

Carbide Dump

A photograph of a cave interior. The scene is dominated by large, white, layered rock formations that appear to be made of a soft, possibly calcified material. These formations are set against a backdrop of dark, jagged, and wet-looking rocks. A stream of water flows over the dark rocks in the lower center of the frame. The lighting is dramatic, with bright highlights on the white rock and deep shadows in the surrounding cave.

July 2024
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The *Carbide Dump* is published monthly by the Blue Ridge Grotto of the National Speleological Society in Roanoke, Virginia. Distribution date is approximately the second week of each month. An issue may be skipped if insufficient material is received. Contributions of articles and artwork are invited and will be gratefully acknowledged. Art work originals will be returned. Contributions should be sent to the editor. Regular and associate grotto membership (\$10) includes a *Carbide Dump* subscription. Subscriber rate is \$10.00. Exchanges with other grotto and caving organizations are invited. Direct exchange mail to Mary Sue Socky.

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The Blue Ridge Grotto holds its monthly meetings every third Friday of the month at 6:30p at Jersey Lily's Roadhouse, 1650 Braeburn Dr. Salem, VA 24153. See the Grotto meeting announcement in this issue.

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You can access the *Carbide Dump* electronically at: <https://blueridgegrotto.org/carbidedump.htm>

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Contributors: David & Mary Sue Socky, Kelly Perkins, Nick Socky, Kevin Johnson, Susan Burr, Brian Williams, Carol Tideman, Marian McConnell, Lauren Appel, Zenah Orndorff, and Jerry Fuller.

Cover: Bacon in Pritt Cave (Singularity) in Alleghany, VA. Photo by Dave Socky

CAVERS CALENDAR

July 12-13: *CaveSim* visits Washington Park and Wasena Park in Roanoke, VA! Volunteers are needed. Contact Zenah Orndorff (zenahviola@gmail.com) for more info.

July 14: *CaveSim* visits Blacksburg, VA! Volunteers are needed. For more info contact Zenah Orndorff (zenahviola@gmail.com).

July 16 – BRG Officers Meeting at Wasena Tap room at 5:30p.

July 19: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

July 31: TRA Membership applications must be received by the TRA Secretary by this date.

Aug 16: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

Aug 29- Sept 2: Old Timers Reunion. You must be a TRA member or guest of an on-site TRA member. See <https://otr.org/about/membership/>

Sept 20: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

Sept. 20-22: Eastern Region NCRC is offering a weekend course, **Orientation to Cave Rescue (OCR)** held at Elkins WV Fire Dept.; camping at OTR site in Dailey, WV. See <https://ncrc-er.caves.org/> for updates on registration and class info. Questions: Larry Manning Larry.Manning@caves.org Registration is open.

Sept 27-29: Fall VAR, @ Hungry Mother Lutheran Camp, Marion, VA. Hosted by Eric Landgraf, John King, and members of [Out of Bounds Grotto](#).

Oct 3-6, 2024: TAG will be held at the Lazy G Ranch, Union Grove, AL. Registration will open soon. [See this link](#) for more info.

Oct 3-6: *CaveSim* may return to the valley during the annual **Roanoke Go-Fest!** More info soon.

Oct 18: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

Nov 7-10: Karst Waters Institute 4th Appalachian Karst Symposium, Lewisburg, WV. Meetings, field trip on Saturday & Banquet Saturday night.

See <https://karstwaters.org/conferences/appalachian-karst-symposium-2024/> for info. Questions: appkarst2024@karstwaters.org

Nov 9, 2024: WVCC Banquet, Lewisburg, WV in conjunction with the Appalachian Karst Symposium.

June 21 - 28, 2025: NSS 2025 Convention, Cobleskill, NY. [See link](#)

Long Cave Lists

A legacy of Bob Gulden, now maintained by Paul Berger

<https://cave-exploring.com/index.php/long-and-deep-caves-of-the-world/>

Treasurer's Report

07/01/2024

Cave Bucks	\$ 110.96
Conservation	\$ 2.00
Equipment	\$ 144.12
General	\$6,312.49
Total	\$6,569.57

BRG Meeting & Trip Notice

The **July 19, 2024** meeting of the Blue Ridge Grotto will be held at **Jersey Lily's Roadhouse 1650 Braeburn Dr, Salem, VA 24153**. Dinner, appetizers with socializing starts at 6:00pm with the meeting starting around 6:30p.

This month's program will be a presentation of the 2024 NSS Photo Salon, which was shown at the Convention during the Salon Awards program. It is 24 minutes of some of the finest photography by cavers from all over.

Grotto Trip

Culverson Creek, WV

Date & Time: Saturday, July 20, 2024. Meet at Hanging Rock Orange Market at **8:30 am**.

Leader: Dave Socky.

Coordination: Susan Burr 540-580-9409
pondladv97@gmail.com

Requirements: Horizontal wet cave, medium difficulty. If you wish to go, let Susan Burr know.

Limit: No limit

Description

Culverson Creek Cave is a large 20 mile system with a total of 5 entrances. **This cave floods**, so if there is any hint of rain, we will go someplace else.

We will go into the Wildcat entrance, but instead of going right towards Death Canyon, we will go left into the culvert and through the tight downward crawl which leads to the main Culverson stream passage. We will turn left, downstream, in this large passage until we reach a spot where the stream goes over a 15-foot water fall. At this point we will use a belay in order to climb down into the lower section of the passage. We will continue downstream until we reach the Logjam - see the photo to the right.

We will then retrace our steps, but go past the point where we climbed down into the main passage and go out the main Culverson entrance. We will get totally wet, since swimming is required right before the entrance.

The trip will be mostly walking, but there are steep, muddy, and slippery

slopes to climb. There is a climb down with a belay, a fun traverse and climbdown with webbing hand holds. Large walking passage with logs jammed into the ceiling. An obvious reason why we don't go into this cave when there is the possibility of rain.



Log jam in Culverson.
photo by Bill Balfour

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRG Meeting Minutes – can be read on the BRG webpage at: <https://blueridgegrotto.org> under the 'BRG Organization' button.

NSS Membership:

Would you like to join or renew with the NSS? See this [link](#) for details.



Cave Bucks are voluntary donations from cavers who have recently been caving. Most people donate a few dollars for each cave trip they have been on. Then send the money where it will do some good and buy some caves!

Blue Ridge Grotto Google Groups:

We think everyone has signed up for the new **Blue Ridge Grotto Google Groups**. All BRG members who have email should now be a member of the BRG Google Groups. Put this address in your address book: blueridgegrotto@googlegroups.com

In addition, **any** BRG Google Group member can post an announcement to the entire group – instantly, just like

posting an email. Please use this feature to keep the whole group updated!

FUTURE VAR - Nick Schmalenberger asked if **BRG would like to host the Spring VAR 2025?** Susan Burr suggested the Fall one might be better, weather-wise.

- Who would be interested in helping (as leaders or volunteers) sponsor a VAR in Spring of 2025 in Bath County at the RASS property?
- We would need people to coordinate the various activities and logistics: dinner, treasurer, vendors, portapotties, registration, guidebook, social media; as well as volunteers to help in the various tasks.
- There is a handbook on how to host a VAR, the last one BRG hosted was in 2008.

Please let Nick Schmalenberger know if you are interested
nick@schmalenberger.us

VAR Closed Cave List can be found at this [link](#). Please send changes and updates to Brad Blase at blase@virginiacaves.org

Bat Cave Closures -

Some WV and VA caves have closed for the **summer—maternity colonies** of bats. Other caves may be open. The summer closure does not affect all caves. Check the closed list, and please go elsewhere if your intended cave is closed. *There are thousands of caves in the Virginias.*

Virginia - Closed Apr. 15 - Oct. 15 for bat maternity colonies. (Summer Closure in effect.)

West Virginia—Closed May 15 - Sept. 1 - for bat maternity colonies. (Summer Closure in effect.)

See [this link](#) for more WV closed cave information.

Please respect all cave closures.

Membership

Welcome our newest Associate BRG Members, Abbey Mays and Alexander Koch! Both Abbey and Alexander were sponsored by Nick Schmalenberger.

Mays, Abbey
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Buchanan, VA 24066
540-784-3616 /c
maysa@sou.edu

Koch, Alexander
260 Link Evans Lane
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archer260@gmail.com

New Address
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540-529-0413 /c
sockynss@vt.edu



Joe Zokaites in McClung
Cave, WV

Obituary - Pat Dore

1941 to 2024

(from the family [online obituary](#))

Pat was born on Broad Run in Monroe County, WV on July 23, 1941 to Ella Marie McCraw and Joseph Curtis VanDyke. She spent her youth between Monroe and Greenbrier Counties and graduated from Greenbrier High School in 1959.

She married James Christie (1935-1983) in February 1959 and lived on the Christie Family Farm in Sinks Grove, WV, where she became a farmer's wife, an amazingly active member of the Monroe County community, and raised her four children. Pat's proudest achievement was raising her four children Deb, Harv, Mike, and Eugene to be hard working, family oriented, and community involved. She was a member of the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church where she participated in the Women's Circle and was very fond of the Wolf Creek Baptist Church. She was a leader in the Monroe County Home Extension Club, a Club Leader for the Better Builders 4-H Club in Sinks Grove as well as a volunteer for the Monroe County 4-H Scottish Dance Team. She was also involved in the Wellspring Craft Cooperative in Lewisburg, WV.

She married Michael Dore on September 20, 1986 and became an active member of the National Speleological Society and caving community. Pat explored most of the well known caves of Monroe and Greenbrier Counties, and became a most gracious host to all who ventured to explore Scott Hollow Cave, located on her property in Sinks Grove. In 2004 Pat became a Fellow of the National Speleological Society and Life Member. She and Mike ran an upholstery business, The Springhouse, out of their farmhouse shop.

She was a professional seamstress, dairy farmer, avid gardener, wood crafter, and quilter extraordinaire. She made many wedding cakes and wedding dresses for the brides of Monroe County for years, also occasionally

dove into wedding catering. Her hobbies included canning, baking bread, sewing, reading, and anything that would keep her hands busy and was always willing to sit at her kitchen table to socialize with anyone who wanted to stop by and visit.

Pat passed quietly surrounded by loved ones in her home at age 82 due to a sudden recurrence of cancer. She is preceded in death by her first husband, James Christie, her first son, Harvey Christie (Cristy Christie), and niece Deidi VanDyke.

She leaves behind her beloved husband, Michael Dore, her children Debbie Gentry (Tom Gentry), Michael Christie (Jeanne Christie), Eugene Christie (Elizabeth Christie). Pat had seven grandchildren, Adam Gentry, Drew Gentry, Cate Poage (Brent Poage), Becky Christie, Gabe Christie, Jacob Christie, and Sam Christie. She was fortunate to be a memorable and fun Great Grandmother to four Great Grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother Jimmy VanDyke (Pat VanDyke), and special cousin and friend Libby Osborne.

The family welcomes you to a Celebration of Life Party at Mike and Pat's Farmhouse on Sunday, July 7, 2024 located at 815 Fort Springs Road, Sinks Grove WV. Gathering begins at 2pm. The family asks for you to bring fond stories to share, a memorial journal will be made available for guests to document their favorite memories of Pat.

In lieu of flowers, please bring a covered dish or beverages.

Private online condolences and other expressions of sympathy may be directed to our website at www.roseandquesenberry.net.

Arrangements are by Rose and Quesenberry Funeral Home, 1901 South Kanawha Street, Beckley, WV.



Scott Hollow BRG Cave Trip Report

Article by *Susan Burr* photos by *Brian Williams*

May 18, 2024

Participants: Susan Burr, Jeff Huffman (Leader), Mystik Miller (Leader), Kelly Perkins, Isaiah Hall (guest), Larry Manning, Lauren Appel, Brian Williams, and Nick Schmalenberger.

We successfully did the Omega Loop, thanks in part to Mystik being along. After we did the loop we opted to go see the beautiful flowstone along Mystic River, that also has a waterfall & rim-pools on top. Then we headed down to the "Scary Ladder." Yes, those who had not seen it before now understand what we mean by the "scary ladder!" Next stop for most was the sump. I understand they saw a couple of frogs there. I did

not go with them. I headed back to the pretty flowstone with Jeff because I wanted to take more pictures. Once the group was together, we headed out & up "Drag Ass Hill." Our time in the cave was about 5 hours & 15 minutes.

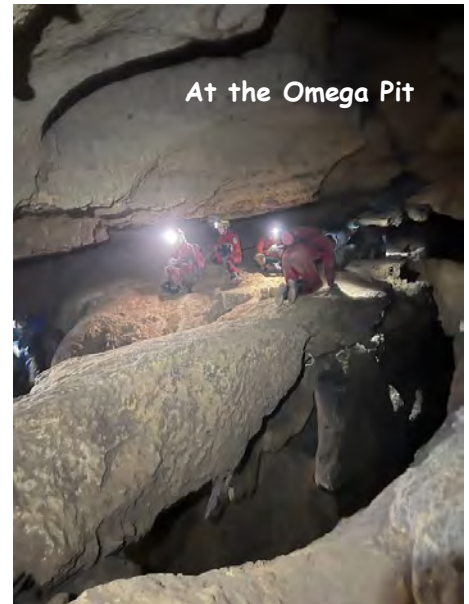
It was a beautiful day when we got out. Once changed, we headed over to the Farmer's Lounge in Pickaway for a nice dinner.



At the beginning of Mastodon Ave



Climbing up to start the Omega Loop



At the Omega Pit


Millie Mine Bat Hibernaculum

By *Kevin Johnson*

Carrie and I were traveling over the 4th and visited the Millie Mine Bat Hibernaculum located in Iron Mountain, Michigan.

The bat colony was discovered in 1992. The mine is 262 feet in depth. There are an estimated 50,000 bats that hibernate in the mine. This is one of the five largest bat colonies located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

There are four species of bats that use the mine; the Little Brown Bat, Big Brown Bat, Northern Long Eared Bat, and Tricolored Bat. We didn't see any bats due to the fact we visited the site during the day.

Little Brown Bats

WHY IN THE MINE?

- As many as 50,000 bats hibernate inside the mine.
- At least 4 species of bats are thought to hibernate in the Millie Mine.
- This is one of the five largest bat colonies in the Upper Peninsula.
- Mines are free of natural disturbances.
- Mines have a stable year-round temperature.
- Mines have a constant, relatively high humidity.
- Michigan has few natural caves.
- Bats migrate from all across the Great Lakes Region to hibernate in the mines.



Island Ford BRG Cave Trip Report

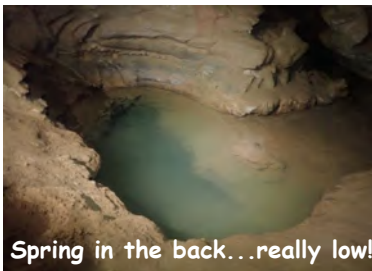
Article & photos by *Susan Burr*

June 22, 2024

Participants: Susan Burr (Leader), Kelly Perkins, Doug Feller, Margo Soucek, and Calvin Long.

We originally were not going to have a June grotto trip since several people were on vacation. A last minute trip to Island Ford Cave, VA was planned at the grotto meeting. Kelly, Margo & Calvin had not ever been there. This was also Doug Feller's first cave trip since "the accident!" He did great!!!

I took them in to the back of the cave & Margo & Kelly went all the way to the room where Fred Grady discovered the cave bear bones. Then we all headed to the spring, which was VERY, VERY low!!! This was where we had a little



Spring in the back...really low!

snack &/or drink. We then headed to the one formation for some pictures & over to what I call the salamander nursery, but was disappointed there were none. Next we looped back around & I showed them where they could climb up to an upper section. Kelly & Margo were the only ones to do it. I headed back out to where I could show them where they could come down safely. Once the group



Doug, Calvin & Kelly staying high in the stream passage

was back together we headed to just before the first stream crossing & ducked down into the stream to head back out. The challenge of staying completely out of the stream was taken on. In the end only Kelly, Margo & myself managed to make it all the way without getting in the stream.

We had a really fun 2 hour cave trip. 🐾



Calvin & Margo at the only formation

CaveSim in Roanoke

CaveSim will be in Roanoke THIS Friday and Saturday, July 12 & 13, 2024! CaveSim is free to the public!

- Friday 7/12/2024 2-5p, Upper Washington Park, Roanoke VA.
- Saturday 7/13/2024 9a-5p, Wasena Park, Roanoke VA.
- Sunday 7/14/2024 10am-5 pm. Kipps Elementary School Parking Lot, Blacksburg, VA

Click on links below for more info.

[Play Roanoke Link July 12](#)

[Play Roanoke Link July 13](#)

[CaveSim home page](#)

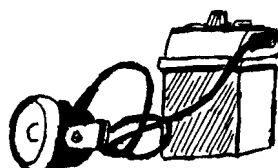
Want to volunteer? Contact Zenah Orndorff <cavesim.va@gmail.com>

Since we don't have any way of knowing if/when help will be needed I'm asking volunteers simply to show up at your convenience. If you know the day/time you plan to attend please reply to the

group, but it's fine if you just show up. Wil and I and Andrea Futrell plan to be there all day both days.

We'll have table space available if BRG wants to put out information or has display items. I anticipate volunteers will be: talking to attendees (kids and adults) about caving in general and Virginia caves, answering questions, telling stories, leading simple activities, and potentially helping with the climbing tower. If you have any props, gear, display items, etc... feel free to bring it along. Ultimately, CaveSim should be self-sufficient, and anything we do is a bonus to make it even better!

Feel free to contact me before you come out and I'll let you know exactly where we are. Thanks again, Zenah Orndorff 🐾



The CaveSim covers rescued a dog from a cave!

Colorado cavers Dave Jackson and Jesse Rochette of CaveSim rescued a dog from a Giles Co. VA cave.

Dave Jackson and Jesse Rochette are cavers from Colorado visiting Virginia, teaching people about cave safety. July 7, they put that experience to the test.

"We rappelled in, and the first member of our group found a dog that had fallen in 40 or 50 feet into the cave," said Jackson. "All of us have cave rescue experience. So we say, 'we're gonna get this dog out of this cave.'" ...

Click on the following links to see the new articles on this rescue:

[WDBJ7 Link](#)

[WSLS Link](#) 🐾

Great Savannah Cave System Metrics

by *Nick Socky*

Current footage of different sections of GSCS as of May 22, 2024

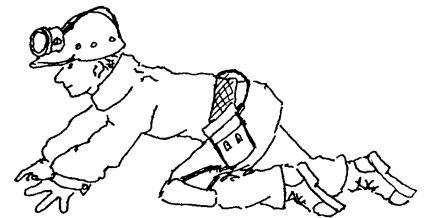
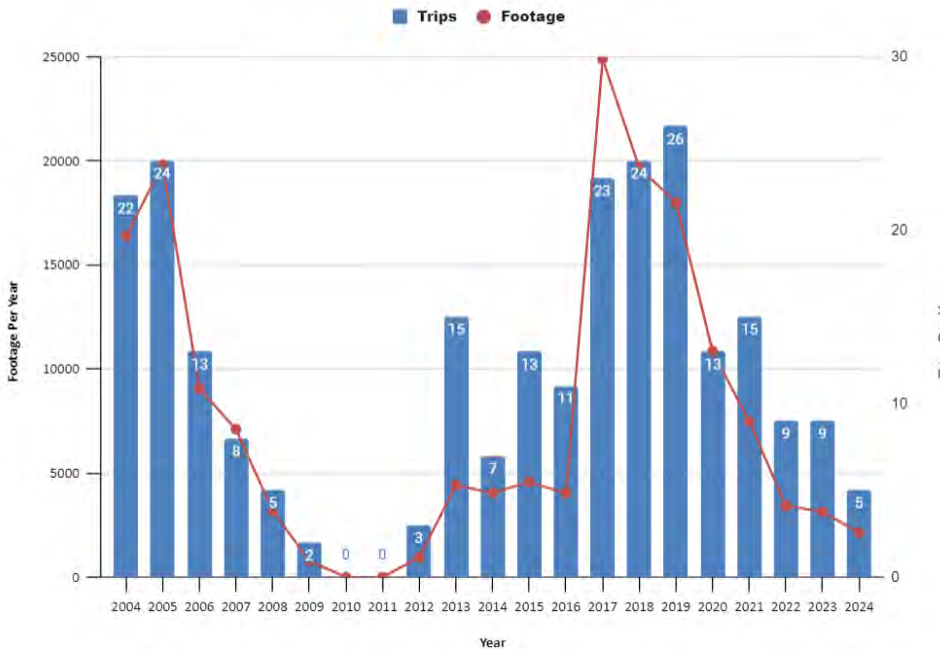
McClung Cave Data

McClungs (old)	95084.42	feet	18.01	miles
McClungs (new)	40727.07	feet	7.71	miles
McClungs (total)	135811.49	feet	25.72	miles
Historic Max	84559.70	feet	16.02	miles
Sweetwater	66545.60	feet	12.60	miles
Max (total)	151105.30	feet	28.62	miles
GSCS	286916.79	feet	54.34	miles
			87.47	km

Total Participants	138
More than 1 Trip	69
Total Trips	136
Total Years	5
Total Footage (feet)	131407.65
Total Miles	24.89
Total New Survey (feet)	40727.07
Total New Miles	7.71

Footage and Trips Per Year in Maxwellton

Original Length (feet)	95084.42
Original Miles	18.01
New Total Length (feet)	135811.49
New Total Miles	25.72



Great Savannah Cave System Lead List

	Total Leads	Estimated Footage	%Completed
Historic Max	174	3976.4	35%
Sweetwater	128	4135	3%
McClung	139	3473	33%
Ludington	To	be	connected
GSCS Total	441	11584 Feet 2.19 Miles	

Grotto Trip Log

5/18: Scott Hollow Cave, WV. Participants included Susan Burr, Jeff Huffinan- Leader, Mystik Miller-Leader, Kelly Perkins, Isaiah Hall-guest, Larry Manning, Lauren Appel, Brian Williams, Nick Schmalenberger, See article on Page 49.

6/15 Mud Pot & Warm River Cave, VA. Participants included Matthew Centofanti, Doug Duncan, Rick Lambert, Andrew Newton, Jason Sargent, Jim Schurman, Dave Socky, Noah Synowiec, and Jacob Whitlock. I acted as surface support for Noah and Jason to go in and retrieve data loggers and dye traps and install new data loggers in Mud Pot. There was also a team in Warm River to do the same in the old downstream end (down the cable ladder). While driving from Mud Pot to Warm River received a text message about a cave rescue in Randolph County, WV. It was an entrapment in a new cave near Alpena. Standdown was within 10 minutes. Then a second caver rescue in Laurel Caverns, PA was called for an 81-year-old man who had hurt his ankle. Didn't even think about going on that one. The team from Warm River came out and we went back to Mud Pot, where Noah and Andrew went in to dump dye and swap the dry/wet data loggers and install one in the possible cold pool. Finally finished around 7pm.

6/19 Massie #1 (Bear Cave), VA. Participants included Dave Socky, Joe Zokaites, Bill Koerschner, Gracie Cornish, Rick Royer, Rick Lambert, and Jason Sargent. Survey in Massie #1 (Bear Cave) and digging at Triplet Cave (Bill and Jason). Joe, Gracie, and I started the rigging and survey while RickR and RickL picked up the dye monitor at the Warm River resurgence. The Ricks caught up with us just as I was starting to sketch the first room where A4 was located. Joe and Gracie put in a bolt and rigged the second ladder to go down to the lower level. We put in a couple of shots in the upper level before going down the cable ladder and continuing the survey in a steeply sloping canyon passage which took off to the west. About 30 feet down was another 12-foot drop which was easily climbable. After surveying another 30 to 40 feet we got to a point where the only way on was up. Rick Royer and Gracie climbed up through a really tight slot straight up. They got another 3 shots until it ended in a steep up slope of mud. Back down near the bottom of the ladder was a tight lead in the north wall. I didn't even come close to fitting in, but Gracie squeezed in and got into a small room with another 20-foot-deep pit. We rigged some webbing to extend the ladder so it would reach into the new pit. Gracie climbed down where the passage

leveled out, but then it got too tight. There was air blowing out, so this was a good dig. Rick Royer squirmed in to help Gracie get out of the pit, giving her a belay. After a bit of struggle, both Rick and Gracie made it out. We were at the entrance within a half hour. We had surveyed a total of 206 feet in about 4 hours. We packed up and went over to Triplet Cave where Bill and Sarge had done a good job digging. Bill is still excited about it so there will be return trips to Triplet.

6/22 McClung, WV. Participants included David Socky, Nick Socky, and Joe Zokaites. We cleaned up leads in the Lower (Lost) Freeman Ave trunk. Went to the end of our last survey and finished the main room, and then got into a route through a maze of break-down passages and eventually got back to the stream. It was virgin cave. But eventually all routes got too tight, and we finished off all leads. From the line plot, the end of our survey was only 200 feet from (and 10 feet above) the Chocolate Ave passage that ties into the sump. That is where the stream most likely goes. There are still more leads to survey in the Lower (Lost) Freeman Ave passage. It was a fun 8-hour trip with 470 feet in the book. Nick sketched. 🐾

Future NSS Conventions

Hey fellow cavers, The NSS is looking for sites and host groups for the conventions for 2027 and beyond.

Did you know there has never been an NSS convention in Arkansas, Arizona, Georgia, Ohio, Utah, or Wisconsin? These are all states with caves and other attractions. When I ask about hosting I often hear, "our caves are sensitive". I believe all caves are sensitive. it's just a matter of degree. We never ask a host to allow access to any particular cave. Wouldn't it be great to plan a vacation around Flagstaff, AZ, or Hot Springs, AR, or maybe Salt Lake City, Utah?

The last time we were invited to have an NSS Convention in Maryland was in 1952, Iowa 1974, Massachusetts 1979,

Minnesota 1980, Wyoming 1984, Kentucky 1985, Oregon 1993, Virginia 1995, and Idaho 1999. These were great locations and folks had a wonderful time. Please give some thought to inviting us back.

If you have ever attended an NSS Convention and enjoyed the experience, please consider being a host and inviting around 1000 of your friends.

You will be given guidance and support from first contact until the end of the convention.

For more information don't hesitate to get in touch with ctiderman@caves.org

Carol Tiderman 🐾



Nick Schmalenberger forgot to bring a change of clothes for the Goodwins Cave trip on April 21, 2024 ©. Photo by Lauren Appel



- Vertical and horizontal trips will be available.
- Permits for Cyclops and Salamander will need to be pulled by individual parties wishing to visit those SCCI caves.
- Limited trips available to Perkins Cave Preserve will be a highlight of anyone's trip to Fall VAR.
- Newberry-Bane System trip. Visit the cave where Vertical Bill pioneered many of the techniques we use to explore today!
- Float trips on the Holston or Clinch Rivers are within an easy drive.
- Visit the Marion Farmers Market on Saturday morning for any locally grown items you may desire for your own meals.
- Biking on the historic Virginia Creeper Trail is just minutes away!
- Engine 343 Wood Fired Pizza Truck will be providing dinner on Saturday. They also have a vegetarian/vegan gluten free crust option that will be available.

OUT OF BOUNDS GROTTO

FALL VAR 2024

outofboundsgrotto.org

SEPTEMBER 27 - 29

Hungry Mother Lutheran Retreat
Marion, VA