

# Carbide Dump

A person wearing a headlamp and a dark shirt is looking up at a large, glowing, orange and yellow rock formation in a cave. The rock has a textured, layered appearance. The background is dark, and the lighting is dramatic, highlighting the person and the rock.

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

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

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**Cover:** Bambi Marshall lighting up cave bacon on the July grotto trip. Photo by Brian Williams.

# CAVERS CALENDAR

**Aug 15:** BRG meeting, 6:30pm at Dave and Mary Sue Socky's house.

**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 Dave and Mary Sue Socky's house.

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

**Oct 9-12:** TAG Fall Cave-In 2025, Union Grove, Alabama. Must be a current NSS Member or guest.

**Oct 17:** BRG meeting, 6:30pm at Dave & Mary Socky's house. Nominations.

**Oct 17-19:** VAR. At the RASS Field Station. Hosted by the VAR Officers.

**Oct 17-19:** GO Fest, (Go Outside Festival) Downtown Roanoke, VA. CaveSim will be there. Volunteers will be needed.

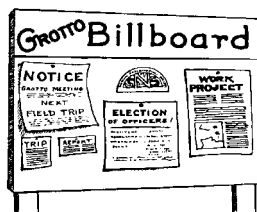
**Oct 18:** Bridge Day, Fayetteville WV. See <https://officialbridgeday.com/bridge-day-info> for more info.

**Nov 8:** WVCC Banquet, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, Lewisburg WV. See <http://wvcc.net> for more info.

**Nov 21:** BRG meeting, 6:30pm at a location to be announced. Elections.

**Dec 13:** Annual WVACS Christmas Party, WVACS Fieldstation. Contact Nick Socky at 540-529-0413 or at [sockynss@vt.edu](mailto:sockynss@vt.edu) for more info.

**July 6-10, 2026:** 2026 NSS Convention, Corydon, IN (<https://caves.org/convention/2026-nss-convention/>)



## 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/>

## VAR Limited Access Cave List

<https://var.caves.org/index.php/conservation/closed-caves/closed-cave-list>

## Treasurer's Report 08/07/2025

Cave Bucks	\$ 117.96
Conservation	\$ 2.00
Equipment	\$ 144.12
General	\$5,779.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,043.71</b>



# 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.



**NSS Awards** - Congratulations to Lauren Appel! Her photo of Mystic River flowstone, Scott Hollow Cave, WV, on the *DUMP* cover (2024v60#4) won an Honorable Mention in the NSS Cover Art Salon! See all the winners <https://caves.org/salon/2025-graphic-art-salon/>

**NSS Awards** - Congratulations to Marian McConnell, whose 'Halloween' artwork on the back cover of *Illuminations* (Dec.2024, #19) won an Honorable Mention in the NSS Cover Art Salon! In addition, Marian won an Honorable Mention in Fine Art Salon for colored pencil art of Wood Frog in Helectite Cave (which she donated to the Auction) (JEP bought it at the auction!), and an Honorable Mention in Cave Ballad Salon for song "Life in the Middle Ages."

**New WVCC Preserve!** At the end of May 2025, the West Virginia Cave Con-

servancy announced the acquisition of **Fuller's Entrance** to the Culverson Creek Cave System. It was made possible by a generous donation from Cliff and Lois Lindsay. The preserve includes the Fuller's Entrance and the Karst Window. The cave will be open to all responsible experienced cavers. The gate into the field is now locked – prior contact with Bill Balfour or Lois Lindsay should be made to get the combo for access.

**So Long**, Ed and Marianne Saugstad! They have sold the farm and are moving to England. Enjoy your new life and home! Come back and visit us anytime!

**R.I.P. Marcia Albert** (inactive NSS # 27506) who passed away May 16, 2025. Marcia and husband Rudy were active BRG members 1986-1989.

**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 [pondlad97@gmail.com](mailto:pondlad97@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](mailto: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](mailto:blueridgegrottoofficers@gmail.com) for PayPal.

**Santamander** - 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.

**Rocks** - the Warm Springs Valley project meets every Wednesday, and some Saturdays. Contact Dave Socky if you would like to participate at the following email: [sockydr@cox.net](mailto:sockydr@cox.net).

**VAR Limited Access Cave List** can be found at this [link](#). Please send changes and updates to Brad Blase at [blase@virginiacaves.org](mailto:blase@virginiacaves.org) or Dave Socky at [sockydr@cox.net](mailto:sockydr@cox.net).

**Summer Bat Closure** for some caves. These closures protect maternity colonies of bat moms and pups.

♦ WV: closed May 15 - Sept 1.

♦ VA: closed Apr. 15 – Oct. 15.



## Cave Updates

- Catawba Murder Hole Cave, VA is CLOSED
- New River Cave Preserve, VA (NSS) is using a permit system. **One group per day is allowed in the cave.** <https://permits.saveyourcaves.org/> to submit a permit request for visitation. (Allow 2 weeks.) Contact [newriverpreserve@caves.org](mailto:newriverpreserve@caves.org) for more info.
- Norman Cave, WV - Parking problems are ongoing. Vehicles will be towed. Go caving elsewhere.
- Higginbotham Caves 1-4, WV – owner Rich English 860-309-9885 wishes to be texted when going to these Greenbrier Co. caves. **Parking:** park by the # 1 entrance, park close to the road – do not go down the hill or park by the dog pen.
- Friar's Hole, WV – All entrances on the Mothes' property are now open. Permission must be arranged with landowner in advance for all trips to any entrance. Group size limited to 20 people, no beginners. Please walk, Don't drive to these cave entrances. Closed Jan – May be due to poor access & road conditions.



## BRG Meeting & Trip Notice

The August 15, 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. Click [here for the location of the Socky residence](#).

The program will be a 24 minute video called "The One That Got Away". It was the Best of Show for the 2025 NSS Video Salon. It is about looking for the lost Airstop Cave and features a lot of footage of Friars Hole plus some photos of Al Stewart!

## Grotto Trips

To Be Determined



## NSS Convention in Cobleskill, New York June 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Article and Photos by *Pud Zwolinski*

My wife, Lyn and I left for the NSS Convention from our cabin near Berkeley Springs WV on Saturday, taking six to seven hours to drive to Cobleskill, New York. It is pronounced **Kow.buhl.skil**. We arrived at our hotel, the Super 8 and checked in on Saturday to be able to attend the Adirondack Geology and Karst Field Trip being led by Thom Engle early Sunday Morning. But first, we had to register.

Following signs to the campus of SUNY Cobleskill, we parked at the lower parking lot and immediately met Sue and Bill Biggers. The temperature was around 82 degrees F, without a cloud in the sky. It was while registering that we heard that Dave Socky had a pretty bad fall.

Getting up way too early that Sunday, we went to the Fairgrounds, the site of all the camping, and it started to rain. The van rental place for our field trip stated that our vans were recalled by the manufacturer and the powers that be negotiated three Ford Expeditions. We looked like a Secret Service or ICE caravan. One black, one dark blue and one gray. We got the cool color, gray (or is it grey?).

First stop was Saratoga Spa State Park, home to numerous artesian wells. The first well, State Seal Spring, had some pretty decent water, but nothing to com-

pare to the water we get from Berkeley Springs State Park near our cabin. There were a couple of other artesian wells nearby, but when it was stated that one of them had an abundance of Lithium, I passed on doing the taste test. I will note that my favorite sparkling water comes from this area. Saratoga Spring Water Company has heavenly sparkling water. Hand me one of their bottles of blue water, and you can get me to do anything, within reason.

Next stop was Lester Park, home of stromatolites, created by a form of dark life called cyanobacteria. These fossils were quite prevalent and easily photographed. Did I bother to take any pictures? Nope.

The best stop of the trip was at Natural Stone Bridge & Caves. This great stop has been in the same family for two hundred years. Essentially, Trout Brook meets an arm of Grenville-ages crystalline marble whereby the stream makes two underground segments. Now most of us think marble is the hard stuff that statues and tombstones are made of. Not this marble. It is extremely crystalline in nature, interlocking calcite crystals. All the other minerals in the rock have been soluted out of the calcite crystals, making the marble extremely friable. Extremely interesting. The park has numerous trails between the cave systems and crossing the creek which gave my recently healed broken ankle a workout. The main caves we checked out were Stone Bridge Cave, Noisy Cave, Lost Pool Cave and Echo-Garnet Cave. Oh, and don't forget Peter Pan's Peephole, an upper entrance to Noisy Cave. As a member of the Peter Pan club, I loved that karst window.

Due to time constraints. We had to forgo Burroughs Cave and its related karst. This area has the longest solutional cave in marble in New York. One thing that really made this a great trip was the two-way radios that MayaCon 2012 acquired for the NSS. The clarity and range of



**Captain John**

the radios always kept our caravan in contact. We just needed to work on our radio lingo skills.

Monday was very hot for upstate New York. I saw temps in the mid-90s. Rather than do convention stuff, we wanted to check out some of the revolutionary war stuff nearby. First stop was Saratoga battlefield. It had an excellent little visitor center, and we were able to download the car field trip from the USNP web site for an easy drive through the battlefield. Good thing our founding fathers finally won a battle. It got the French to begin backing our young nation. Plus, Daniel Morgan and his Virginia volunteer militia were quite successful with their back woods fighting tactics against the Hessians along the western flanks of the battlefield. Sidebar. Our cabin is in Morgan County WV.

That evening, we attended a group photo shoot and the howdy party. The half-chicken that was served was so large,

*(Continued on page 47)*



**Secret Caverns Slug**



(NSS Convention from page 46)

many of us made two meals of it. And I did like the cherry cider they served for one of the beverages.

Tuesday consisted of shopping vendors row and attending sessions. Again, it was in the mid-90s.

Wednesday. We started by taking the tour of Secret Caverns. Wasn't beautiful

like commercial caves in Virginia but still got us underground and we did see plenty of speleothems. The one thing that got me to take a picture of was a slug way down in the bottom of the cave that must have been washed in.

Thursday. Temperatures were now in the low 80s. Time for another road trip. Original plans were to go to see Fort Ticonderoga and check out the Original Star Trek Series Set Tour. Now if you are even a little interested in Star Trek, then this is a must-see and do trip. I learned more about the series than watching it multiple times since it originally came out.

You start at the Transporter set, which also subbed for other TNG sets. No, they couldn't beam me out. I was too heavy for their particle beams. Next, we visited the Medical Bay set. The first season McCoy only had a single set room, but in the remaining seasons, they expanded his role, and he got two additional sets to complement his character. The Ready Room and the Leisure Room were the same set; they just had different furniture depending on the scene's needs. All the Halls you ever saw consisted of maybe 50-60' of hallway between all the sets set at angles so you thought they were running for miles. And all the Crew Quarters were the same set, just made up for each individual

character's needs. The Engin Room surprised me the most. It looked so big on the screen because various walls could be moved to get all those different shots from different angles. And last but not least, The Captain's Chair. It was the only set piece we were allowed to touch. And everyone on the tour got their picture taken "making it so." The entire group cooperated by staying out of each other's pictures.

Needless to say, Fort Ticonderoga was skipped.

Friday. It was a day of finishing up shopping and getting ready for the awards banquet. However, prior to the start of the banquet, the National Speleological Foundation held a raffle for an NSS life membership and other items to raise funds for the NSS. One of the items in the raffle was a Milwaukee rotary hammer drill. I commented to Lyn "Watch this. Someone who doesn't even cave will probably win the drill". And who had the winning ticket? Lyn. I had the biggest grin. And before I could get that drill to my car before the banquet, she had two offers to buy it from her.

However, the best part about the awards ceremony was that Dave Socky was healed enough to attend, so all in all, we had a great time (and a new drill).

Already looking forward to Corydon, Indiana next year.



Engineering John

## Threats to Caves

### Stay Involved and Protect our Underground Wonders

(From the NSS 2025 July Updates)

In response to public outcry from across the political spectrum, lawmakers have halted the proposed sale of public lands in the recent H. R. 1 bill. While this is a positive development—and our caves on public land are safe for now—their future remains uncertain. We urge everyone to stay informed about the value of our public lands and continue advocating for their protection.

The legislation would have required the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to sell between 0.5% and 0.75% of their total land holdings by 2030, totaling 3.29 million acres across 11 western states.

This sale would have included the land containing prominent caves such as Main Drain, Columbine Crawl, Loaded Dice, and Deadhorse, as well as causing access issues to the Great Expectations (GreatX) NSS Preserve. If these lands were to be sold, public or trailhead access to many caves could be lost entirely, and the caves and ecosystems they contain could be destroyed, closed, or irreparably harmed by development.

Help us protect our natural underground wonders and their water resources, threatened species, and sensitive habitats by being their voice in case similar sales are proposed in the future.

The NSS is working alongside you to advocate for our caves impacted by current policies. For example, we sent and published an Open Letter to the Department of Homeland Security to

consider the implications of waiving the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 (FCRPA) in order to construct barriers and roads along the U.S. border, potentially impacting cave and karst-dense areas like Big Bend National Park in Texas. Read the full text here.



View from a karst feature in the Salt Range of Wyoming. Photo by Pete Johnson.

## BRG Charter Found!

Out of the blue, we received an email from Katie Gray:

*"My dad, Gary Gray, passed away recently, and I'd like to bring some of his things to your members. I have your original charter, which I thought belonged with your organization and I saw on your website it was listed as 'lost'. I think it's been here since you all got it. He also had several cave map publications, and about every issue of NSS news that came out since the 70s. I thought I might also bring some of his pictures and see if anyone can identify the other members or where they were taken."*

Katie attended the July 18, 2025 BRG meeting, and gave Blue Ridge Grotto their NSS Charter, which had been framed and kept safe by Gary Gray, NSS # 8415, the first Chairman of Blue Ridge Grotto.

Thank you, Katie (and Gary, RIP!) Blue Ridge Grotto NSS I.O.-180, will continue the traditions for the next 50-some years. We will give your Dad's caving stuff a good home.



## CaveSim and GoFest 2025

CaveSim and Dave Jackson will return to Roanoke, VA in October for the GO Fest event!

CaveSim will be open Saturday, October 18, and Sunday, October 19, 2025, in downtown Roanoke. Rain or Shine.

If you helped with CaveSim last year, then you know how much fun it is. It is estimated that **2000+ people** will visit during GO Fest. CaveSim needs your help!

Saturday will be the 'long day': 9 am to 8 pm. Sign up times are from 9 am to noon, noon to 4 pm, and 4pm to 8 pm.

Sunday will be 10am -5 pm. Sign up times are from 10 am to 1 pm and 1 pm to 5 pm

GoFest is rain or shine! Please bring water, chair, and a light. keep track of

personal items - you are dealing with the public. Be in good health.

We need cavers willing to interact with the public to help explorers 'helmet up' and experience CaveSim! We also need folks to help with the Squeeze Box, Pulley Systems, and answer questions about caves, bats and how to 'Cave Softly and Safely.'

Yes, this is a busy October weekend. Fall VAR is 'close by' – you can enjoy VAR, **and** help with CaveSim, too. It's an activity-filled weekend, either way.

Folks, we need volunteers Both Days for the various shifts. Let me know what day and time. Please sign up. Contact Mary Sue Socky at [sockymss@cox.net](mailto:sockymss@cox.net) or 540-529-3954.





## REMEMBERING DANIEL W FONG

### NSS 22289 SC, FE

By William K Jones and David C Culver

(From July 2025 NSS News)

Cave biologist Daniel Wu Fong died on April 25, 2025, following a long battle with cancer. Dan has been a biology professor at the American University in Washington and was best known professionally for his landmark papers on various aspects of the evolution and ecology of the cave and spring amphipod, *Gammarus minus*. He was recognized for his work with the NSS Science Award in 2022, and he was a Fellow of the NSS. Dan was one of the founding directors of the Karst Waters Institute and served as president from 2007 to 2012. He also founded the online journal *Speleobiology Notes* in 2008 and served as editor until 2012. Dan co-authored (with Megan Porter and Michael Slay) the NSS field guide “Cave Life of the Virginias” (2012).

Dan was born December 1, 1954, in Guangzhou, China, and moved to Hong Kong at age four and then to the San Francisco area when he was 14. He earned a BA in Zoology at the University of California-Berkeley, an MS at the University of Oklahoma — where he developed his lifelong love of caves — and his PhD at Northwestern University with David Culver as his advisor. Dan’s PhD studies centered on *Gammarus minus*, mostly from Greenbrier County, West Virginia caves, where many populations showed a highly modified morphology of tiny eyes with reduced pigment. By analysis of individual pair matings in

the laboratory, Dan showed that differences in eye size, antennae length and overall size were genetically (i.e., heritable) rather than environmentally determined.

Dan’s research over the years mostly focused on studies of *Gammarus minus*, including molecular genetics and trophic analysis using stable isotopes. Organ Cave and its resurgence on Second Creek in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, was the site of many of his studies on quantitative and molecular genetics. Dan also considered it in a general ecological context for studies on microdistribution and community structure. While his study of *Gammarus minus* is the core of his scholarly contributions, he made significant contributions in several areas, especially conservation biology and management. He devoted a lot of attention to the endangered isopod *Antrolana lira*, a groundwater-dwelling species, distantly related to some groundwater isopods in Texas and hundreds of kilometers from any marine waters, the historical source of colonists. While much of this work was in the form of difficult-to-obtain reports to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, he published a paper demonstrating that it was likely three species, not one, based on molecular genetic analysis.

Dan was the author and coauthor of over 40 journal articles and book chapters on cave biology and evolution, and he frequently collaborated with biologists

from around the world. He also described several new species and had three cave animals named for him: *Pseudotremia fongi*, Shear 2008 (a millipede from Greenbrier County), *Niphargus fongi*, Fišer & Zagamajster 2009 (an amphipod crustacean from Slovenia), *Monolistra fongi*, Prevorčnik & Verovnik 2010 (an isopod crustacean from Croatia).

Dan was a demanding advisor for his many graduate students over the years, but he earned their respect and always worked closely with them in the field and laboratory. He really enjoyed taking new students to Greenbrier County, West Virginia, and introducing them to the joy of caving and the potential for research in these unique natural laboratories. Dan was a great practitioner of the “work hard, play hard” approach to learning and research.

He was also a very active sport caver, and especially enjoyed pit dropping in TAG. He was also on several trips into Lechuguilla Cave, as well as visiting a number of caves in Croatia and Slovenia.

Dan will be very much missed by all who had the privilege to take one of his classes, serve as a graduate student, go on a cave trip with him or just sit around a campfire and drink a beer. He will be remembered for his ready wit, infectious smile and laugh and his optimism, even as his health declined.



Joe Zokaites going into Glass Menagerie.  
Photo by Dave Socky

# Grotto Trip Log

**6/14:** Bob Alderson revisited **Warner Noisy Blower Cave, WV**. They heard of a potential dig. Had trouble finding the cave entrance in the field. Dwight, Gabby, Vonny, Bob found a sandy dig near the ceiling of one section.

**6/14:** Nick Schmalenberger went to **Shadow Cave, VA** with Zach Bruno and saw a cool salamander.

**6/19 Mossy Cliff Cave – not, Horse Cave maybe, and Catawba Creek #4 maybe.** Participants included David Socky, Matthew Centofanti, and Jacob Whitlock, plus Taylor Nelson & Wife (owners). Mossy Cliff Cave was one of three caves we looked at on the new landowner's property. This short notice trip was set up by Gracie Cornish. We thought this might be Mossy Cliff Cave, but it didn't match the map at all. It's probably one of the other Catawba Creek Caves. The Horse Cave (maybe) entrance was a small hole in the middle of the woods. No one could fit until I dislodged a large rock and rolled it inside. This was not just a little rat hole. Turned into walking passage a few side leads and/or rooms. Catawba Creek #4 maybe - Again, I'm not sure which cave this is. In any case, they all should be re-surveyed.

**6/21 Bouck Theater Cave, Cobleskill, NY.** Participants – Dave Socky. I was told I should enter this in the NSS ACA. I tried turning the Bouch Theater into a cave by attempting to get backstage in the dark without a light. Consequently, I stepped off the edge of the stage (like walking out over the edge of a pit) and slammed my left side onto the edge of the stage and collapsed onto the floor. I ended up getting a helicopter ride to the Albany hospital where they determined I had broken four ribs and damaged my spleen and kidney. I spent the whole convention in the hospital, but I was able to attend the banquet on Friday and even presented the Arts and Letters Award to Angelo George. I am now home, recovering. I'll be back to caving in late September.

## NSS Convention

**6/21: Bouck Theater Cave, Cobleskill, NY.** Participants – Dave Socky. I was told I should enter this in the NSS ACA. I tried turning the Bouch Theater into a cave by attempting to get backstage in the dark without a light. Consequently, I stepped off the edge of the stage (like walking out over the edge of a pit) and slammed my left side onto the edge of the stage and collapsed onto the floor. I ended up getting a helicopter ride to the Albany hospital where they determined I had broken four ribs and damaged my spleen and kidney. I spent the whole convention in the hospital, but I was able to attend the banquet on Friday and even presented the Arts and Letters Award to Angelo George. I am now home, recovering. I'll be back to caving in late September.

**6/23-6/27:** John and Lyn Pearson's journeys in NY. They went on the NSS Geology Field Trip, saw stromatolites, visited **Natural Stone Bridge & Caves**, marble caves, **Peter Pan's Peephole**, the NSS Howdy Party, visited **Secret Caverns**, cheered Dave Socky at the Friday NSS Banquet, saw a bunch of neat old Star Trek stuff, AND Lyn won a Milwaukee rotary hammer drill from the NSF raffle! See the article on p.46

**6/23:** Nick Schmalenberger went to **Hailes Cave, NY** for the convention sketching class with Jon Zetterberg, Julie Schenck-Brown, Dan Safronoff, and a bunch of other people. The cave was mostly a long walking passage with a stream. A beaver was active in the entrance area. The cave was much colder than Virginia caves, glad I brought my cave suit.

**6/25:** Nick Schmalenberger went to **Schoharie Cave, NY** with Rolland Moore. The cave is known for people visiting naked and barefoot, so we were slightly better equipped. It had a stream of knee-deep cold water through its passage as far as we went, until we ran into the convention photography workshop and decided to return from that point. I decided I didn't really need to wear my flipflops, exiting the cave barefoot was nice.

**6/26:** Nick Schmalenberger went to **Chevy Cave, NY, Pasture Cave, NY, and Marshalls Cave, NY** with Julian Benson + 7 people from Boston + Ezra from Vermont. These were all vertical caves, so smaller groups were a good move. Chevy and Pasture were walking distance apart, so 4 of us saw Chevy first which was nearer to the parking spot, Julian took the other 4 to Pasture, and then we switched. It was raining off and on all day and lots of mosquitoes lived around the entrances of these caves, being underground was definitely nicer. Chevy was 1 pitch down to where 2 long tight crawls supposedly lead to a beautiful formation room, but we didn't go this way. Instead, we lay in the crawlway in a last in first out fashion just for protection from rockfall in the pretty narrow pit, and didn't really notice many features in the cave at all.

**Pasture Cave** had a cable ladder leading down through a buried very large former oil tank as an entrance, to a timber retaining wall where the pit began and lead through a crack to a rebelay. Then the pit became quite nice especially compared to Chevy. Some formations at the bottom included a calcified 5-gallon bucket and next to it some sort of calcified magical egg. We continued on up a muddy slope to where a slippery climb down lead to a stream passage, but I decided I didn't need to continue further. After Pasture Cave we returned to the cars and drove to Marshall's Cave.

At **Marshall's Cave**, we were in our 2 groups, and my group went in the lower horizontal entrance after putting our vertical gear in a pack we gave to the other group. They rappelled down apparently the biggest single pitch in New York State, 93 feet. We met them at the bottom where Julian pointed out formations, explained some cool history of his pioneering this cave project, and taking lots of beginners here. Our group took the other groups packs, climbed up the pitch, and out the top entrance in a culvert. Once we were all out Julian

(Continued on page 51)



(Trip Log continued from page 50)

pointed out to us some of the other project caves very close by. One next to some cedar trees is very much wetter than Marshalls, Julian pulled the lid off the culvert and we could see water rushing just looking down there.

**6/27:** Nick Schmalenberger went to **Clarksville Cave, NY** with Tom Kinsky from Boston I'd met before in Mexico, Mystik Miller, Samantha Gerland of Minnesota, and a 14 year old youth from Indiana. Here we did another through trip with some fun crawling around in circles and taking yonic pictures, until Tom decided to take us out the stream passage he wasn't sure would even work for us if the water was too high, but it was ok. There was about 6 inches of air space, but the water was deep enough to stand up in. We came into a room with a slope we could sort of slide down into the water, so we all did this more or less carefully, and made some videos. From here it was about 50 more feet to the exit, and we got back to camp just in time for the banquet.

**6/28:** (Post NSS Camp) Bob Alderson joined cavers from the Heidelberg-Hudson Grotto for a post-convention cave trip. 15 people stayed in the recently renovated NECC cabin. Visited Emily and Mike at Speleobooks and their Octagonal house, etc.

**6/28:**(Sat) Bob Alderson, Aaron and Tyler Burr, etc. visited **Gage Cave, NY**. They did the drop, but not the water crawl. This was a led post-convention trip.

**6/29:** (Sun) Bob Alderson, Aaron and Tyler Burr visited **Clarksville Cave NY** and **Onesquethaw Cave, NY**. These were post-convention led trips. **Onesquethaw Cave** has a nice entrance passage.

**6/30:** (Mon) Bob Alderson, Aaron Burr and Tyler Burr visited the NECC property **Benson's Cave, NY**. Benson's is part of the **Secret Cave System**. It is the 'wild side' of **Secret Caverns**. There was a 70' entrance pit, lots of canyon passage and stream crawls.

**7/1: Burroughs Cave**, part of the Hot Water Pond Complex in NY. There are 4 marble caves here. Bob Alderson took a 2-mile uphill hike to **Rusty Stove Cave** (fissure cave),

**Burroughs Cave** – visited the resurgence to a big breakdown room,

**Little Burroughs Cave** – passed it while bushwhacking up the mountain-side. Went to **Hot Water Pond** (created by beaver dam), that drains into **Hot Water Pond Cave, NY**.

They went back downhill and finally found **Little Burroughs Cave, NY**. They explored, checked out a breakdown room with very sketchy breakdown! Then they went to a nearby 'dive' for dinner – strange place with beer and chicken wings and interesting customers.

**7/2:** Bob Alderson visited **Natural Bridge Caverns, NY**, a show cave that has been owned by one family since 1776. Emily Davis made special arrangements for the cavers to visit. Cedar, Big Marble (50'x60' entrance) and

other marble cave features along the trail.

**July:** Bob Alderson went hiking in the 'Daks. He saw lots of waterfalls. Can one get burned out on too many waterfalls? He also spent a week in Acadia National Park in Maine with family.

**7/12: WVACS Classic.** Dave and Mary Sue Socky attended the above ground festivities, lots of which involved sitting under a juniper tree and enjoying friend's company. Nice taco banquet, nice drive home.

**7/12:** Bambi Marshall attended the WVACS Classic and got on a trip to wet **Norman Cave, WV**. Still very limited parking. Cave was fun; leader did an early exit with one out of shape participant, allowed the rest to explore as long as they were out by a specified time limit. They did fine, made mud sculptures in the back room, saw the start of the crawl to **Bone Cave**, and made it 'home' to WVACS in time for dinner!

**7/12:** Bob Balch went hiking in search of **Gnome Rock**, near Bassett, VA. He found a few shelter caves, and an etching? Petroglyph? of a gnome.

**7/16:** Various Caves Warm Springs Project (WSP), VA. Participants included David Socky, Rick Lambert, and Jason Glancy. They went to change out data loggers at these caves: **Triplett, Twin Sisters** (no data loggers in Sisters caves), **Kellison Cave, Betty Poyser Cave, Good Reception, Das Boot**, and **Hoover Pit**. This was Dave's first drive by himself since his broken rib accident. He did ok.



## New NSS Luminary Talks

These are two of the new NSS Luminary Talks that have been recently posted to the NSS Webpage. Check them out!

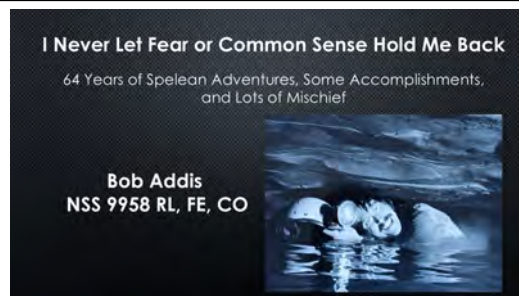
**Love** the titles!

*"Seems As If all the Decisions In My Life Were Because I Am a Caver"*

*"I Never Let Fear or Common Sense Hold Me Back"*

<https://caves.org/webinars/2025-luminary-jim-pisarowicz/>

<https://caves.org/webinars/2025-luminary-series-bob-addis/>



Marian McConnell won an Honorable Mention in the 2025 Fine Arts Salon for this painting.