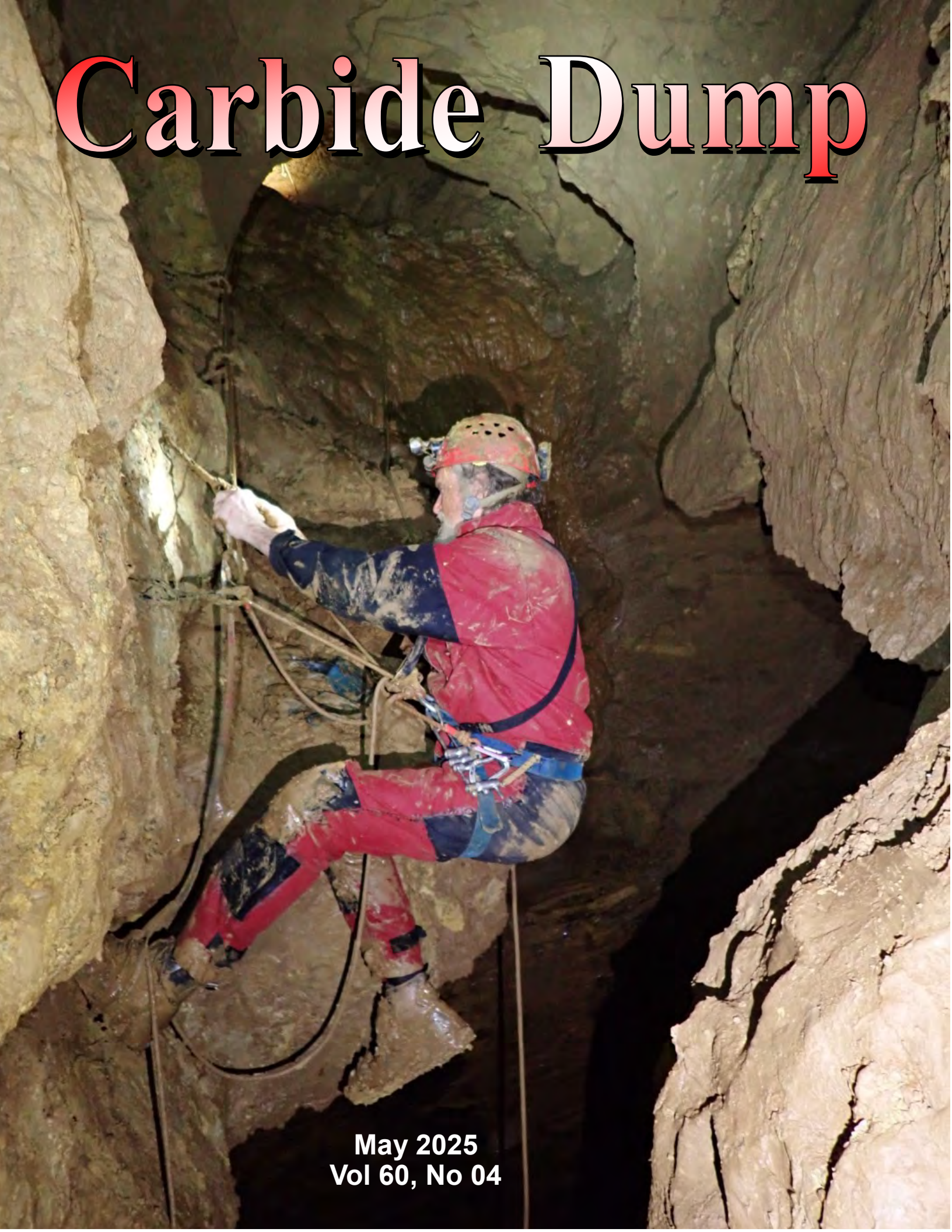


Carbide Dump



May 2025
Vol 60, No 04

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 6:30 pm. See the Grotto meeting announcement in this issue for current location.

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Contributors: David & Mary Sue Socky, Marian McConnell, Susan Burr, Mark Minton, Yvonne Droms, Jenna Fidler, and Jerry Fuller.

Cover: Mark Minton cleaning Bob Alderson's bolt climb in Warm River Cave in Alleghany Co, VA - April 19, 2025. Photo by Yvonne Droms.

CAVERS CALENDAR

May 9-11: Spring VAR, at Spruce Knob, WV, hosted by Out of Bounds Grotto. See you there!

May 16: BRG meeting, 6:30pm at Dave & Mary Sue's house. 6572 Woodbrook Dr, Roanoke, VA 24018.

May 17: BRG trips to Patton Cave and Dixie Caverns (conservation).

May 18: Spring WVASS Meeting, at 10am the WVACS Fieldstation near Frankfort. Contact Dave Riggs, Executive Director, at 304-685-7537 or driggs@speleo.us for more information.

May 23-27: Speleofest 2025 (Ye Olde Speleofair), Lone Star Cave Preserve, Bonnieville, KY. Hosted by Louisville Grotto. Registration is open! See <https://www.louisvillegrotto.org/speleofest/>

June 6-8: Karst-O-Rama, at the Great Saltpeter Cave Preserve, Mt. Vernon, KY. Hosted by the Greater Cincinnati Grotto. <https://karstorama.com>

June 13-15: Young Timer's Reunion (YTR), at the RASS Fieldhouse, Millboro, VA. Organized by the VPI Cave

Club. RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/SFiueiN56Jj8hvTJA>

June 20: Probably NO BRG meeting, in June. Only one officer will be present. No meeting site.

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

July 11-13: WVACS Classic, at the WVACS field station. More info soon.

July 11-19: NCRC Weeklong classes, Mountain Gateway Community College, Clifton Forge, VA. For more info, including prerequisites, visit: <https://caves.org/ncrc/courses/ncrc-course-descriptions/>

July 17-18: BRG meeting, 6:30pm at a location to be announced.

July 20 - 27: ICS 2025 in Brazil. See <https://speleo2025.org/>.

Aug 15: BRG meeting, 6:30pm at a location to be announced.

Aug 28-Sept 1: Old Timers Reunion, Dailey, WV. Must be a TRA member. <https://otr.org/about/membership/>

Sept 19: BRG meeting, 6:30pm at a location to be announced.

Oct 6-10: National Cave and Karst Management Symposium, Ely NV. Hosted by Western Cave Conservancy. See: <https://ely2025.nckms.org/>

Oct 17-19: GO Fest, (Go Outside Festival) Downtown Roanoke, VA. **SAVE THE DATE!** If CaveSim returns, volunteers will be needed.

Oct 18: BRG meeting, 6:30pm at a location to be announced. Nominations.

Treasurer's Report 05/09/2025

Cave Bucks	\$ 112.96
Conservation	\$ 2.00
Equipment	\$ 144.12
General	\$5,868.35
Total	\$6,127.43

BRG Meeting & Trip Notice

Logan's Roadhouse has closed permanently! (Is BRG bad luck for restaurants?). So, the May 16, 2025 meeting of the Blue Ridge Grotto will be held at Dave and Mary Sue's home at **6572 Woodbrook Dr, Roanoke, VA 24018**. The meeting will start at **6:30pm**. Please eat dinner before hand since the Socky's will not be serving a meal. This is a new location for BRG. Click [here for the location of the Socky residence](#).

The program will be a slide show on Nick Schmalenberger's *Caving Adventures in Mexico*.

Grotto Trips

#1: Patton Cave, WV

Date & Time: Saturday, May 17, 2025. Meet at Hanging Rock Orange Market at **8:30 am**.

Leader: TBD.

Coordination: Susan Burr 540-580-9409
pondlady97@gmail.com

Requirements: Basic caving gear. Intermediate trip.

Limit: No limit

Patton Cave Description

This trip is pending final permission. If things change, a notice will be sent via BRG List Serve.

Patton Cave has over 5000' of passage and makes for a nice grotto trip. Lots of places to get lost in, some areas of nice formations, big rooms, high leads, mud slopes, breakdown mountains, active stream passage, high leads – it's all there.

#2: Dixie Caverns, VA

Date & Time: Saturday, May 17, 2025. Meet at Dixie Caverns (park near the Cabin) at **9:30 am**.

Leader: Mary Sue Socky. 540-529-3954.
sockymss@cox.net

Requirements: Dirty clothes and helmet and light. Wellies if you venture into the lake to clean formations.

Limit: No limit. Please let Mary Sue know if you are coming.

Dixie Caverns Description

Dixie Caverns is a pretty show cave. It is approximately 650 feet long, and has a lot of steps. It's BAAACK! IT - The blue-green algae, or 'Moss' is sending new tendrils down the Wedding Bell. Areas around lights & formations need cleaning, too.



Dixie Caverns vs. Proposed Hotel (final). 4/22/2025,

DONE DEAL. The Roanoke County, VA Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the rezoning and hotel plans for the property next to Dixie Caverns. The BOS sympathized with Dixie Caverns, and will look into lighting, privacy, maybe a retention pond, issues etc. in hotel design to respect the residents on the Dixie Caverns property. The clincher was when the BOS announced that 'if the applicant gets his detailed plans in before July 1, 2025', then he can follow the old rules and does not have to follow the rules for building on karst. Oh yeah, BOS offered to install a non-requested sidewalk between the hotel and the Caverns to show 'good neighborhood relations'... while ignoring worsening stormwater drainage issues. *MSSocky*

ROCKS – the Warm Springs Valley project meets every Wednesday, and some Saturdays. Contact Dave Socky if you want to participate.

THE BAT FLAT: Here's an innovative idea for installing bat houses on telephone poles that's being tested in Virginia at [this link](#).

BRG CDs - Should BRG invest some of its extra funds into CD's? (Susan Burr). BRG is either a Business account or a Special Business Account. If we are "Special Business Account" the interest rates would be 3% - 4%, and would be worth a 4-month, 7-month, or 11- month investment. This would be 'dynamic.' Is a minimum balance required? Someone with an account Signature needs to check into it. After short discussion, it was decided that Treasurer Marian McConnell and Chair David Socky (signature holders) will investigate it



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.



BRG meetings. BRG has closed another restaurant, this time Logan's Roadhouse in Roanoke, VA. So, the May meeting will be at the Socky's house, temporarily, until a new location can be found.

T-Shirts: There are 17 remaining T-shirts! \$12.00 each. Med. to XL, various colors: red, gold, grey, green, light blue, etc. Contact Susan Burr pondlady97@gmail.com for more information.

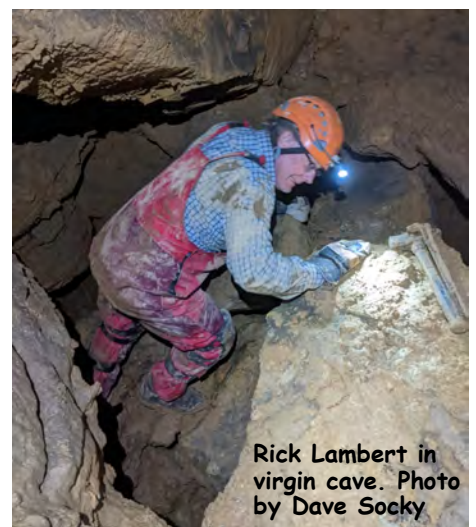
BRG Online Payments: BRG can now accept payments through ZELLE, a

'free' cash app. Use the following email through your banks' ZELLE app: blueridgegrottoofficers@gmail.com.

BRG will also continue to maintain the BRG PayPal account (which charges fees). Anyone who pays BRG through the PayPal account will be charged a \$1.00 convenience fee for the transaction. Use blueridgegrottoofficers@gmail.com for PayPal.

BRG Christmas Card - Marian McConnell is collecting photos of orange cave salamanders to use to design a 2025 BRG Christmas card, "Santamander" ... since the Santa bats have been so popular. Please share your really good detailed salamander photos with her between now and October.

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



Rick Lambert in virgin cave. Photo by Dave Socky

A Vertical Trip in Warm River Cave, VA

By *Mark Minton* with input from *Dave Socky*

NOTE: Warm River Cave is closed except for science and survey trips through the Warm Springs Project group with express permission from the owner.

April 19, 2025

Yvonne and I used to joke that we could turn any cave into a vertical cave, and that certainly holds true for Warm River Cave. Even though the majority of the cave consists of base-level river passage, we have explored several vertical sections accessed by climbs, some of them quite extensive. Our most recent trip on April 19, 2025 was one such example.

One might think that the historic Hot Stream, for which Warm River Cave is renowned, had been fully explored decades ago, but that is not the case. For most people, Warm River was a novelty, rather than a place for serious exploration. The old map hinted at upper levels, and on recent trips we had confirmed their existence. For this trip, we went loaded for bear to push them. Bob Alderson, Yvonne Droms, Corey Hackley, Mark Minton, Keely Owens, and Dave Socky carried in full vertical gear, two drills, 200 feet of rope, lots of bolts, climbing gear, digging gear, and survey gear. On the way in, we placed a new data logger in the changing area of the entrance room, although we could not locate the old one we were supposed to remove. We also noted a pair of buz-

zards preparing a nest on the opposite side of the room, so there will probably be chicks there soon.

When we arrived at our staging area just upstream of the rimstone dams in the Hot Stream, we divided into various groups. I ascended the nail climb we had rigged last trip and used part of the static rope we brought to replace the dynamic rope rigged on a traverse. We would need that dynamic rope for belaying new climbs. Corey soon passed by on the way to his next climb. Dave and Keely began the survey from an old station in the stream passage, then took it up the nail climb and across the traverse to tie in their hanging survey from last trip before carrying on into new stuff. Bob and Yvonne prepared for another climb to a lead across from the nail climb. It was a busy place.

By the time Dave and Keely reached Corey, he was just completing his bolt climb. He rigged it with part of our static rope. That climb, like most of the rest of this upper level so far, was very warm and extremely muddy. The mud is very sticky, but also tends to get sloppier the more it is disturbed. That makes repeated use of hand- and footholds problematic, as they slowly slough off and disappear. For that reason, we rigged extra safety lines as a precaution.

At the top of Corey's 40-foot climb, the character of the passage changed com-

pletely. The mud gave way to gypsum and anthodites, which became more prevalent the farther they went. Corey flagged a path around the most delicate spots. Unfortunately, they did not have a camera, but will get photos next trip. Eventually the passage necked down, but they were able to dig through a couple of constrictions and keep going. Finally, one squeeze filtered out Dave, but Corey and Keely surveyed on until an even tighter squeeze forced them to call it quits. Digs and a climb remain. All told, they surveyed 663 feet! Amazingly, they had climbed back up to the level of the entrance room, although they were still a long way from it horizontally.

In the meantime, Yvonne belayed Bob on a new climb/traverse from the top of the nail climb to a lead on the opposite wall of the main passage near the ceiling. Flowstone and a steady trickle of water poured out of this lead. The climb was extremely muddy, making it difficult to find bolt placements, and even to move. And forget about keeping the gear clean! But Bob persevered, slowly making his way across while raining mud down into the main passage below. When he reached the flowstone, anchor placements were easier, but the flowstone didn't sound very solid. He finally made it across, exhausted.

While the other two teams were climbing and surveying, Mark went prospect-

(Continued on page 31)



Bob, Mark, Dave, Keely, and Corey gearing up for the day (Yvonne Droms)



Dave sketching in the main stream (Yvonne Droms)

(Warm River continued from page 30)

ing upstream. First, he examined a side lead at stations NAT16/17, which he assumed was an infeasible, but which was in fact a distributary, carrying a significant portion of the active flow downstream away from the main passage! (This lead is shown on the map, but had been overlooked.) With a bit of hammering the lead was passable, but low. It went a couple of body lengths to a sharp left turn where it got too small. However, larger passage could be seen only a short distance ahead, and there was air-flow. It would be a fairly easy dig to open it up.

Back out in the main passage there is a high lead only a short distance upstream that could drop into the downstream continuation of the distributary if it goes. It should be an easy climb with a boost or a couple of nails. From there, Mark went to the bitter end of both upstream water passages. Both end at deep sumps that obviously continue underwater, but it seems unlikely that the water level would ever drop enough for them to be pursued without scuba. Surprisingly, there was no bad air. The water, while pleasant enough, also did not seem as hot as in the past.

Mark spent the rest of his time with a hammer and chisel opening up Phil's Lost Passage, a side lead shown on the old maps near station NAT21. This side lead had been missed during our resurvey of the Hot Stream ten years ago, and

we assumed it had collapsed or filled in. But in fact, it was still open, just very low on the wall near water level and under a ledge. It was blowing colder air (enough to dry the walls), and seemed to open up only a short distance away. Mark made good progress until he dropped the chisel into deep water and lost it. It should be easy to finish the job next time.

Mark arrived back at the nail climb just as Bob was returning from checking his lead. He explored as far as a short drop into nice-looking canyon passage with airflow! It is possible that he was looking into the upstream end of Phil's Lost Passage. According to the map, there is at least 300 feet separating these leads. It will need to be surveyed next trip. Mark cleaned Bob's climb and together he and Bob rigged our last static line down to the main passage. A rebelay afforded a clean drop below the flowstone.

Bob, Mark, and Yvonne left a note for the other team (written, appropriately, in



Yvonne cleaning gear in the main stream at the end of the day (Mark Minton)

mud) and headed out, arriving to a warm night at about 10:30 PM. How nice to come out to 70F degree temperatures instead of below freezing! We snacked on chips and cheese while awaiting the other team, which arrived a bit before midnight. It was a very successful trip.



Keely in the passage above the nail climb (Dave Socky)



Bob prepping for his climb (Yvonne Droms)



Bob on the wall above the main stream (Yvonne Droms)

New River Cave, VA - Grotto Trip

Article and photos by *Susan Burr*

April 19, 2025

Participants: Susan Burr, Jeff Huffman, Doug Feller, Alex Thompson, Bambi Marshall, and Robert Balch

First time having to get a permit to go caving here. There were a few kinks, but Travis was very helpful & we got the permit to visit New River Cave, VA.

Our trip was to go the waterfall and back



Salamander

out. It was a nice day outside. In the morning on the hike up the hill to the entrance, the weather was pleasant. Lots of wild flowers blooming & the view at the entrance is always nice.

I was the first to head into the cave & once in the entrance something flew past me. I thought I might have disturbed a bat, but discovered an Eastern Phoebe bird's nest with 3 eggs. We saw the mom on the nest on the way out.

I think we only saw a total of 2 bats in

the cave and one salamander. Since we only come to this cave about once a year, route finding is a constant. We basically know the route, but sometimes we are not 100% sure. I tell people that getting lost is one way to see the cave. We seem to always find our way eventually.

As usual, we did encounter another group of 3 young guys. They were headed out as we were heading to the falls in the stream. I questioned them on whether they had a permit to be in there. They lied several times about it, but I called them out on it each time. I was nice and told them they could not have had a permit for this day since they only issue one per day. I explained how they could get a permit in the future and that is was relatively easily & didn't take too long to do. They were very politely and thankful for the information. They did have a call back, but were worried they were going to be a little late. Hopefully they made it out in time. They were also properly equipped.

We made it to the falls & then turned around & headed back out. It was a lot



Bambi in a tight passage we had to slide through

warmer hiking back to the cars, but it kind of felt good since some of us had gotten cold in the cave.

For permit to visit New River Cave:

See <https://permits.saveyourcaves.org/>

or NewRiverPreserve@caves.org



Jeff Huffman helping light up the formations



Formations in New River Cave, VA

Grotto Trip Log

3-22-25: BRG trip to Rapps Cave, WV. (See report in April 2025 DUMP.) They saw it all. There were a ton of salamanders in the cave entrance.

4/12: McClung Cave, WV. Participants included David Socky, Ethan Bowers, and Andrew Bloom. We went to work on leads off Minilithia (MOM Survey) and surveyed known passage in Crystal Canyon. We killed three leads and surveyed 123 feet and connected the passage into a known passage after squeezing through a tight hole. Good 10-hour trip with 123 feet of survey done.

4/16: Jenga Cave, VA. (D. Socky) The usual band of "ne'er-do-wells". We are about 40 feet into the cave and down about 15 feet. We've moved hundreds of buckets of dirt and rocks. There is a LOT of air movement in this cave. It's right over the top of Warm River Cave, but separated by 140 feet of overburden.

4-17: Excitement in Dixie Caverns, VA! A group was touring Dixie Caverns when Jenna Fidler received a "GETUPHERENOW!" call from guide Maren. Jenna and Beau Harrison charged up to the Cathedral Room to encounter 51 silent, wide-eyed 5th graders from the town of Narrows in Giles Co, VA. They were all staring and pointing in one direction. "It's UP THERE" one kid whispered. IT was an adult turkey vulture, who flew up to the Cathedral ledge, and exited through the natural cave opening. Those kids had an unforgettable experience! Jenna said they all had their own rendition of what vulture wings sound like when they flap.

4/19: Warm River Cave, VA. (NOTE: Warm River Cave is closed except for science and survey trips through the Warm Springs Project group with express permission from the owner.) Participants included David Socky, Keeley Owens, Corey Hackley, Bob Alderson, Mark Minton, and Yvonne Droms. Went to the Historic Hot Stream (upstream) section of Warm River. We did two bolt climbs and surveyed 663 feet of new cave on a 12.5-hour trip. (See the article on p. 31.)

4/21: Shenandoah Wild Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Dave Hubbard, Carl Amundson, and Wil Orndorf. Another trip for the peccary bones. This trip was not to do any

collection, but to do preparation for future collection trips, Dave and Wil spent all day by the bones moving mud out of the way and prepping the area for removal. This was also to protect the bones. They filled bucket after bucket up with wet, sloppy mud. I would pull the bucket up out of the hole, and then Carl would take the bucket and dump it in an out-of-the-way location. The mud was HEAVY! Once Dave Hubbard was satisfied with the work, we looked at another nearby site where there were more bones. The trip in and out was uneventful. We were in the cave for about 7 hours, emerging at 5:15pm.

4/23: Jenga Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaite, Bob Alderson, Bill Koerschner, Rick Lambert, Keith Sweeney, Jason Sargent, and Jim Schurman. Joe, Bob, Rick, and I completed the surface survey from the fence post to **Hobbit Hole**, two digs, and **Jenga Cave**. While we did this, the rest of the crew dug on **Jenga Cave**. After we finished the surface survey, we all joined the dig. For a while, I had the onerous job of sitting in the chair and marking the bucket count on the chalk board for each bucket that came out. Over the day, we hauled out 134 buckets of mostly rock. After lunch, Joe and I went off and surveyed the three digs/caves. We then spent the rest of the afternoon helping to haul buckets out of **Jenga Cave**. The dig face in **Jenga** is now a nearly standup room about 8 feet in diameter. There is air coming out from all over. The survey we did shows the bottom of **Jenga** to be only 17 horizontal feet from FO21 in **Warm River Cave**, but 144 feet above it. We need a pit! We quit at 5pm.

4/26: Jenga Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Rick Lambert, Keith Sweeney, Jacob Whitlock, Andrew Newton, Benaiah Farrow, Rob Grace, and David Rogers. We were going to do **Dunn Cave** surface survey, but we ended up with enough bodies to work on **Jenga**. We worked until about 4:30pm and moved 164 buckets of mostly rock. There is still work to do, but there is still lots of air movement and seems like lots of potential.

4/30: Dunn Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Bob Alderson, Keith Sweeney, Rick Lambert, and Jim Schurman. A team of five did a surface survey from the entrance to Dunn Cave to the springs that are the resurgence of the water from Dunn Cave. This is one of the three

thermal caves in the area, along with Mud Pot and Warm River. After the surface survey was finished, Bob, Jim, and I went into Dunn's to check it out and to recover a dye trap for Bill Jones. The climb down into the stream from the upper level was a little tricky but turned out to be easier than it looked. The water was not warm, but it wasn't the usual chilling 55F degrees. We were in the cave for about an hour.

4/30: Go Slow Cave VA. Participants: Dave Socky, Bob Alderson, Keith Sweeney & Rick Lambert. The cave is on the edge of Rt 220 in the Warm Springs project area. Bob crawled in the whole 35 to 40 feet and finally called for the drill. We spent about 2 hours technical digging and finally got to the point where you could almost drop down to a lower room. It was about a 10-foot drop, but at five feet down it was undercut so it looked doubtful we could climb out without some kind of aid. We decided a little more digging would be advisable to make entry easier. But it was already 5 pm, so we decided to wait until next week.

5/7: Go Slow Cave, VA. Participants included Dave Socky, Bill Koerschner, Keith Sweeney, Rick Lambert, Jason Sargent, and Amos Mincin. We made it in, but it ended is a 10 by 10 foot room. No air movement. We finished up the day at **Jenga Cave**.

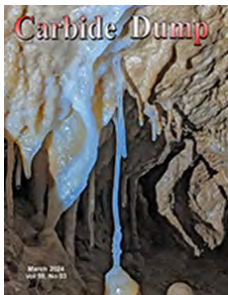
5/7: Tree Matt Cave, VA. Participants included Dave Socky, Bill Koerschner, Keith Sweeney, Rick Lambert, Jim Schurman, and Amos Mincin. This is a new cave we found in the bottom of a sinkhole in January 2025. Amos squeezed in, dug it open enough for the rest of us to get in, at which point we started surveying. After 150 feet of survey, including a large 20' x 40' room, we couldn't go any further because we didn't have rope and vertical gear for the 30 foot and 100 foot pit! Whoopee. We know what we'll be doing next Wednesday!

5/7: Mary Sue Socky, Susan Burr & Marian McConnell spent several hours working in **Dixie Caverns, VA**. Cleaning walkways, new displays, getting ready to celebrate Virginia Cave Week in June. Susan saw a black rat snake near the creek.



Fav5 for 2025 Convention

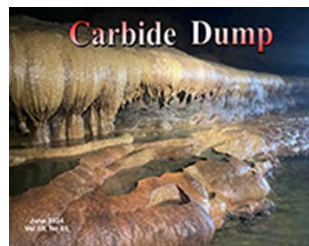
Thank you for choosing the Final 5 newsletter covers!



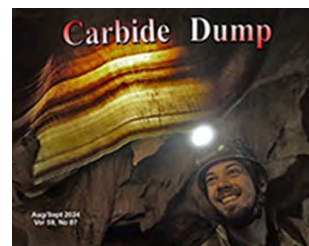
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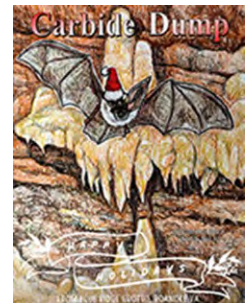
May 2024 v59 n4



June 2024 v59 n5



Aug/Sept 2024 v59 n7



Dec 2024 v59 n10

They will be displayed and judged for the Graphic Arts Salon during the June 21 – 28, 2025 NSS Convention. We'll let you know if any covers win awards!

Dixie Caverns Cleanup 2025

Mary Sue Socky

I have been visiting Dixie Caverns on Wednesdays, doing small conservation projects.

Wednesday is the least busy day of the week for Dixie Caverns. (They are closed on Tuesdays.)

Any help is welcomed! There are numerous small projects (inside and outside) that can be tackled in one day, or a half-day.

Time? Variable. Depends. If there are large tours in the morning, I can do outside work, select rocks in the creek, etc. (Usually 10a-3p)

Equipment? Depends. Conservation stuff is stored in my garage. I will bring what is needed to the cave. Dixie has brooms, garden hose, & a ladder on site.

4/30/2025 I treated the Backscratcher ceiling area for several areas of white and green mold. (Don't know if the green was penicillin, or the beginning of more lampenflora, but it and the white are now gone!)

SO – if you want to work in Dixie Caverns, contact me.

If you want to do something special (spray down the Wedding Bell, remove moss, look) contact me! I don't usually bring peroxide, spray bottles, shop vac, etc. unless there is a need.

The Display Case has been updated with new post cards and posters.

PLUS, I am happy to offer a "Spring Clean Up Conservation trip" to Dixie

Caverns on **Saturday, 5/17/2025 for the grotto trip** – if Susan, Doug, or Jeff do not have a trip scheduled.

(This is an alternative trip for those not in shape to go wild caving.)

- Yes, the moss is back around certain lights in the lower levels.
- There is new green on the Wedding Bell.
- And, while the Wedding Party Lake has gone down a bit, the 4" deep Lake and algae around the Wedding Party are STILL THERE.

There are always things to do in Dixie, especially if we are going to hold a Cave Week event there! If you have feedback, please let me know.

Mary Sue Socky
sockymss@cox.net
 540-529-3954



Virginia Cave Week! June 1-7, 2025

Virginia Cave Week is scheduled for June 1 - 7, 2025.

BRG has not hosted a Virginia Cave Week event for several years. The last VA Cave Week event was at Center In the Square, Roanoke VA. Some people expressed interest with helping. Dates would be Sunday June 1, or Saturday, June 7. Jenna Fidler suggested something could be held at Dixie Caverns. BRG has time to think of sites, volunteers, etc.

Are you interested? What kind of activity would you suggest? Stay tuned!



Amos Mincin and Bill Koerschner in virgin cave we surveyed on Wednesday, 5/7/2025.

There is a 100 foot pit underneath Amos! Photo by Dave Socky

BRG CAVE TRIP GUIDELINES (Revised 2025)

TRIPS

- Any BRG member in good standing can set up a grotto trip.
- Grotto trips will be announced in advance; either in the **CARBIDE DUMP** or at the monthly meeting.
- All participants must sign up for the trip in advance.
- Guests and trainees must be sponsored by BRG members.
- Sponsors must accompany their guests on the cave trip.
- A grotto trip may be cancelled at any time.

LEADERS. The Trip Leader:

- Will determine the trip's purpose.
- Will contact landowner for permission to visit the cave.
- Will set trip size limits.
- Will set the trip's difficulty level.
- Has the responsibility to determine if a participant is physically capable for the trip.
- Has the final say as to who can go on the cave trip.
- Is responsible for finding sponsors for non-members and guests.
- Will check to see that guests and non-members have signed waivers.
- Will check to see that all participants have adequate equipment.
- May cancel the trip at any time.
- Has the right to have a person escorted out of the cave if that individual cannot continue with the cave trip (or even call the trip if that is advisable).
- Is responsible for checking out grotto gear & promptly returning it in good condition to the gear cache.
(Note: **NEVER** allow someone to take their borrowed gear home 'to clean it up'. Get it back from them NOW, dirt, sweat and all.)
- Will collect \$\$ for damage to grotto gear (other than normal wear and tear) from the people using said equipment, or the leader will pay for its repair from his own pocket.

PARTICIPANTS

- Participants must be in good health, (no illness, no fever for 24 hours, no injuries or numbness, etc.), be physically fit and be prepared for the duration (hours) and level of activity that a particular trip demands.
- All participants must sign up in advance for grotto trips due to trip size limitations.
- BRG members and sponsors may contact the trip leader to sign up if they live out of town or cannot attend the meeting.
- To sign up for a grotto trip, contact the trip leader. Non-members and guests are encouraged to sign up for grotto trips at the monthly meeting.
- Members who bring a guest are expected to sponsor and accompany their guest on the same trip.
- All participants are required to have proper safety gear in good working order.
- Any participant can recommend that a particular person not participate in a cave trip due to health problems, lack of stamina, experience, or lack of proper equipment.
- Participants may not individually check out grotto gear; they should make a request for grotto gear to the trip leader.
- All participants on grotto trips will agree to and practice the [NSS Conduct Code](#).

GROTTO GEAR

- Grotto gear is limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Trip leaders will be responsible for checking out the needed grotto gear and returning it promptly in good condition to the gear cache.
- The user of any grotto gear provides their own batteries.
- The user is held responsible for the gear's returned condition and will be charged for repair or replacement if the gear is damaged, abused, or lost.