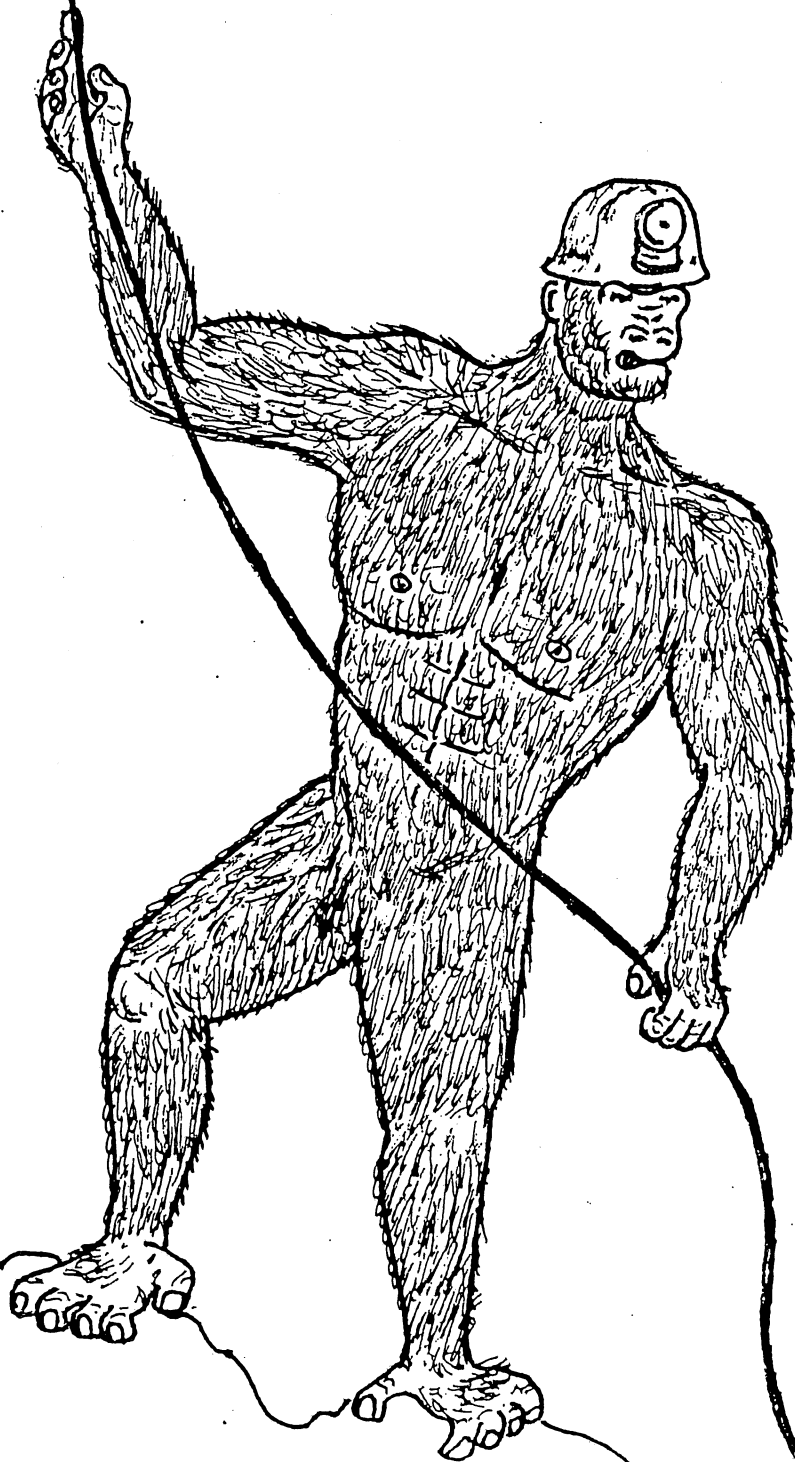


THE TECH

TROGLODITE



FALL
1986

THE TECH TROGLODYTE

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

FALL QUARTER 1986



VOL. XXVI, No 1

President.....Joan Johnson
Vice President..Craig Roberts
Secretary.....Jenny Ford
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.. Beth Wichterman

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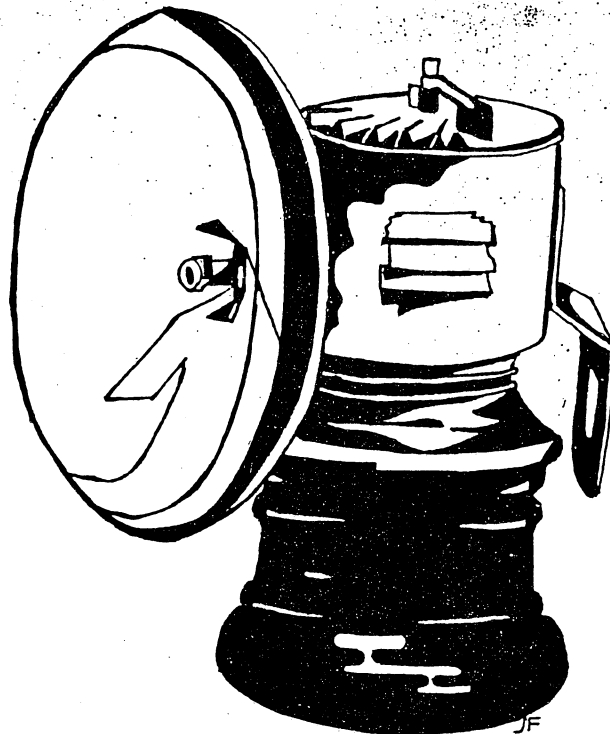
The PREZ's Column:

This has been a good year for the club. I'd like to thank everyone from VPI who helped with the OTR site, Glen Davis and Jerry Redder in particular.

This fall we increased our membership, or rather the number of dues-paying members has increased. We have many prospective members thanks to everyone who helped take trainee trips this fall. Remember, trainees make caving interesting. Take one along on your next trip.

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone to be careful down there. The past few months have proven that you can't be too cautious.

Joan Johnson



The Editor's Column

Another Trog has been pretty well typed into the computer, and once again, the response of the club to my pleas for articles has exceeded my expectations. Many thanks to all the contributors. Now all that's left to do is for me to think of some intelligent way to fill the editor's page.

I feel that there is still some negative response to the requirement of prospective members that they write an article for the Trog as part of the requirements to join the VPI Cave Club as full members. One of the O.F.'s even raised the question of whether we were trying to turn the club into a literary organization. Hardly. But I do feel that everyone has something to say. Maybe I shouldn't have specified "article", but should have said something like "trip report" instead. Somehow that sounds less formidable. Back in the dawn of history, when trainees were trainees, the trip report was the thing to do although one had the option of writing an article if one so desired. (It was amazing what some people could disguise as a trip report.) Anyway, I've included a couple of trainee trip reports from just a few years ago in this Trog as examples. As you can see, they are not that big a deal, particularly the second one.

As this Trog gets wrapped up, I think its time to suggest that someone out there might start thinking in terms of taking over as the editor. The standard editor burn-out period seems to be about three issues which gives me one more after this one. More importantly, however, is that I am not an active enough caver to do the publication justice. The Trog deserves better and the VPI Cave Club deserves better.

Bob Simonds

THE GROTTO GRAPEVINE

Many things have been happening since last Spring. To start with OTR, this year was the first at the new site in Dailey, WV. There were 1500+ people in attendance, once again a record setting number. VPI won a number of prizes in Speleolympics, including Jenny Ford's first place in the women's obstacle course. York Grotto won big, though, so we all need to start working out for next year to show those people who the best cavers are. Of course, on the party front we all know who's the best. The more wine party took place again this year, but with a new twist; party in the creek! As the party in the creek was breaking up, a small contingent continued the more wine party as party in the hot tub! Afterwards, Ko Takamizawa was seen passed out naked next to the hot tub. Did anybody get any pictures?

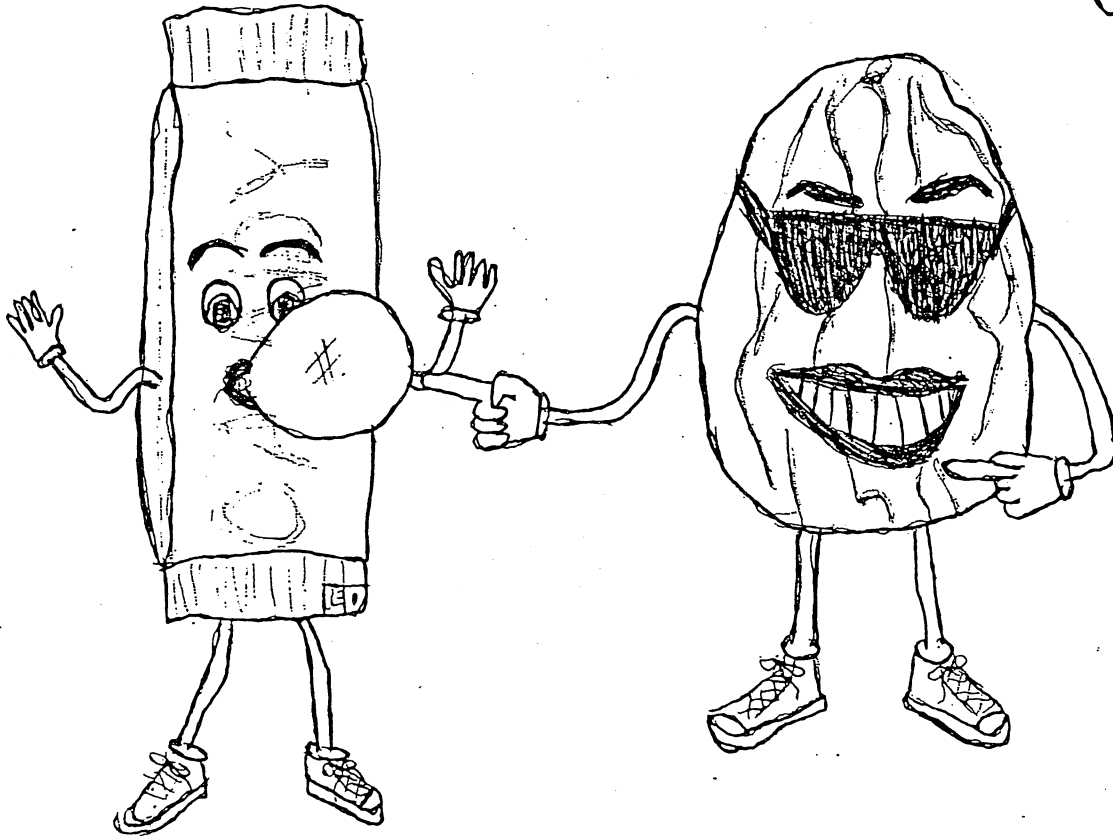
On the second of August, Steve Conner and Ann Marie finally tied the knot. A bunch of B-burg cavers attended and managed to behave themselves until the newlyweds were about to drive off. Then Redder, Hugh, and Dave climbed in the back of the car; they didn't get very far. Later there was a party at the Peterson's house. Sandy's frozen margaritas had people dancing in the rafters.

On November 22nd, Kay Jacobsen married Neil Johnson. We know she must have had some reservations about it though, because she was seen stinking drunk in the Hokie House just a week before the wedding. Becky Himmelmann caught the bouquet; does this mean she might marry Jeff sometime soon? After the wedding, Chip and Jenny Clark took everyone for a behind-the-scenes tour of the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. A good time was had by all.

Since this is a caving club, I suppose some mention should be made of caving-related happenings. We've had three rescues and near rescues since August. Ko Takamizawa got his foot caught under a rock in Stompbottom in August. He was freed without incident, but it is interesting to note that only our own VPI cavers were all the way back in the cave where Ko was. In September, VPI was called out for a search in McClung's Cave in West Virginia. The lost caver was found, unhurt, after a day-long search. Most recently, VPI was called out for a search in our favorite New River Cave to find a lost nerd-caver. The guy was out of the cave by the time the first people got there.

Keith Goggin has finished surveying Spring Creek Pit. It has 5 waterfall drops and is 200+ feet deep. Stompbottom still goes. The Zo's are still working on Newberry's. They're also pleading for babysitters who can stay from the beginning of a cave trip until the end, whenever the end may be. Lawrence Britt is still in the Navy, and he has finally finished the Starnes map. Ed Fortney is still taking the Church of God caving.

4
Ooooo, I Heard it
through the
Grapevine!



We could possibly have Convention '91 (the 50th anniversary) in the New River Valley. Carolzo and Mike Fiore were our delegates to Fall VAR. New River Gorge Bridge was closed again this year for Bridge Day and once again a group of VPI cavers were there to get a cheap thrill. No dead parachutists this year. Craig Roberts has been having trainee bridge sessions every week, but we don't seem to have a very large crop of trainees this year.

Squires will be closed for renovations during Banquet '88, so everyone keep on the lookout for a place to have Banquet that year. Jackie Redder went to China over the summer to look at caves (and a few other things) and had a slide party of her trip. She's also teaching EMT class again. Keith Smith and John Lohner had a drink-Tequila-howl-at-the-moon party that was a huge success. Keith was setting off firecrackers in the kitchen drawers, Jim Washington was seen dancing around in tights, Beth Wichterman was the drunkest we've ever seen her in public, and three people were almost hauled off to Christiansburg. The cops decided to take in only Sue Setzler, but she still managed to go to Stompbottom the next morning. Now that's dedication!

Halloween party was hosted by Rob Hills and Mike Fiore. Glen Davis donated food and punch. Thanks guys! Mary, Keith Smith's girlfriend, won best costume for her "Doodle Bird." Other costumes were: The Color Purple, The Doors, Swiss Army Knife, Vampires, Hixon, Barmaid, Kentucky Girl, Cousin It's, and many others. A good time was had by all, but many people don't remember it!

And now for a few last odds and ends. Maureen Handler is working in Massachussetts. Mike Futrell is back from Kentucky but still isn't a student. Glen Davis and Don Anderson have been doing alot of backpacking lately; are they trying to get into the Outing Club? Plans are being made for another Mexico trip this Christmas. Mike Fiore wants to renounce his New Jersey citizenship. Dave Cinsavich finally graduated from a certain class, so Jerry Redder had a graduation party for him (bring a substance and abuse it!). Viola Ritchie (alias Elvira) is desperately trying to finish her thesis this quarter. Linda Oxenreider will be graduating at the end of this quarter, but will she ever find a job?

For the answer to this and other questions, and for a good dose of the latest dirt, be sure to read Grotto Grapevine in the next issue of the Tech Trog, coming to newsstands in your area.



Some Thoughts On Confidence...

by Reggie Reid

Caving, like any other sport, requires good physical coordination, a certain amount of endurance, and most importantly, good judgement and confidence. Good judgement is essential to any sport in which small errors can have catastrophic consequences. In caving, as in most other such sports (auto/motorcycle racing, etc.) technological advances have allowed participants a greater margin of error. As a result, the equipment used has become an integral and indispensable part of caving (if one wishes to cave safely). Though veteran (and novice) cavers will argue over the usefulness or uselessness of various pieces of equipment from clothing to ropes, they agree upon one thing: the usefulness of a piece of equipment is partially dependent upon the user's faith or confidence in the article. While good cavers take all precautions necessary to mitigate the consequences of equipment failure, to be a truly effective caver, absolute confidence in the equipment is necessary.

Even more important than faith in one's equipment is having confidence in one's caving partners. Whenever you are on rope or performing a difficult climb, the belayer is completely responsible for your safety. Having confidence in the belayer often makes it a lot easier to concentrate on climbing. Confidence in oneself and one's climbing ability is also of paramount importance. Self-confidence inspires other's confidence in you. Since a caver's life may often depend on his/her judgement, the ability of his partners, and the proper use of equipment, tempered by common sense and experience, self-confidence may be a caver's greatest asset.

Spring Hollow Revisited

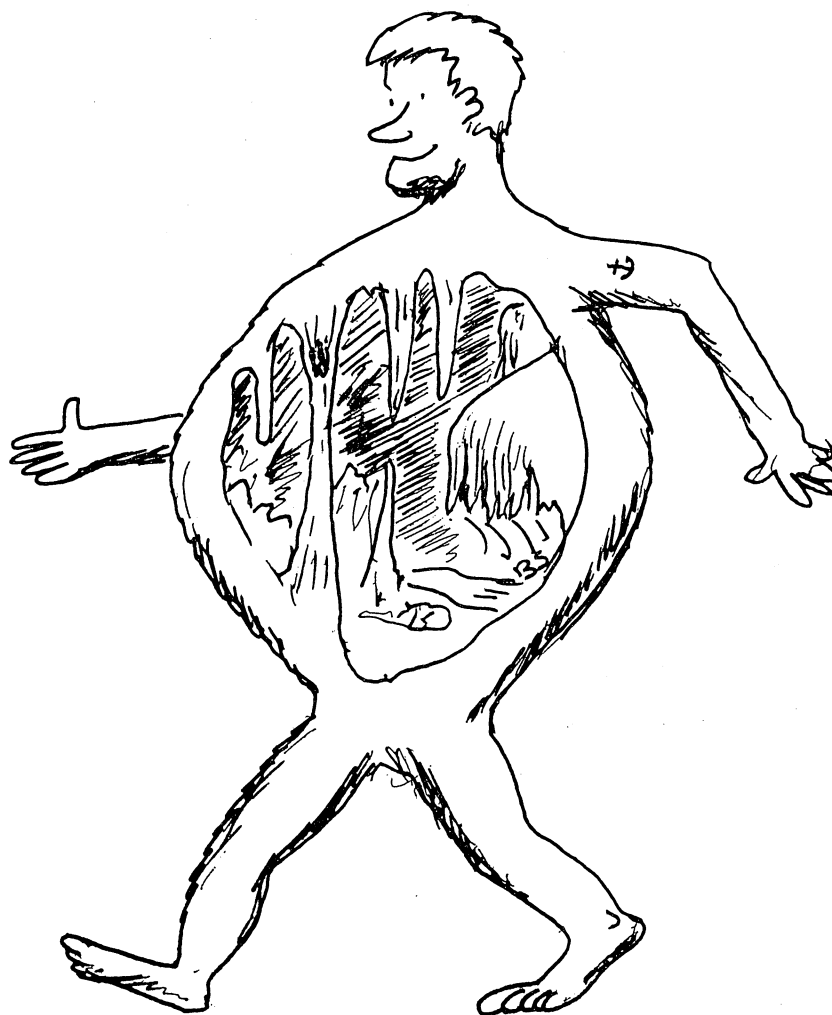
by Mike Futrell

On September 27, myself and Ko Takamizawa, a grad student at Va. Tech, drove out to Skydusky Hollow, Bland Co. Va. I was hoping to do a climb at the end of cave rat passage that I had noted in late 1983. This area is beneath the entrance portion of Bane's Spring Cave, and a connection has long been sought after. Ko is a willing and capable caver who has belayed for me on previous occasions. I was confident in his abilities to endure what may be a long trip.

After securing permission from the owner, myself, Ko and the 'bitch' (my 25-30 lb. gear bag) proceeded into Spring Hollow Cave. A few short climbs later we rigged a rope on the 35' nuisance drop due to our dislike for the traditional cable ladder approach. A very fast hour and a half later we found ourselves at Wilbur Dome. There before us solemnly hung the bluewater left exactly three years ago when Frank Gibson, Eric Anderson, and myself did the 43' bolt climb. After tugging on the rope (not too hard for fear of pulling it down), I ascended followed by Ko. He looked at the rig point and just said "...wow." We briefly rechecked the passage going off at this point but found little of significance aside from a deep fissure which I had difficulty getting back up.

Due to the curved and fissured nature of the lip at the top of the bolt climb, where it is impossible to stand without being on rope, one can look up and over to see a hole 1' x 2' in the very top of the dome-pit about 25' away. There is very little maneuvering space here and anything dropped will be lost down a tight fissure. Fully anticipating an aid climb, I set to organizing my gear rack while Ko worked on setting up a belay. All too soon our procrastination techniques were used up and it was time. In starting the climb, I noticed an intermittent ledge flake leading up the wall. Perhaps I could lead this route! About 15' later I found my first pro, a sling looped over a pinnacle. It looked bomb proof and gave me the courage to proceed with sheer blackness below. Nearing the top, I found a manky looking jug handle just before the crux move into the lead. I clipped into this with another sling but it didn't take the fear of falling away as it should have. I made the last move by putting my arms up in the muddy lead and feet swinging pulled myself up while trying to keep all the gear at my side from getting caught. A nice rush followed. Wow, I had led the climb and it wasn't as difficult as it had looked. The dome was plumbed at 60' from this point. I found myself in a small alcove with a two foot wide muddy muddy fissure leading up and off the end. I slimed up the fissure and found another pit!

After calling the news back to Ko, I down-climbed the route leaving my pro in place. We reorganized the gear and discussed our options. We would have to pull the Bluewater off the bolt climb to avoid using the dynamic climbing rope on the new pit. I re-led the pitch with the Bluewater trailing. After reaching the alcove, I hauled the remainder of the gear and packs on the Bluewater and belayed Ko as he seconded the climb. We then each set a bolt over the lip of the new pit. Ko rigged and descended cleaning a lot of loose rock along the way. I followed. We found it to be 35', dead bottomed, filled with sandstone cobble and breakdown. Once again Spring Hollow gives a little bit to those who work really hard. We sat at the bottom of Ko's Pit, ate supper and discussed the cave. With mission accomplished, we still had four roped pitches between us and the entrance, two up and two down, not to mention the misery of the cave in general. Fortunately we were prepared cavers and had beer waiting in the car. With this in mind we, began the long haul out. Special thanks goes to Ko, whose experience and caving drive made another trip a success.



WALKING PASSAGE

WAYS TO RESPECT BATS

by Marvin Fuqua

Contrary to popular belief bats do not attack people. There are many rumors about bat attacks which permeate among amateur cavers, but these simply are unfounded. Bats, with the exception of the South and Central Americas' vampire bat, do not normally attack creatures larger than themselves. Horror stories concerning bats are usually generated because bats fly close to humans in caves. These fly-bys are not attacks. Bats, like men, have certain paths that they follow daily and when we go through the caves, we sometimes obstruct their normal flight pattern and they have to take the time to maneuver around us. If a bat should become rabid and thus attack a caver, an extremely rare occurrence, the bat should be captured and sent with the bitten caver to the hospital as rabies can be lethal.

Many caves have bats and thus we should learn how to peacefully coexist. Bats adjust to the presence of other animals and as a result they are not particularly threatened by men in their homes. This means that they will not bother you unless you bother them.

Bats are nocturnal creatures which forage for food at night, thus nocturnal cave trips would bring about greater contact with active bats. A few species of bats migrate during winter and summer seasons, while others hibernate during the winter. Many of the bats in this area hibernate, thus winter trips should be few in number in order to avoid upsetting the ecology of the cave. Bats have been recorded to have life spans as high as thirty years and we should do all we can to ensure the longevity of our insect eating friends.

Bats have excellent navigating abilities. They emit sonar-like signals of short duration at tremendous speed, so if a bat flies towards you, don't panic. He will detect you and move out of your way. In addition to excellent navigational ability, they have remarkable homing instincts. One bat was reported to have returned home from a distance of 180 miles. A few small brown bats have returned home in one night -- a distance of slightly over 60 miles.

Bats have existed in caves for thousands of years without need of our assistance so NEVER HANDLE BATS. They have adapted to their environment, and if you interfere with the balance of nature in the bats' world, you may cause catastrophic ecological damage.

Resting bats sometimes appear to be wet on the outside, and some cavers may think that drying off the bat or stroking off the water may help it. This is absolutely false. Bats secrete an oily substance which makes their fur waterproof. If they should be touched, this oil barrier will be disrupted. The bat will become wet, and thus more susceptible to the cold. Besides, resting bats should never be disturbed.

Light also affects bats. "Bright light or white light of any type may be lethal in many cases for most bats." (Zoologist Jack A. Cranford) As mentioned earlier, bats associate light with dusk and dawn, and they have internal clocks which are set by these signals. The clock tells them when to wake up to leave the cave and feed. The presence of artificial light can cause the bat's clock to be reset. Once reset, the bat will miss its proper feeding window, and many local species could die if they go two or more days without feeding. They cannot adapt to another type of insect food, thus they would starve if they should miss their normal prey. According to Dr. Cranford, the best lighting to use would be low intensity red light. It should be noted that carbide lamps put out a low intensity beam and they are further in the red spectrum than are electrical lights. Regardless of your lighting system you should never shine light directly on bats, especially while they are resting. Moreover, PHOTOGRAPHS OF BATS SHOULD NEVER BE TAKEN FOR ANY REASON. There is NO exception. The presence of man can cause additional problems as well. Nerdy cavers leave spent carbide, food, and other garbage in caves which could also upset the cave's ecology. Remember the rule of thumb, "Leave nothing but footprints." A result of leaving behind food and other garbage is that it could attract rats and other potential bat predators into the cave, in addition to ruining the cave for others. In addition we should not break off or remove anything as bats can become confused if the cave's topology has been altered.

The only times a bat should be touched are first, if there is a good chance that you could accidentally knock him down, and second, if it has already been knocked down. The dangers of being on the ground are three-fold. First, bats can become wet which speeds hypothermia. The second reason is the risk of hypothermia to the bats. The final reason is that some nerdy caver may step on the bat.

If for one of these two reasons you must move him, in the summer lift him up and try to make him attach to the ceiling or a high wall. In the winter, do not wake him. Instead, try to nudge him into a dry crack or small ledge well above the floor.

This entire subject can be summed up in one sentence:

TREAT BATS WITH RESPECT AND THEY WILL RESPECT YOU.

I would like to thank Zoologist Dr. Jack A. Cranford of the Va. Tech Biology Department for taking the time to enlighten me on the subject and thus help make this article possible.



Car Cramming

Just about everyone knows that cavers have an obsession with trying to see how small a space they can fit through. Folding chairs, coat hangers and porch railings are popular cave club party favors. There are even a few individuals around that can fit through a coat hanger sideways. One Friday night as we planned for a routine trip to James cave in Radford, it became apparent that the size of the party was becoming larger than was hoped for, considering that we all had to fit in one car. This is especially significant since the car was my metallic blue '66 Mustang, which has very limited interior space to begin with. The expedition consisted of Craig Roberts, Beth Wichterman, Joan Johnson, Reggie Reid, Drew Porter, Don Oswald, and myself.

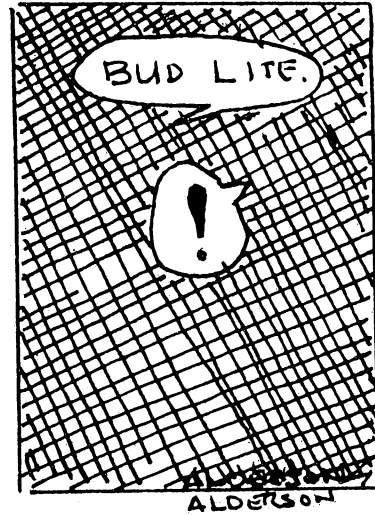
When we met the next morning, our group of seven proceeded to start loading ourselves and all our gear into the car. We sprung the trunk lid when we slammed it shut after cramming it to nearly 50% over capacity. We still had a very large duffle bag and all seven people to fit into the Mustang. After three people got into the back seat we loaded the duffle bag in. Then we wedged Beth into the back seat across their laps. Next, the remaining three people squeezed into the two front bucket seats and we were ready to go. Of course, the gear shift had to be between the seats to make the seating problem even more difficult. The weight on the little Ford was so great that I had to add air to my air shocks to keep the rear end from dragging.

At last we were on our way. We had to repeat packing and unpacking the car five times: after going to the sign out, at Krogers, upon leaving the cave, back at the sign in sheet, and finally at Derring parking lot outside of Pamplin hall, where the party split up until we all met again at the next Friday night meeting. On this trip we probably got more exercise getting in and out of the car than we did caving. Maybe sometime this year we can try cramming ten people into someone's Chevette.

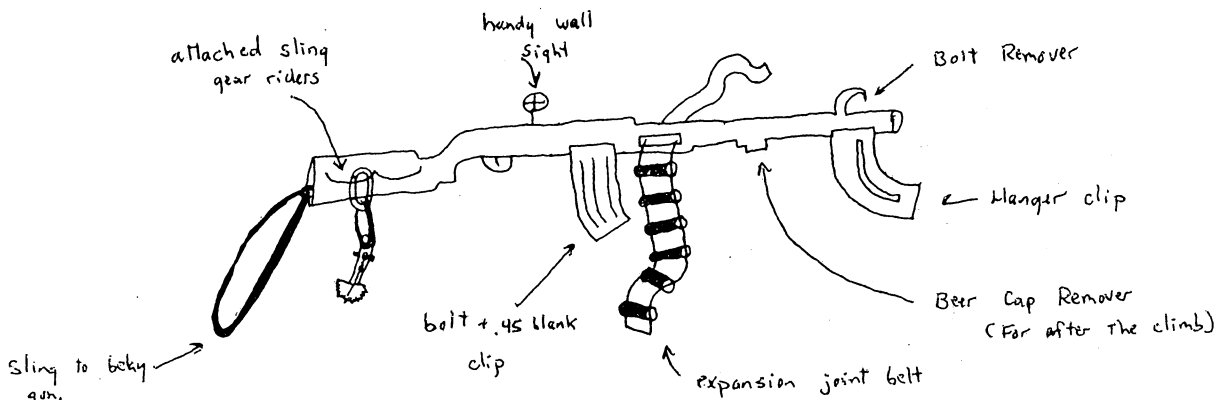
Tom C. Foster, VPI #297

Overheard, Underthought, & Out of Context

Whatcha got?	MA
I'd like to put this in your safety deposit box. Please.	PS
Caving and poontang are not necessarily incompatable.	JK
Rock & Roll	CF
Zzzzzzzzzzzzz...	PB
You think I'm crazy? No! You just chicken!	AV
I don't need to prove I'm macho.	MH
I can't get this thing out.	JH
The last time I was dancing my crotch was dry.	DC
The next time you're offered an urinalysis test...	
Just say NO!	JF
Is Ko still Japanese?	KJ
I owe my first beer to the cave club.	MF
Beer makes you sick.	MH
Yes, but only if you do it right.	JW
Ooooo my head is still on my shoulders I think.	KT
Wait until you see my next costume.	KG
Now if we were at Hixon's, I wouldn't have to wash my hands to cook supper.	MF
I like being wasteful because it makes me feel rich.	BS
If I weren't going out with him, I'd want to rip his clothes off.	ML
Hey, I've seen you naked before.	JW
We want naked women.	MW
What do you mean, some of us want naked men?	PS
Show me your wife's tits and I'll show you my wife's tits.	CS
Hey, feel these.	CJ
Have you turned yourself into a rock lately?	SS
One can be young once, but one can be immature forever.	PB
(but always remember: as JK says...)	
Your pack is like a pet. You're in a crawlway pushing it in front of you and it keeps wanting to roll back and lick your face.	



THE Bolt climbers fantasy



length: 2 feet

wt: 16 oz.

color: hot pink

luminous yellow

commands black

price: less than a pair of Fire boots

accessories: - rope bazooka (hants underneath)

- infra-red scope, for finding Hot leads.

- auto pin conversion kit, convert your bolt gun to full auto!

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Cave Bats of Virginia And West Virginia

by Ginny Dalton

The key below is for 5 of the 8 species that hibernate in the caves of the region from about mid-September through early May. There will be exceptions to the generalities of this key.

1. Bats in clusters? (cluster = body contact in groups of 5 or more individuals.....Yes, go to 2.....No, go to 4
2. Bats are clustered in area greater than one foot in diameter (with as many as 200 bats per square foot).
.....Yes, go to 3.....No, go to 2'
- 2'. Bats are clustered in area less than one foot in diameter (with fewer than 100 bats per square foot).
.....Little Brown Bat
3. Ears are about one inch in length (may be curled down at side like rams horns).....Big-Eared Bat
- 3'. Ears much less than one inch in length (bats are very densely packed into the cluster).....Indiana Bat
4. Tiny bat hanging at an angle, only bat with red forearms contrasting with dark wing membrane, fur yellowish and fuzzy.
.....Pipistrelle
- 4'. Large bat stuffed in crack or hanging vertical unless thumbs hooked on wall, fur long and silky.....Big Brown Bat
- 4''. Bat with ears about one inch in length (this species also clusters).....Big-Eared Bat

NOT IN THE KEY are two species rarely encountered and usually solitary: Myotis keenii and Myotis leibii. M. leibii looks like a tiny little brown bat with a very dark face; it is about the size of a pip. Keen's bat also looks like a little brown, about the same size, with longer ears (about 3 mm longer). Two bats that may be found in the Virginia Region of the NSS but not in the key or on the list are Plecotus rafinesquii and Myotis austroriparius.

Two species of bats are found in caves in the summer: big-eared bats (maternity colonies) and gray bats (maternity and bachelor colonies). Sometimes pips can also be found in caves at this time of year.

Myotis lucifugus (Little brown bat): Forearm 34-41 mm (avg. 38 mm), ear 14-16 mm, foot 10-11 mm, weight 6-13 g. Few scattered long hairs on foot extending to tip of claws or beyond. Brown glossy fur. Yellowish belly contrasts with back fur. Often covered with water drops. Small, fairly loose clusters; hang along cracks and end up in belly-to-back overlapping relationship. Very difficult to distinguish from M. sodalis. Ears and face usually darker than sodalis. Calcar not keeled.

Myotis sodalis (Indiana bat): ENDANGERED SPECIES. Closely resembles Myotis lucifugus. Fur may be more grayish than lucifugus; never glossy or yellowish. Forearm 34-41 mm (avg. 38 mm), ear 14-15 mm, weight 5-11 g, 9 mm foot. Hairs on foot short and inconspicuous. Hibernates 37-43°F. Singletons sometime look like longjohns hanging on a line. No droplets of moisture condense on fur. Found in high, but not saturated, humidity (66-95%; av. 87%). Typically found in large caves. Hibernates as large carpet on flat surfaces with only noses, ears, and wrists visible. Keeled calcar. Light belly fur.

Myotis keenii (Keen's myotis): 34-38 mm forearm (av. 37), weight 5-10 gm, foot 10 mm. Ear 17-19 mm and extending 3 or more mm beyond the nose when laid forward (less than 3 mm for lucifugus), tragus longer and more pointed than lucifugus. Cooler hibernating sites than lucifugus. Near entrances but with high humidity. Never abundant in any one area. Easily missed; rarely seen. Usually hangs singly or tucked away in crevices or holes. Brown fur, not glossy. Light belly fur. Sometimes covered with water droplets.

Myotis leibii (Leib's myotis): smallest Myotis (about the size of a pipistrelle). 28-36 mm forearm (av. 32), ear 14-15 mm, tiny 7-8 mm foot. weight 4-6 gm, keeled calcar. Hangs solitary, tucked away in cracks. Dorsal fur glossy, usually brown, but more golden than lucifugus. Ears, wings, lips black. Prefers cooler hibernating sites than lucifugus but more tolerant to low humidity than keenii. Hibernates near entrances. Similar to E. fuscus in hibernating sites.

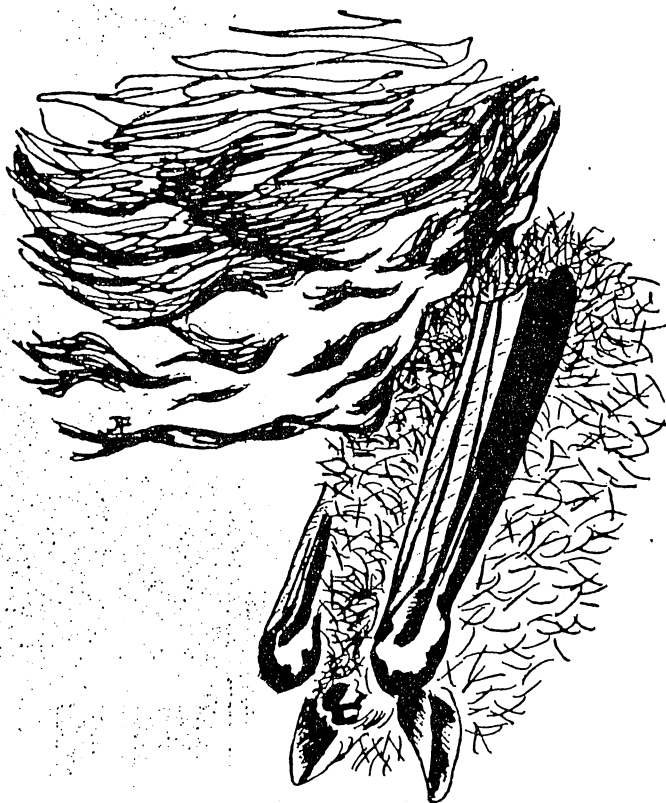
Myotis grisescens (Gray bat): ENDANGERED SPECIES. 40-46 mm forearm, large 12 mm foot, weight 7-10 gm, ear 16 mm calcar not keeled. Dull grayish-brown dorsal fur is uniformly same color from base to tip of hairs. Ventral surface lighter. Wing membrane attached at ankle (vs. toe attachment for other spp. concerned). Hibernates 45-50°F in deep, vertical caves. Large aggregates like sodalis, but tightness of clusters due to forearms angled out (interwoven arms). Clusters may be several tiers in thickness.

Pipistrellus subflavus (Pip): 31-35 mm forearm, foot 9-11 mm ear 13-15 mm weight 4-7 gm. Small body, hangs like a fuzzy ball. Calcar not keeled. Only bat (besides M. leibii) with forearm that small. Often covered with water drops. Prefers 99% humidity. Yellowish dorsal fur contrasting very little with ventral fur. Tricolored fur: base of hairs is dark, middle band is lighter, tip is dark. Anterior third of interfemoral membrane furred. Hibernates singly, prefers warmer parts of cave in protected side passages (52-55°F).

Eptesicus juscus (Big brown bat): 42-51 mm forearm, 12 mm foot ear 17-18 mm weight 11 15 gm, keeled calcar. Hibernates 32-64°F. Sleek, long, glossy brown fur. Prefers cooler hibernating sites than lucifugus of sodalis, but more tolerant of low humidity than keenii. Large bat, broad nose. Hibernates singly or in groups of 2-4 near entrances where temperature and humidity are low. Never becomes beaded with moisture like lucifugus and pips sometimes do. Prefers horizontal crevices but often found hanging in open on cave wall. Dark face.

Plecotus townsendii virginianus (Big-eared bat; long-eared bat): ENDANGERED SPECIES. 39-48 mm forearm, 10-13 mm foot weight 7-12 gm, huge ears 33-38 mm(1-1.5 in). 2 large lumps on nose. Brown with tan underparts, short hairs on toes. Prefer to hibernate near cold entrances. Ears may be rolled like rams' horns in hibernation.

Dr. Virginia Dalton
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Continuity

Revolving internally
 Winding down
 The mechanical spiral
 Spins us around
 Like the DNA pattern
 With the life it contains
 From inspired creations
 To decaying remains

The motion
 The movement
 The pressure
 And heat
 The molecules moving
 The rhythm complete

Each atom's existence
 All energy and thought
 Are from physics and forces
 Eternally caught
 In waves like the ocean
 Only rolling in air
 No beginning
 No ending
 Always going
 Nowhere

Janelle Slivinske

Madam President

There once was a girl named Joan
 Who got off on banging the bone
 That wasn't too swell
 The club went to hell
 Now everyone's caving alone.

Mike Fiore
 & Rob Hills

QUIZ

Many colorful comments have been floating around the club lately. See how many quotes you can match with the hapless victim. By the way, rumor has it that the author of this quiz has moved to Upper Volta.

Normally, you have to hose me down with liquid nitrogen to get me to stop. _____

If I wasn't going out with him, I'd want to rip his clothes off. _____ about _____

I think my head is still above my shoulders. _____

I'm going to wear out my palms. _____

I need two tongues to do this. _____

Are these regular mushrooms? _____

Are you a substance? _____

Do you want to babysit? _____

A. Dave Cinsavich

F. Sue Setzler

B. Mike Fiore

G. Kochiro Takamizawa

C. Mark Honosky

H. Beth Wichterman

D. Margaret Lake

I. Joe Zokaite

E. Craig Roberts

How did you do?

0-3 correct Where are you from, RASS?

4-6 correct You were too busy being quoted to listen to anyone else's quotes.

7-8 correct You must have heard it through the grapevine.

9 correct You better hide before someone accuses you of writing this!

Two Trainee Trip Reports From the Sixties:

LOWMOOR CAVE

by Glen Davis

Personnel: Al Armstrong, Dave Strobe, Carole Noble, Tom Roehr,
Glen Davis

To get to Lowmoor Cave, take U.S. Route 460 towards Roanoke, then take U.S. Route 220 north to Clifton Forge. From Clifton Forge, take Interstate 64 west for four miles until you come to State Route 616. Turn left off of Route 616 into Lowmoor and then turn right on the first paved road. Drive on until you pass the town and then look for an old bridge on the right-hand side of the road. The cave entrance is about four hundred yards up and around the side of the hill. The cave can also be entered through the quarry either by a one hundred foot vertical drop or by an old truck ramp. I suggest looking for the cave entrance as it is very easy to keep walking in circles when inside the quarry.

We left Blacksburg at 10:30 on Saturday, March 5th (1966, Ed.), ate lunch in Clifton Forge, and entered the cave at 1:30. When we first entered the cave it appeared to be a very wet cave. It turned out that the puddles and profuse dripping were unique to the entrance chamber. The rest of the cave was very dry, thus making the temperature seem much higher than it really was.

The half of cave that we saw was entirely walking passage. The solutional form of these passages created a very interesting rock formation in which many interesting and beautiful photographs could be taken with different colored lights. The larger of these passages are actually long rooms, but this is not easily seen because of the formations which greatly limit one's ability to look straight down the room. This section of the cave, the upper section, is connected to the lower section by a vast maze chamber.

The lower section of the cave is the most beautiful because of the many calcite formations. Many of these high grade calcite formations are broken and crushed, and literally cover the floor. In the lower section of the cave, I am told, there is an extensive crawling passage that is completely covered with crushed calcite. This passage could be very grueling and painful if a person was not wearing heavy pants and shirt, as the broken calcite is very sharp and cannot be evaded.

After reaching the halfway mark of the cave (where the crushed calcite crawl begins), we decided not to continue along the main passage and began to poke around in some of the many side passages. While doing this, Dave Strobe found two hundred yards of virgin chimney passage (undisturbed manganese dioxide deposits on the dirt walls indicated that the passage was virgin). After an hour and a half of sticking our heads into whatever looked like it might go somewhere, we started out. Instead of going out through the cave entrance, we went out through the underground quarry. The quarry has a ceiling about eighty feet in height and is supported by fifty-foot-in-diameter pillars. We got out of the cave at 9:30 and got back to Blacksburg, safe and almost sound, at 12:00 (Al, who was at the wheel, dozed off twice).

EWING SALTPETER CAVE

11/27/65

by Bob Simonds

Personnel: John Schelleng, George Titcomb, Ackie Lloyd, and others.

Thanksgiving weekend, 1965, gave me the opportunity to do some work with the Virginia Cave Survey in Lee County, Virginia. Ed Bauer and myself left Wednesday after classes in one very tightly packed Volkswagen for Pennington Gap, GHQ for that particular weekend. I caved with Ed on Thursday and Friday, but on Saturday we went our separate ways. I heard that he was going to cold and wet Surgener's Cave, but I had already had enough cold and wet caving for that weekend (Indian Cave) so I went to nice, warm, and dry Ewing Saltpeter.

To describe Ewing Saltpeter Cave in one or two words would be impossible, but three will suffice. It is basically just ONE HUGE ROOM. On visiting the cave, one can't help but get the impression that the hill in which the cave is located is just one big bubble. With a cave that big, and a hill that small, what else could it be?

The group entered the cave at about 10 A.M. The short entrance passage leads down into a room about 50' in diameter and with a ceiling height of about 10'. From this entrance room, a walking passage leads straight ahead for about 100'. This passage enters the big room near the top, and a rope is needed for the descent to the floor. From the entrance room, another passage leads off to the left. This duck-walk passage goes for about 100', coming out at the top of a wooden ladder. The ladder leads down to a small room, from which there are at least two passages leading to the large room. One passage enters the big room at the floor level under the first passage (the one that requires the rope) and the other one enters the big room along the left side at the floor level.

The floor of the huge room is mostly clay and dirt, but there are also a lot of rocks and pieces of break-down. At one point along the left side of the room, immense pieces of break-down form a series of small maze passages. At one point, the cave floor gives way to a large crater. This is the most difficult part of an otherwise easy cave, and it requires a little climbing. There seem to be quite a few passages leading off the room, but we made no effort to push them. There are very few formations in the cave; the ones that are around are mostly dried up and crumbly. All in all, Ewing Saltpeter is a very impressive cave from the standpoint of its size, and yet it is a very easy cave.

After John Schelleng took some measurements and George Titcomb took some pictures we headed out. After poking out in some small holes on the other side of the mountain, we headed back to Pennington Gap to tell of our adventures.



LITTLE-KNOWN CAVE CREATURES:
THE NEW RIVER NERD GOBBLER

From The Signout...

The VPI Cave Club has logged more than 1420 man hours underground since June 1, 1986 on 61 trips. Ko Takamizawa is credited with the most hours, 70! Joan Johnson is a close second with 67.5. Sue Setzler went on the most trips, 13+.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CAVE</u>	<u>PARTY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
6/1/86	New River	E.Fortney, C.Elfried N.White, M.Harford + 4 girl scouts	Girls just want to have fun!
6/14/86	Clover Hollow	C.Roberts, P.Hess, A.I. Cartwright, (+ Dog w/ large ...)	Cave trashed! Dead possum in the crawlway. Forever smell creek, but these real men did not turn back.
9/13/86- 9/14/86	McClungs	VPI Cave Club	Lets play find & seek or search & destroy. Found him after 24 hrs. Bonafide Rescue Circus.
9/27/86	Spring Hollow	M.Futrell, K.Takamizawa & one bag of toys	More THRILLS & SCARES for your money.
9/27/86	Banes Spring	P.Balister, M.Fiore, C.Pirie, R.Smith, B.Yasnowsky, B.Wagner	Saw the sights; lost some skin, didn't lose the trainees after goin' in.
10/4/86	Pig Hole	B.Fizer, C.Roberts & 9 trainees	Trainee loses finger. "Do I have to carry my own stuff?"
10/4/86	Paul Penley's	E.Devine, P.Balister, C.Welsh	No Resting! It's against the rules.
10/18/86	Stompbottom	G.Rouse, J.Kehoe, M.Fiore, R.Hills, K.Takamizawa, J.Ford J.Johnson, S.Setzler C.Ferguson, C.Roberts B.Wichterman, R.Keen	Cold, Slimy, Wet, Dry Passable, Nasty, Fun, & Miserable. It keeps going. (108 man hours, 950' surveyed, Ugh.)