

Northeastern Cave Conservancy News

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March 2019



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The Northeastern Cave Conservancy News is published quarterly by the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. The Northeastern Cave Conservancy promotes the study and preservation of speleologically significant properties in the northeastern United States. Annual membership is \$20 (Regular), \$5 (Additional Family), \$50 (Benefactor), \$100 (Institutional), \$125 (Family Life Membership), and \$400 (Life Membership). All checks made payable and sent to:

Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc. · P.O. Box 254 · Schoharie, N.Y. 12157
www.necaveconservancy.org

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Next Board Meeting

Sunday, March 3, 2019 at 10:00 am
 Mass DEP Office Dalton, MA

Spring Board Meeting
(Date and location To Be Announced)

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) is a not-for-profit corporation committed to the conservation, study, management, and acquisition of caves and karst areas having significant geological, hydrological, biological, recreational, historical, or aesthetic features.

To these ends, the NCC combines the resources and expertise of affiliated cave explorers, educators, scientists, landowners, and conservation officials.

The NCC programs are focused mainly on the preservation of caves and karst. Outreach includes education in schools and local communities, establishment of park spaces on karstlands, and educational messages about the significance of groundwater pollution on this sensitive underground ecosystem.

NCC members assist in the exploration, survey, and protection of these natural resources, and manage them so you can explore them yourself.



40th NCC Anniversary logo design adopted by Eva Hunter

REMEMBERING ALAN TRAINO

— Bill Folsom —

Alan suffered a massive heart attack in late July of 2018. This was quite a shock to anyone who knew Alan, due to his boundless energy and vitality. Miraculously, Alan survived the initial event, but never fully recovered, launching into his final adventure on December 30, 2018. Suffice it to say that his enthusiasm for exploration and general zest for life will be sorely missed. Alan crammed 120 years of living into his 60 actual years, an inspiration to all of us: Grab life by the horns.

Born and raised in Paterson, NJ, Alan lived most of his life in Hawthorne and North Haledon. Alan was an optician and the owner/operator of S. Pollack Opticians in Hawthorne, NJ. Alan hosted some of the largest astronomy shows in the world, ultimately being recognized for his contributions with the 2009 Astronomical League Award. In 2015 the International Astronomical Union named a newly discovered asteroid "30097 Traino." He was also an Adirondack 46er (#3203), having done many of the peaks in winter.

I met Alan above the Widow Jane Mine in Rosendale, NY, at the Fall 2002 NRO, during the Saturday night festivities. Ken Moore introduced us and an immediate bond was formed. Our personalities were diametrically opposite: Alan was a man of Action while I am more deliberate. That said, we complemented each other well. I can say with confidence that I benefited greatly from knowing Alan.

Whenever anything needed to be done, Alan stepped up, ready to go. In addition to digging for new cave at every opportunity, Alan was always keen to support existing caves as well as cavers:

NRO Chair 2005 - 2010
 NCC Trustee 2009 - 2018
 Preserve Manager, Sellecks Karst Preserve, NCC
 Preserve Manager, Ella Armstrong Cave, NCC

Alan loved introducing people to caving, especially kids. He led many Boy Scout and school trips when his kids were that age. I remember seeing lots of smiling wet muddy faces afterward!

When digging, most folks knew how intense he could be at the point. Koepiccus Sink will never be the same without you, Alan. He would remain at the digface for 3-4 hours at a time, the rest of us wondering how he maintained the continuous flow of buckets leaving the sink-hole.

At NROs everyone saw Alan zooming about in his black Xterra to get to a cave or to get coffee first thing in the AM. Several times Alan served as the evening's entertain-

ment, as auctioneer. One particularly memorable auction Alan sold off the shaving of Ken Moore's beard. Over the years, Alan raised thousands of dollars for the Northeastern Cave Conservancy and donated plenty also.

Several years ago, a group of us decided to check out a cave system that had been closed for years. The new owner of the property and Alan hit it off, with Alan (and others) then spending many hours cleaning out the insurgenge entrance of Slingerlands Hellhole, which had been obliterated by hurricane debris. Alan loved showing off the newly reopened entrance and taking folks into the cave. In fact, this will hopefully be the next NCC Preserve! Thanks, Alan.

A big part of Alan's life the past few years revolved around the 2017 solar eclipse. As part owner of Lunt Solar Systems, a solar telescope company, you can imagine why. Many cavers and non-cavers recall looking at the stars or the sun through one of Alan's many telescopes.

All Alan's hard work preparing for the eclipse paid off, and he was able to relax afterward, relatively speaking. One of his last adventures on this earth was searching for meteorites in the deserts of Morocco. While the standard issue tool was a magnet on a stick supplied by the guide, Alan turned it up to 11 as usual and brought a metal detector that was the envy of the rest of the group.

Even though Alan was greatly diminished by his near-death experience, he was determined to make it to the Northeastern Cave Conservancy's 40th Anniversary Banquet. No one other than a few close friends had seen him since his heart attack, so many of his caving friends got to see him before he finally succumbed.

On Friday November 1, 2018, I picked up Alan and we hung out for the entire weekend, making the rounds up-state, touching base with a couple of local cave owners, both of which had had their own health challenges. That same weekend Alan and I made another pilgrimage of sorts, catching the Queen biopic, Bohemian Rhapsody. One of Alan's favorite bands was Queen. Alan had met Brian May, lead guitarist of Queen (who also happens to be an astrophysicist), while running NEAF (NorthEast Astronomy grForum). Coincidentally, the day after Alan's funeral, Brian May released a new music video celebrating NASA's New Horizons space probe, having just taken a photo of the most distant object ever explored in our Solar System: Ultima Thule, 4 billion miles from Earth in the Kuiper Belt. Alan would have loved that video.

Bye Bye Buddy Buddy...so glad we got to know you.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Hawthorne Volunteer Ambulance Corps, P.O. Box 200, Hawthorne, NJ 07506 or to the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, P.O. Box 254, Schoharie, NY 12157 (<http://www.necaveconservancy.org/donate/>).

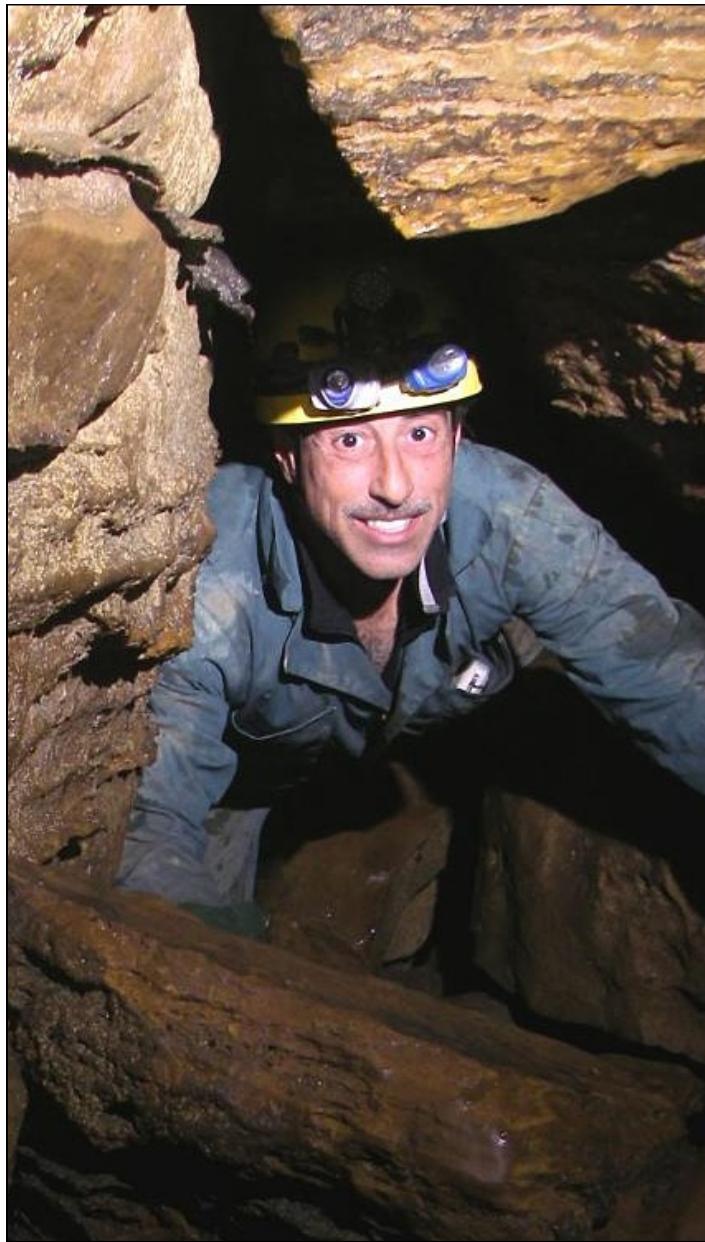


Photo by John Dunham



Photos on pages 4 - 7 from a variety of sources.



Photo by Mike Martescello



Photo by Michael Chu



Photo by Michael Chu

Photo by Luke Mazza



Photo by Donna Stanley

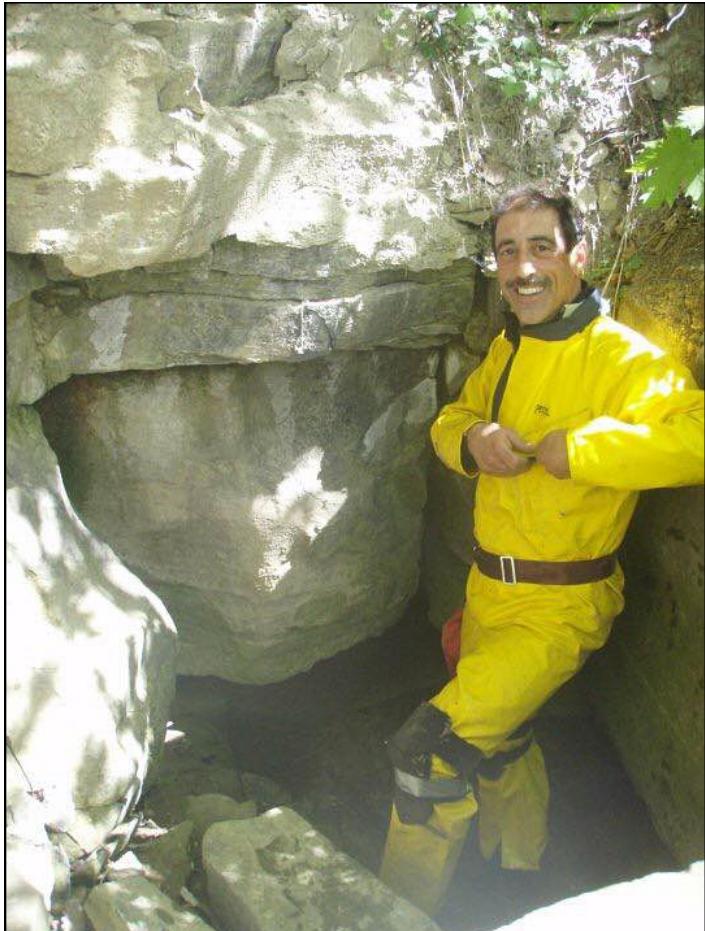


Photo by Bill Folsom



Photo by Carlos DeDani

Photo by Bill Folsom



Photo by Mike Martesello



Photo by Pamela Shivak



CLARKSVILL CAVE PRSERVE ADDITION

— Thom Engel - NCC Vice President —

On 9 December 2018, the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) closed on an additional 2.44 acres of land for the Clarksville Cave Preserve. This addition protects the land overlying the rest of the Gregory part of Clarks-ville Cave (see map.) It also makes our preserve, which consisted of two separate parcels, into a single contiguous preserve.

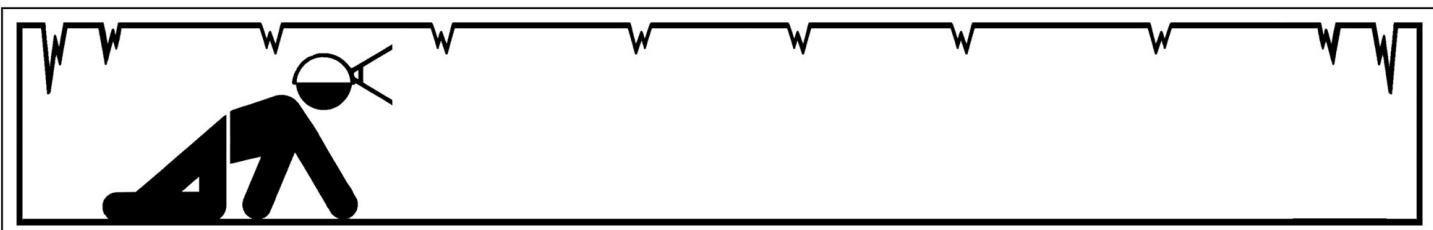
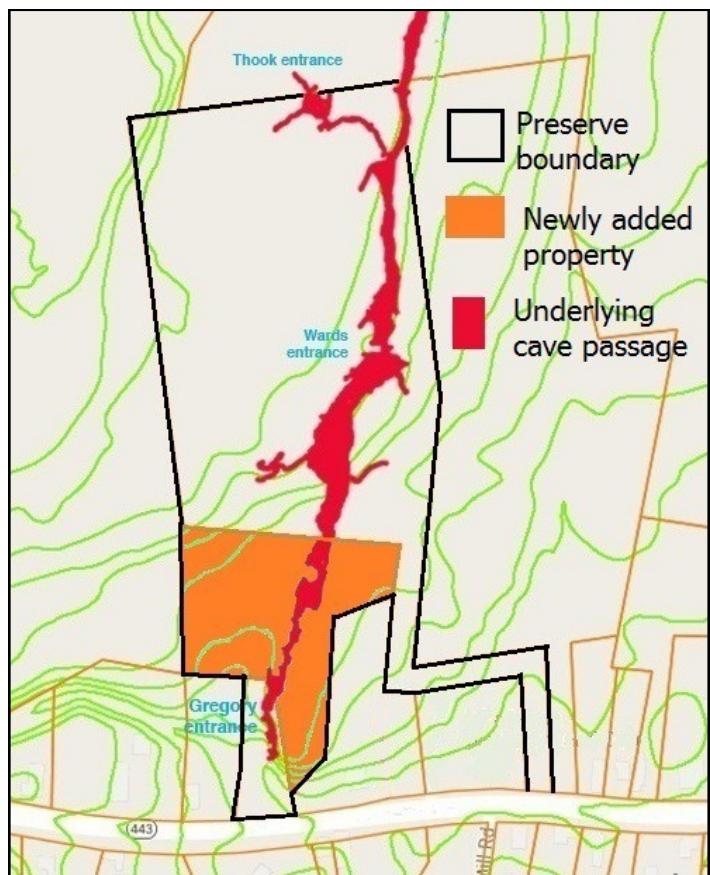
Clarksville Cave, which has been known since about 1810, is one of the best-known wild caves in the North-east. The preserve receives about 3,500 visitors a year, of which about twenty percent just walk the surface. The NCC purchased the Ward parcel (11.27 acres) in 2004, which secured the Ward entrance to the cave; much of the upland karst in the vicinity of the cave; and a smaller cave known locally as the Ladder Dig. A month later, the Albany County legislature voted to give the original 0.46-acre Gregory parcel to the NCC, creating a two-piece preserve.

In February 2018, I was contacted by the owner of the land between the NCC's two parcels. He was considering subdividing the land, and wanted to know if the NCC would be interested in the rear section of this property. Based on the zoning in this part of Clarksville, the entire property could have been subdivided into three residential building lots. The NCC saw this as an opportunity not just to connect our two parcels, but also to prevent the construction of houses over or near the cave. The NCC board moved quickly and negotiations by Chuck Porter, Acquisitions Chairman, and Bob Simmons, NCC President, with the landowner settled on a final price.

This initiated a period of intense fundraising. Forty people and groups contributed more than \$19,000. The groups included the Northeastern Regional Organization; regional grottos; the NSS, through an NSS Cave Acquisition Grant; as well as the National Speleological Foundation, through a Vehslage Grant. We extend a big thank-you to all contributors, with special recognition to the NSS and NSF, whose contributions pushed the effort over the top. Also, a special thanks to NCC Member Mike Bourgeois, a licensed land surveyor and local caver, who donated his services to survey properties for local planning approvals.

Connecting the two parcels will now allow the NCC to construct a hiking trail, extending from near our preserve kiosk through the woods to the Gregory entrance, eliminating the need to walk along a busy state highway to access or exit this cave entrance. This access trail will become a part of the planned karst education trail on the preserve. Besides the caves, the preserve has some nice exposed surficial karst features, including well developed clints and grikes (kluftkarren) along its western side, an area that few visitors see.

There will be a preserve workday on Saturday, April 27 to do trail work. It will start at 10:00 am.





Bob Simmons, Chuck Porter, Christine Young, Steven Crookes, and Janice Crookes at the actual closing on the Clarksville land parcel.
Photos by Mitch Berger.

ANNOUNCEMENT — CAVE PRESERVE MANAGER POSITION OPENINGS —

Due to the recent passing of our dear friend Alan Traino, the Northeastern Cave Conservancy is in need of filling two preserve manager positions. In addition to many other roles with the NCC, Alan was the manager of the Ella Armstrong Cave Preserve in Albany County, NY, and the Selleck's Cave Preserve in Schoharie County, NY. If you might be interested in either of these positions, or would like additional information, please contact Bob Simmons, NCC President, at president@necaveconservancy.org or at 860-620-2055.

We are hoping to fill these positions at our March 3rd Board meeting.

Thank you,
Bob Simmons
President



NORTHEASTERN CAVE CONSERVANCY SEEKING CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF TRUSTEE ON THE NCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Nominating Committee of the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) is soliciting candidates for Trustee of the NCC Board of Directors. Each spring, three of the nine Trustee seats come up for election. Trustees are elected by members of the NCC via emailed ballot during the last half of May, and those elected are seated at the June Board meeting. The Board of Directors, which consists of the Officers and Trustees, set policy for the NCC. The Board meets quarterly, generally for half a day, with frequent communications, mostly via email, between meetings.

Candidates need to be a current member of the NCC. No specific prior experience is required; however, experience in land conservation and stewardship, business, finance, law, fundraising, or community outreach is always helpful.

You may wish to review the Northeastern Cave Conservancy's Board Manual (<http://www.necaveconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/NCC-Manual-2017-09.26.pdf>), minutes from previous meetings of the Board (<http://www.necaveconservancy.org/minutes/>), and a summary of the election process (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ss-IJ4LfCXbCuopMyYE6h0kJcYIPcailEum-MxnSyDo/edit>).

If you would like to be a considered as a Trustee candidate, please send a bio/platform to nominating@necaveconservancy.org by May 10 for inclusion with our electronic ballots. I'll send an acknowledgement to you when I receive it. If you know of anyone who would make a good Trustee, please ask them to consider becoming a candidate.

If you have questions about the process, or would like to see sample bios/platforms, please contact Norm Berg, Nominating Committee Chair, at nominating@necaveconservancy.org, call 860-621-2080 (leave a message), or contact any NCC Board member.

Norm Berg
NCC Nominating Committee Chair
Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.



 If using Amazon, keep in mind that if you go via this link, the NCC gets a donation: https://smile.amazon.com/ref=smi_ext_ch_13

