUW-770 and a white 1986 Isuzu Trooper II BLC-101, have been seen of late venturing out where others have not dared in search of mud and adventure. Both good and bad adventure has been found, as evidenced by the fact that both cars were put out of commission for a brief time. The local areas of off road madness include Butt mountain and Brush mountain, with typical obstacles including fallen trees, water and mud puddles, and various other avoidables. Another improbably 4-wheeler came into play one night when Philip decided to take the Justy off-road. Unfortunately, the car wasn't quite as adventurous as Philip was, and ended up door deep in water. Pictures were taken as the untrusty Justy was pulled forth from the red sea and returned to the land of dry ground. Of course, this isn't to say that I've never gotten stuck, as Brian will contest to after a four a.m. call woke him up and persuaded him to tow my car out of a chassis deep mud hole. The Crusher has yet to get stuck, although I'm waiting for a call from Brian at four a.m. to tow him out next. Major problems have been had by both of us as far as car casualties go. We've decided it definitely is not an inexpensive sport. Since this began, my car has had the clutch replaced, a rear seal on the transmission replaced, and my carburetor replaced...the Crusher has had the ignition system replaced almost entirely. Next time, I'll get a car a little bit better built as far as structural strength and abuse goes. The members of the four wheel madness crew include Koichiro 'walk-on-water' Takamizawa, Kristen 'get more' Posson, Philip 'flocculant' Balister, Brian 'flip-the blazer' Cruikshank, and the "Midnight Hikers" of Joe Uke, Lesley Colby, and myself among other occasional riders. What does the future hold? I'm not sure, but improvements for the cars seems to be in order, as well as new inductees into the midnight madness of off road adventure.

Scott Rapier

## Links in a Nutshell

Yeah, well, Links Cave... what can we say?! I'm sure most of us have been into it at least once or twice, or in my case, a dozen times. Links cave is a very fun, potentially challenging cave to poke around in, plus it belongs to Jim. Just a short hop, skip, and a jump up the hill -- and beware of the latches.

One of the most entertaining trips that I managed to take in Links involved two of my high school friends, Robert Carter and Paul Plantz. Also roped into this trip were Loretta Bush and Kristen "Get More" Posson. This was to be the first trip by these two into a wild cave, and Links, my pet peeve, was the obvious choice. So, off we went, to thoroughly initiate these two into the fine art of VPI caving.

Arrival at the farm involved getting dressed and prepared, something that Paul and Rob were excused from, coming perfectly prepared as new cavers invariably do. After hearing such comments as "So, where's the cave?", and "Wow, do we get helmets and neat lights too?", we headed up the hill.

Cave topics included "You gotta be kidding me -- that entrance is way too small!", and "Are we really going to have to go through-that?" Loretta, Kristen, and myself chuckled with the thought of the S-crawl to come. Into the cave we go... "Slow down, Scott! You're crawling too fast!" Humph...just waiting til later. First stop -- the 5.9 climb...first obstacle S-crawl. "Okay guys, time to go into the hold!" This comment did not meet with much approval, especially when they saw it. Despite the numerous oofs and umphs, damns, shits, and other curses, I was eventually joined by the pair on the other side. "Do we have to back through that?" heh heh heh.

After a fun 5.9 excursion, the only thing left was the canyon section. Back through the 5.9 we went, leaving some of the curses behind. Into the canyon we go, hi ho! Or so I thought..."You have GOT to be shitting me, Scott!" and "How the Hell did you get up there?" Well, after much explaining as to how to accomplish this maneuver, they decided against trying it. Back through the canyon we go, hi ho!

Sitting down in the precanyon, '15x8 inch phallicmite' room, we let the kiddies look around for awhile. Listening to this pair was more than just a job, it was an adventure. "Hey Paul, look at that! It's a Dragon!"...or alternately, "AHH!!! It bit me! Snaaaake! Needless to say, a spirited bunch. We could tell they were returning as the tune *I Feel the Earth Move Under my Feet* reached our ears. Thank God that abated quickly enough.

"Finished?", we asked, "Did you have fun?"

"Yeah, now lets get the fuck out of here."

"Well, okay, but I'm afraid I'm kinda lost at the moment. I've been trying to figure out where we are while you were playing."

"AAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

You KNOW I just couldn't resist...

Heh Heh Heh

Scott Rapier

## Reflections of the "Victim"

As a survivor of two club practice rescues in two years, I'd like to describe the rescue from the point-of-view of the "victim".

Last year's rescue was in New River Cave. Joe Uknalis waited with me for the rescuers to arrive. No offense Joe, but waiting in a cave gets *really* dull!

I'd been warned that I would be very cold, so I brought hat and gloves, and wore several layers of clothing. Carol Zo. thoughtfully provided me with down booties. For my comfort, since I was not a real patient, I wore goggles instead of the full face shield. I also chose the option of not having my hands tied, but my arms were tied down under a wool blanket. My legs were very uncomfortable from the first, although the sling holding them was loosened at my urging while I was being tied in.

The trip out of the cave was uneventful for me except when Craig Roberts was standing nearby. There were many experienced cavers directing the rescue. They seemed well organized, and there were many hands for Stokes passing. The dryness of New River Cave meant there was little slipping, and there were several stretches where the Stokes could be carried instead of passed. The rescuers tried to remember the "One, two, three lift" scenario, but they often forgot. They didn't forget to ask me how I was doing which I was grateful for. My head wasn't always above my feet, but being healthy, it didn't bother me. I inhaled quite a bit of dirt, but I have never minded inhaling dirt, and it was my own fault for picking the goggles over the face shield. What bugged me were my legs; they were stiff and uncomfortable. I longed to bend them. Happily, I was warm and almost cozy which made up a bit for the discomfort of not being able to move. When I was finally released from my prison, it was very hard to bend and walk.

This year the practice rescue was held at Tawney's Cave. Doug Bruce accompanied me in. Waiting wasn't as tedious as it was last year because we entered the cave right before the rescuers. Last year, Joe and I had arrived early at the cave, and entered before the rescuers were ready to go in.

Tawney's is wet and muddy, and the creek was higher than usual during the practice rescue. My feet were soaked before I was tied into the Stokes. We gathered in the sinkhole where I put on my hat, gloves and extra sweater. Unfortunately, the sinkhole is the coldest part of the cave. I was colder than last year, and all of us forgot to take my wet socks and boots off. I opted for the goggles again despite strong protestations from the trip leaders. I can be a stubborn bitch, so they decided to let me eat ceiling if I wanted.

The rescuers for the Tawney's practice rescue were younger, and there weren't as many compared to the New River rescue. They were much more conscientious about keeping my head up, but they also got my elbow stuck near the ceiling when I was passed through a tight spot. My hands were poorly tied together which made me happy because I could release them. Unfortunately, my arms weren't tied down under a blanket so they got cold and tended to flop. My legs and back were stiff, but my legs were much more comfortable than last year. My back was less comfortable because I could feel every knee and rock under me. I think there was more blanket under me during the New River practice rescue. Neither rescue party was great about doing "one, two, three" before lifting. Minor details. The Tawney's rescuers didn't tend to ask me how I was doing. Ed sort of took my pulse. I think Natalie was the one who thought I looked cold. I was impressed that someone noticed! Yes. I was cold. It seemed like this year's rescuers were less organized than last year's rescuers, and I got impatient listening to people deciding what to do next while I was cold and stiff. Part of the problem was there were less people to get things done. Overall, the Tawney's rescue was probably more useful than the New River rescue because it gave different people leadership roles, and gave prospective members a bigger variety of rescue training. I also felt the Tawney's rescue was more grueling on its members because of the nasty wet conditions of the cave. I know we were all relieved when Philip finally got his feet wet.

That's it. Anyone who wants to apply for a job as practice dummy, contact Ed Fortney.

Kay Johnson



## QUOTABLE QUOTES

I heard this really great quotable quote last night, but I can't remember what it was.-Cave Club

It was not long enough but thanks anyway -VR

I've been doing myself for years. -PK

I will let you have 6 more inches.-JJ

Where do you want me to put my mouth?-VR

Jake you're not trying, get it up and lets start over. -MF to CB

It doesn't matter if we fuck this up completely, this is OTR.-MF

I haven't been doing it long but I've been doing it intensely.-BG

This is a lot better than a frat party, because at a frat party all the guys are after you.-EF

If you're chasing women and you go to the Ton-80, you've given up.-CBS

Manly-virile-PB

Really Philip, the cat is just fat: I had a Vet student check her out.-JU

Why am I limp and pink?-MF

Wait Tom, don't do me yet-I'm not ready.-MF to TB

Dammit!-KP

Flocculant!-PB

I could see a woman doing golden showers on me, but when she takes a dump on you-that's gross.-EWF

I'm just Pyro's hosebag at Tech.-BG

Sometimes you have to pick it up and bite it no matter how gross it looks.-AL

If you're obnoxious to a girl she won't go to bed with you.-PB

I've never found that to be true.-VR

## From the Signout Sheet...

The Cave Club of VPI logged 692.1 hours from 9/23/89 to 11/28/89 on 33 reported trips.

<u>Cave</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Nellies Cave Rd.	Ed F., C.B. Stine, Sara Vieweg, + 2	Raccoon shit cave!
Tawneys	Mike Horne, Adam Hungerford, Dan Gross	Are you guys ready for more caving? No, really what a trip. We were in Tawneys & then reappeared in New River.
Links	Doug Bruce, Lane Buckwalter, Lane's Dad	I see how you could get hooked on this...
Old Mill	Walt Pirie, Joe Uknalis, Eric Schuler, Scott Leiffer, Brian Emery, Brian Bachmann	Lotsa gypsum flowers beyond second duck under.
Clover Hollow	Philip Balister, Ed F., Patrick Burns, Kristen Posson, Sara Vieweg	Floculant!
Smoke Hole	Brian Cruikshank, Ian Burson, Brian Emery, Dan Gross, Jarrod Leland	Bubble, Bubble gurgle splirt -- It goes
Stay High	Cecile James, Chris Stine, Mike Horne	Trainees <u>are</u> Expendable
Dixie Caverns	Joe Uknalis, Ko Tak., Loretta Bush, Nat Serbu, Scott Rapier, Kristen Posson	More cyalume

\* \* \* \* \*

## Wanted:

Information on the Airport Road house, carbide dump, ox dump, Pritchard, Owens D room or any other sordid VPI Cave Club happenings and legends from the mid 1970s. Send info to Lor Windle at 440 Candlewood Dr.; Jacksonville, N.C. 28540 or send it in care of the Trog Editors at P.O. Box 558; Blacksburg, VA 24060.

\* \* \* \* \*

VPI Cave Club  
P.O. Box 558  
Blacksburg, VA 24060



## Softwear for the Descent of Wo Man

**F**ace it, when you're on your way down some things just aren't good enough. For one thing, cotton just doesn't do the trick. And then there's wool, which can absorb 6 to 8% of its weight in water. And what about those caving clothes made for paper dolls!

**R**etire the old die-hards and use Wunderwear. B&C's got everything from a cordura version of your old "jean" jacket to fleece hoods, coveralls to fleece sweaters, long johns and wooly suits to bib-overalls. Whatever you need we probably make it, and if we don't make it we will.

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