

Carbide Dump



November 2025
Vol 60, No 09

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 the current location.

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Cover: Joe Zokaite surveying a hole in Dunn's Cave, VA. Photo by Dave Socky

CAVERS CALENDAR

Nov 8: WVCC Banquet, at the Clingman Center in downtown Lewisburg, WV. See <http://wvcc.net> for more info.

Nov 21: BRG meeting, 6:00pm for dinner, meeting @ 6:30pm at Famous Anthony's-Brookside, 6499 Williamson Rd, NW Roanoke VA 24019. Elections.

Dec 13: Annual WVACS Christmas Party, WVACS Fieldstation. Contact Nick Socky at 540-529-0413 or sockvns@gmail.com for more info.

Dec 19: NO DECEMBER BRG MEETING. See you next year!

Jan 1, 2026: Happy New Year!

Jan 16: BRG meeting, 6:00pm for dinner, meeting at 6:30pm at Famous Anthony's-Brookside, 6499 Williamson Rd, NW Roanoke VA 24019.

Jan 18: BRG Winter Party, Noon - 5 pm, Pot Luck, BYOB, Dave & Mary Socky's house, 6572 Woodbrook Dr. SW Roanoke, VA 24018.

Feb 20: BRG meeting, 6:00pm for dinner, meeting at 6:30pm at Famous An-

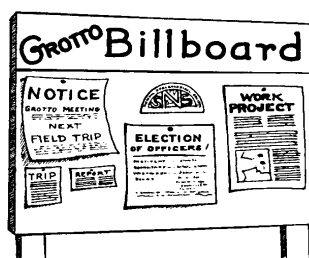
thony's-Brookside, 6499 Williamson Rd, NW Roanoke VA 24019.

Feb 20: BRG meeting, 6:00pm for dinner, meeting at 6:30pm at Famous Anthony's-Brookside, 6499 Williamson Rd, NW Roanoke VA 24019.

Mar 20: BRG meeting, 6:00pm for dinner, meeting at 6:30pm at Famous Anthony's-Brookside, 6499 Williamson Rd, NW Roanoke VA 24019.

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

June 14 to 18, 2027: 2027 NSS Convention. Del Rio, Texas



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 11/04/2025

Cave Bucks	\$ 117.96
Conservation	\$ 2.00
Equipment	\$ 144.12
General	\$5,698.60
Total	\$5,962.68

BRG Meeting & Trip Notice

The **November 21, 2025** meeting of the Blue Ridge Grotto will be held in a private room at **Famous Anthony's - Brookside** (6499 Williamson Rd). Come around 6 pm to order dinner with the meeting starting at **6:30pm**. Click [here for the location of Famous Anthony's](#).

The program will be a 2025 Video Salon entry called **Mystery Cave Underground: Mapping for the Future**. This is a 15-minute program about teaching students how to survey in Mystery Cave, MO.

Grotto Trip

Water Sinks, Owl Cave and the Subway, VA

Date & Time: Saturday, November 22, 2025. Meet at Hanging Rock Orange Market at **8:30 am**.

Leader: Susan Burr.

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

Requirements: Beginner horizontal cave trip.

Limit: 15

There are three caves in the Water Sinks Karst Preserve. Owl Cave, Upper Water Sinks, and the Subway.

The grotto cave trip is a 2 party thing. I have room for 7 people to go to Owl Cave & the Upper Water Sinks. I absolutely do not know much about these, but I know they are horizontal & I feel they are fairly small & easy (*they are definitely horizontal and very easy. Upper Water Sinks even has some board walks - Dave Socky*). Anyone wishing

to go must let me know ASAP. I will send you a link to an online waiver that **MUST** be filled out right away. This group will need to be able to drive there or possibly carpool with those in this group of 7. We have another group that will also be going, but they are also going into Subway Cave which is already full.

Email Susan Burr if you wish to go to Owl Cave & the Upper Water Sinks ASAP. 🐾



Water Sinks Karst Preserve - Feb 2, 2017. Photo by Dave Socky

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 Winter Party: BRG Christmas/Solstice/Holiday/New Year/Winter Party will be held **Sunday, Jan 18, 2026** at the Socky's house. Potluck, BYOB, Noon to 5 pm. BRG Will hold **Jan 16, 2026** meeting in addition to the party.

Additional Grotto Donations. BRG previously donated \$340.00 to several organizations at the 9-17-2025 meeting, some as dues. Mary Socky proposed that BRG donate a little more to a few cave conservation organizations who own caves in our area. After dis-

cussion, Dave Socky proposed that additional donations be voted on **WVCC** for \$120.00, **MAKC** for \$40.00, and **SCCI** for \$40.00. Susan Burr seconded the motion. Members present voted on the motion, which passed unanimously. BRG will donate an additional \$200.00 **total** to the organizations.

Safety & Techniques: Nick Schmalenberger sent in a short report: On October 4, 2025 one member of a group caving in McClung's was descending a hand line with an arm rappel method, that somehow dislocated their shoulder. The group was skilled and well prepared so managed to reduce the dislocation, and then make a sling for the injured arm out of duct tape and webbing. They then started to cave out and were in good shape, so very little rescue help was needed. There was a formal rescue response (ambulances and a fire truck), but they were hardly needed. After exiting the cave, Mystik Miller

gave the injured person a ride to the hospital in Beckley. For arm rappelling, cavers should be careful not to pull too hard on their own bodies, especially if they have a history of dislocations. Often dislocation of a shoulder joint is easier after the first time. If someone is prone to shoulder dislocations they should also practice methods to treat it such as reduction and making slings. Webbing and duct tape are great first aid items for all cavers to carry.

FOR SALE: Brandon Phibbs' cave suit is for sale **\$75**; talk with Nick Schmalenberger. See [this email](#) for further description of the cave suit.

New WVCC Preserve! At the end of May 2025, the West Virginia Cave Conservancy announced the acquisition of **Fuller's Entrance** to the Culverson Creek Cave System, WV. It was made possible by a generous donation from

(Continued on page 75)

Dunn's Cave Stream Passage, VA

Article by *Dave Socky*

Date: October 7, 2025

Survey participants included - Team 1: David Socky, Joe Zokaite, and Bob Alderson. Team 2: Bill Koerschner and Carol Zokaite.

We met at Keith Sweeney's house at 10:00am to sign waivers and then headed to the cave, where we met up with Bill Jones to turn over the waivers.

After getting ready to go caving, we split up into two groups. Bill and Carol went to the eastern end of the entrance room to continue surveying the main upper level. Bob headed down to the stream passage to start working on a high lead, while Joe and I started the survey from the middle of the entrance room down into the stream passage.

Starting our 'C' survey, Joe and I tied into A17, and we slowly made our way down the numerous climbs and crawls to get to the main climb down into the stream passage. The route was mostly vertical, making sketching difficult. In situations like this, profiles are actually more important than the plan view for



Root mats in the stream.
Photo by Dave Socky

Joe and I continued the survey upstream while Bob went to work on another high lead just before the Duck Under. There was more breakdown and mud on the northern side with the stream hugging the left wall. There were some very nice draperies and formation along the left near station C12. There were also many roots and root mats in the water and on the north bank of the stream.

After this point, the stream spread out and was pretty much wall-to-wall water; at C13 the walls came together, the ceiling came down and to continue would have meant crawling in the water. This was the Duck Under. According to the old map, the Duck Under is short with the passage continuing for another 30 feet before turning sharply to the left (south east) and ending at the upstream sump after about 20 feet. Neither Joe nor I wanted to get soaked this day, so we stopped the survey at this point.

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Dave at the top of the climb down. Photo by Joe Zokaite.

the sketch. Bob had rigged the climbdow into the stream passage with a piece of webbing, but it was not really necessary for getting down.

Once at the water, we headed upstream towards the bolt climb that Bob was working on. The stream passage is large – about 30 feet wide and 20 feet high with breakdown along the northern (right) wall and lots of limestone pendants and high alcoves. The stream flowed mainly along the southern (left) side, so it was possible to stay dry by traversing along the right side of the passage. There were many high leads and alcoves up high, but they all ended in breakdown, holes that were just too tight, or mud fill.

It only took three survey shots upstream before we caught up with Bob's bolt climb. The climb was up a narrow fissure on the southern side of the passage, about 12 feet up. The ceiling was 12 feet high. The fissure went back a few feet but ended. While I sketched, Bob came down, derigging as he went. I did get a few photos of his climb.



Bob on his bolt climb. Photo by Dave Socky

(Dunn's Cave continued from page 72)

Meanwhile, Bob did manage to get up into the high lead on the left, but it ended in a too tight fissure after 12 feet. We did survey into his lead, ending with C16. This was not the only high lead, though. There was another that could be seen on the northern side of passage just before the Duck Under. However, it would take more bolts to traverse to this lead, so it was left for another trip.

We then headed back to the start of our survey and continued downstream, picking up our survey at C7. We shot through an easy duck under to C17 where there was another duck under. From here, there was a high lead to the northwest which would require technical climbing. The lead was about 40 feet from C17, accessed up a steep mud slope.

To continue downstream, a final duck under led to a 20-foot-wide room with deep water and the final downstream sump. To fully survey the downstream end of the cave, it was required that we get wet – up to our chests. So much for



Fossil in the stream passage. Photo by Dave Socky

staying dry. The room was wall to wall water except for a small sand bar to the north. At the sump, C21, was a high lead about twenty feet up. However, if it did anything, it would probably tie into the upper-level passage since the sump is directly below known cave.

Our day was done. Our C survey got a total of 407 feet while Bill and Carol surveyed 321 feet for a total of 728 feet. Bob and Carol did not finish the main upper level. We were in the cave for 6 hours.



New River Cave Preserve Update 10/2025

Hello cavers.

The access restrictions for New River Cave, VA have been adjusted.

Permits will be issued to up to 4 trips per day, however the daily max of 15 people entering the cave per day has not changed. Consistent with guidelines published by the US Fish & Wildlife Service the "Hibernation Caution" period during which access to The Attic within the cave is prohibited, is now November 1st - April 15th.

Please remember to fill out a permit and collect waivers for ALL individuals on the trip if you want to visit the cave. To get a permit follow the below link, select the NSS for "Organization" and New

River Nature Preserve for "Preserve".

<https://permits.saveyourcaves.org/new-permit.html>

"Visitation is permitted year-round, but limited to 4 trips per day with a minimum of 2 well-prepared cavers and a maximum of 15 persons entering the cave per day. This is to help reduce the amount of traffic to help in the conservation and preservation of the preserve, the cave, as well as the flora and fauna that live there.

NOTE: Special caution is required for the New River Cave Preserve during bat hibernation season from November 1st through April 1st. Groups should move quickly and silently from the entrance to the main trunk passage as to not disturb the hibernating Big Brown bats; the Attic area past the BFR (Big Friendly Rock) should be avoided all together as to not disturb a group of endangered Little Brown bats."

Furthermore, if anyone wants to help with management activities please get in touch with me. In particular I'd like to have more experienced cavers out there so that when you run into a crew of unpermitted spelunkers (and you will, if you go on a weekend) they can be educated.

Other tasks on my to-do list are more invasive plant removals, including tree work to fell some large dead trees by the parking lot. Improvements to the trail, more visible signage, improvements to the nearby river parcel, etc.

Let me know if you have any questions
Regards
Eli Meyer
Preserve Manager
VPI #496
NSS #71099



Permit

General Information

* Organization National Speleological Society	* Preserve New River Nature Preserve
* Permit holder [Empty field]	Group Name/Description Boy Scout Troop 123, Main Street Grotto, etc.



The Caves of Greece

Article by *Robert Balch*

Robert Balch vacationed in Greece for three weeks in September of 2025. During his time, he visited many caves and caverns. Below is Robert's log (edited for length) of his many trips to the caves of Greece.

Saturday 9/6/2025: involved a 1 hr. 20 min hike to **Davelis Cave**, located in the ancient Spilia Quarry (where Parthenon marble originated). It contains giant steps which descend into the one large room (120'x300'x50') with old draperies and stalactites. Nearby, along the trail was a WWII bunker and an old chapel.

Wed 9/10: **Kaiadas Cave**, located near Sparta. Those sentenced to death were thrown into this cave. Bones of men and animals have been found at this site. Kaiadas Cave has partially collapsed. It has a very tight entrance, with the cave ending after 25 feet. I escaped with all my bones and cave gear.

Fri 9/12: **Corycian Cave** – was the site of 'The Oracle for Poorer Folk'. The entrance to the cave was triangular. Entering the first large room, one observed a labyrinth circle of stones, with offerings in the middle. Off to the left was a large stone on which more offerings of beads, statuettes, strips of cloth, and notes were placed. On the backside of the stone was the face of a hideous woman – the Oracle. The cave contained natural pillars, stalagmites, and ropes which had been installed so one could climb to a small upper room.

Mon 9/15: Northwest of Drama is the **Aggitis River Cave** (Show Cave). Near the parking area was a stone marble which spun in a pool of water. I learned that my guide was a cave diver and had explored 60m of water passage further in the cave, and could possibly arrange a special cave diving trip. We went thru a gate and descended to the cave. There were stalactites and draperies in continuous lines; the tour went half a mile in. The walkway ended as the river got deeper. There were fewer cave decorations along this route and the ceiling and sides were closer. We entered a chamber that was a sinkhole (150 feet). Before us stood a thirty-foot water wheel. This sinkhole was the original entrance, and an enterprising soul had set up the water-wheel to generate electricity for his manufacturing business above. The cave system was discovered some years later by

two men who decided to check out the water source.



Tue 9/16: At Meteora, stopped to take pictures of multiple hollows in cliff face, **shelter caves** that may have been used by hermits, some with stone walls or flags flying. I did not try to climb the walls to get to them.

Wed 9/17: I visited **Theopetra Cave**, a famous archaeological site. Its archaeological deposits are undisturbed from the Middle Paleolithic through the Neolithic period (3000 BC) with no gaps. The cave entrance is 17m wide and three meters high, with a huge chamber behind, almost rectangular with a size of 500m². The floor of the cave had been excavated from a foot to 15 feet down. **Theopetra Cave** had been used to house shepherds and their sheep, as well as a cemetery since the 1880s. The cave museum contains pottery, toys, and bones found in the cave that suggest its long usage by people.

Mon 9/22: Visited **Boufos Cave** in Gouves, along the coast road. It was a sea cave. However, when I reached it, the tide was in, and the cave was completely flooded. Southward led me to Matala. In the sixties and seventies, hippies lived in caves in the sandstone cliffs. I found a couple of openings in the Sandstone cliff, **shelter caves**, 8 to 10 feet deep, with signs of previous occupation. With my binoculars, I observed similar "caves" with crowds of tourists or party goers. Back north, in Hersonissos, I located the **Cave of St. Paraskevi**, also known as **Skotini Cave**. This large, historic cave is significant for its ancient religious importance, having been a sacred site for the Minoan worship of

Britomartis and the Greek goddess Artemis. During the Turkish Invasion, 37,000 people hid in this cave. There were old formations in the cave, but no active water flow. I saw pigeons in the cave, but no bats, even though there were formations covered in guano.

Tue 9/23: **Milatos Cave** – a 200-meter trail skirts the gorge and leads to the cave. The trail led to two entrances, the first into the cave proper, the second into a chapel area, dedicated to St. Thomas – just inside the cave. In February, 1823, 3500 people took refuge in the cave, but were slaughtered by Turks after a 22-day siege. Some of their bones are interred at the chapel. The cave is 73 m long x 63 m wide, varying in height from 1 to 3 meters. Most of the decorations in the cave are columns. I also saw and possibly photographed the entrances of **Pelekita Cave** and **Lera Cave** from a distance.

Thur 9/25: Started out looking for the **Cave of Kryonerida**. Never found it. I ended up at **Kalamato Cave**. On the way, I visited a "small hermit cave" with two churches by the cave- were different ends of the one-room building outside the cave. It was described as having a narrow entrance and wider within, but partially collapsed. I slid in sideways on my belly on humped rock to discover it dead-ended in twelve feet. Returning down the trail, I took the side trail up to **Kalamato Cave**. There was a low duck-in to two rooms at the front. There was a small lead from the room on the left to a small chamber. Another lead led to a larger chamber with a few formations. A couple of low leads ended in cubbyholes. The high lead across a gap led to a path that intersected walking passage, a corridor, 12' to 15' tall and 50' to 60' long.

Sat 9/27: The plan was to check out some caves located north of the Chania airport. Paths to caves were reported to be near Holy Trinity (Agia Triada) Tzagaroli Monastery and Virgin of the Angels (Gouverneto) Monastery. **Koumarospilios Cave**. I hiked numerous goat trails to hilltops and gorges. The cave was located at the top end of the gorge and there was a rock wall a

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(Greece continued from page 74)

couple yards in front of the opening. After gearing up, I entered the two-foot slot. There was a ceramic shard with strange symbols on it near the entrance. In the first room were some dirty curtains. Voids went down slope to a couple back rooms with breakdown. A crawl revealed a fork. The one to the right was higher and went to a large shelf. To the left was an opening to a pit with a 12-foot drop. I thought I could get down, but could not see hand or footholds to get back up. If I had not been alone, I would have pushed it, but

discretion won over valor. There was not much more to the cave. Afterward, I climbed to the other side of the thorn-infested gorge and hiked back to the parking area.

Further north, close to the sea, was the promise of **Lera Cave**, located above the village of Stavros. The cave was high up a hillside. The large opening brought light into the front room inhabited by hornets. There was a hole in the wall ahead which some enterprising soul had painted a large hornet and a legend,

"Feeling Weird?" There were several rooms with large doorways and old col-

umns, broken draperies. Ahead was a large room with more columns about three feet down. To enter one had to pass hundreds of mosquitos. Hornets, no problem; hundreds of mosquitos, ick! While I would have liked to prowl that room, there was no obvious continuation and the walk down the outside slope beckoned, with the promise of a sandy beach and swim below.



(Announcements continued from page 71)

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. Contact Bill Balfour or Lois Lindsay for the combo for access.

T-Shirts: There are 14 remaining T-shirts! \$12.00 each. Med. to XL, various colors: red, gold, grey, green, light blue, etc. Contact Susan Burr 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.

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.

Bats Glow Green - From Mark Minton: New idea on why bats glow green under ultraviolet light. See [this link](#).

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.

NSS Award Nominations: It's time to submit nominations for NSS Awards. Nominations are due by NOVEMBER 15th. <https://caves.org/nss-awards/>

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

Winter Bat Closure for some caves. These closures are primarily for hibernacula.

- ♦ WV: closed Sept 1 - May 15
- ♦ VA: closed Oct. 15 - Apr. 15



Cave Updates

- **Catawba Murder Hole Cave, VA** is CLOSED
- **Norman Cave, WV** - Parking problems are ongoing. Vehicles will be towed. Go caving elsewhere.
- **New River Cave, VA** has updated their permit parameters. See p. 73 this issue.



BRGs Newest Home 10/2025

BRG has found a NEW meeting place at Famous Anthony's, near the Brookside Golf Course in Roanoke, VA!

Famous Anthony's - Brookside
6499 Williamson Rd NW
Roanoke, VA 24019

Everyone seems to like the new meeting room, and requested that Marian McConnell reserve the **Front meeting room** for BRG meetings in 2026, from 6-9p. The Front meeting room is bigger and has a larger TV.

Click [here for a Google Map location for Famous Anthony's](#).

BRG Dues are (almost) Due!

It's close to that time. Dues are not due until the November 15 grotto meeting, but it never hurts to pay early. Dues are \$10 per year, or \$5 for additional family member. See Mary Sue Socky (sockymss@cox.net) to see if you've paid already.



Dave & Joe in a hole in
Dunn's Cave. Photo by Bob
Alderson

Grotto Trip Log

9/6 – 9/27: Bob Balch visited a bunch of caves in Greece, both commercial and wild. See his article on page 74.

9/10: Bambi Marshall found the entrance to **Anemone Cave, ME, in Acadia NP** - A neat, tide pool filled sea cave that can only be visited during low tide.

9/18: Susan Burr and friends visited **James Cave, VA** as a pick-up trip. Everyone had forgotten how difficult James Cave can be. The Roadside entrance of James Cave can use a cleanup – glass shards are everywhere! BRG needs to get with NRVG and plan a conservation trip here in 2026.

9/20: Nick Schmalenberger, Mystik Miller, Randy Wilfong, Ben NLN and Zack NLN went to **Maxwelton Cave, WV**. We made a through trip from the Scott entrance to the Oak Hall entrance, via the Latte Room. We also detoured to visit Cove Creek and saw a large flowstone leading down to the stream.

9/21: Nick Schmalenberger, Mystik Miller, Randy Wilfong, Andrew Minarik, Riley Stalnaker, Ben the youth and his father (NLN). We had a vertical practice for Greenbrier Grotto using the tower at WVACS. We all practiced changeovers on a fixed rope hanging from the tower, and we also practiced using the arborist lowering device called a port-a-wrap attached to the base of the tower.

9/27: Nick Schmalenberger went to **Speedwell Cave #2, VA** with Bran-

don & Alexa Phibbs. The cave had some nice passages, and one room had an amazingly sketchy looking ladder in it.

10/1: Dunn Cave, VA. David Socky, Joe Zokaite, Bob Alderson, Bill Koerschner. Re-survey of **Dunn's Cave**. We finished off the entrance room which included the breakdown mess. D Socky: I did fine for my first cave trip in 3 months. I was still extra cautious and even accepted a spot and knee from Bob when climbing down from the mud tube. My ribs felt fine the whole time.

10/4: Butler Cave, VA. David Socky, Eric Shuler, and Isabella Brown. We surveyed nice dry (mostly) walking passage in Pats Section just past the Air Dig. Did some crawling and tight 12-inch squeezes with no detrimental effects. This was the BCCS Social/Project weekend. On the drive back home, Dave Socky got sidetracked by a rescue in McClung Cave, WV.

10/4 Nick Schmalenberger went to **Culverson Creek Cave, WV** with Jenna Breeckner of Greenbrier Grotto, Virginia Comi of Cleveland, Nick Smith of Ohio, and the twin brothers Mason and Sam also of Ohio who had never been caving before. First we went in the **Wild Cat entrance** and followed the stream towards the Dread Pool. Then we went back the other way and crawled into some cold wet area. Then we visited Bill Balfour and his cats again, then walked to the **Hinkle/Unus/Balfour Entrance of Culverson Creek Cave**. Here we walked through a narrow passage Egyptian style, then climbed up & down a mud slope, crawled into some other very flat space. In the big entrance room they admired where Bill has a little patio; it looks like a nice place in summer.

10/4: McClung Cave, WV. Dave Socky: While driving back home from the Butler cave trip, I got a call. There was a rescue in McClungs going on. A group of nine cavers went into the historic entrance. A girl in the group dislocated her shoulder while arm rappelling down from Bat Bone Crawl. Mystik Miller said 'respond'. There were a bunch of fire trucks and ambulances right outside the entrance. When I got there, it was determined Some 20 minutes later cavers started coming out

of the cave. The injured girl soon emerged. She had a duct tape and webbing arm sling and was able to move along with minimal help. Nick Schmalenberger was there, and he got in as far as the nail climbs before the entrance canyon.

10/4 McClung Cave, WV. Nick Schmalenberger responded to the ongoing cave rescue at McClung's ... Mystik got there not too much later, and there were already a number of volunteer firefighters there as well. They had rigged a headline into the historic entrance, and 4 or so firefighters were already in the cave entrance room with a large floodlight. 4 of us including Mystik our leader checked with incident command and then proceeded into the cave. A few hundred feet in and just after the spot with some spikes hammered into mud for steps we met a group of cavers coming out of the cave, and we followed them back out.

10/7: Dunn's Cave, VA. Team 1: David Socky, Joe Zokaite, and Bob Alderson. Team 2: Bill Koerschner and Carol Zokaite. Bill and Carol worked on the main upper-level route while Joe and I surveyed down into the stream passage. Bob was the bolt climber checking out high leads. We surveyed 407 feet while Bill and Carol got 321 feet of survey for a total of 728.6 feet!

10/11: Maxwelton Cave, WV. David Socky, Rob Wardell, Erroll Glidden, Allie Shellhammer, and Payton Williams. We did mop up in Upstream Cove Creek. Nick Socky had supplied a list of about 10 places that needed cleanup - little loops, PUD shots, and leads/alcoves up high. We started back by the Airplane Room and worked our way back going downstream in Cove Creek. Lots of time spent searching for tie-in stations. It was a fun trip and my first "long" and "harder" trip since I broke my ribs. I did fine so I'm back in the game! We surveyed 586 feet in 12 hours.

10/14: Lowmoor Cave, VA. Mary Sue Socky, David Socky, Marian

(Continued on page 77)



Sketchy ladder in Speedwell Cave #2

(Trip Log continued from page 76)

McConnell, Joe Zokaite, Carol Zokaite, Jenna Fidler, and Jacob Fidler. An easy trip to Lowmoor instigated by Joe for Carol. We parked in the Sofa Section of the mine and went in via the mine. There were about 40 to 50 bats at the main overlook, so we didn't go there. We then slowly took the main route to the iron (now aluminum) ladder where we turned around. We went back via the access to the Capital Room. We went out via the natural entrance and ended up bushwacking on an old overgrown road until Joe found a good one. Good 3-hour trip all around.

10/16: Dunn's Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky and Joe Zokaite. We proceeded to where Bill K. and Carol Z. had left off on the last survey. The plan was to finish up there and then do the upstream stream passage to the sump. Well, it turned out there was more in the upper main passage than we had thought. And we still didn't finish by 4 pm. We got 25 stations and 465 feet of survey. There is probably a couple of hours left to finish the main upper cave. *(as it turned out, it took a full day to finish the survey)*

10/22: Dunn's Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaite, and Bill Koerschner—Team One. Bob Alderson and Rick Royer -Team Two. Joe and I surveyed the rest of the main upper level while Bill did profiles I hadn't done the week before. It took us all day to finish. Lots of sticky clay. We left leads, including a good virgin 20 foot pit which may need a hammer to enter. Bob & Rick did a bolt climb near the upstream end of the stream passage, netting 106 feet of survey before it ended. Team one surveyed 400 feet. 7 hr. trip.

10/24: Shenandoah Wild Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Dave Hubbard, Blaine Schubert, Davis Gunnin, Shea Gunnin, Casey Tucker, and Carl Amundson. Carol Tideman surface. Carl helped with the haul rigging with progress capture and then left because he wasn't feeling too well. The rest of us went all the way in to where the bones were at which point the science team split in two. Davis and Shea worked in the main dig site while Blaine and Dave Hubbard worked in the sight over the bypass. They two sites were actually connected by a very low crawl. I helped unload buckets of mud from Davis while Casey took a nap and wandered around staying warm. Around

3:30 pm the wrapped up bones were brought up out of the dig spot and packaged up. We then made our way out of the cave, passing packs of bones from person to person and hauling them up the drops. I got my pack hauled up and out of the cave - pretty nice. We were out by 6pm.

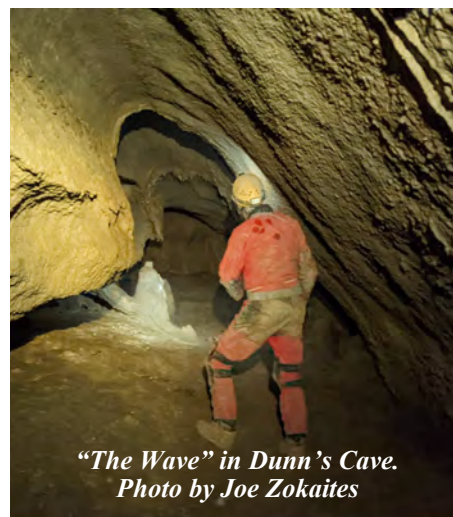
10/25: Triplet Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Keith Sweeney, Rich Lambert, Jason Sargent, Jim Schurman, Marissa Loftus, Andrew Newton, plus 3 others from RASS. I got to dig for once instead of just bucket count. Jim Schurman took over my bucket counting duties. I drilled and set two 8 inch straws (which were very successful), I moved large rocks down the crawl to where I loaded buckets. I dragged buckets through the crawl to load on the sled. I crawled and squirmed through the tight, narrow keyhole to get to the actual dig face. I did ok and didn't hurt a bit. Yeah. The dig face is at the end of a walking canyon. It is a 90-degree right hand turn and is a small rock tube at floor level. It's about a foot wide and a foot and a half high. You can see back about 12 to 15 feet, where it looks like, maybe, it might open up a little. It's hard to tell. But it will be a technical mining operation the whole way. Good news is, though, that spoils won't need to come all the way out. There is plenty of room for spoils in the walking canyon just before the dig. The digging on this day was mostly maintenance - making it easier to get in and out. Still a few more straws to open up the keyhole. We quit at 4:00pm.

10/29: Dunn's Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaite, Bill Koerschner, and Bob Alderson. Mop up in the main upper level. We first went to the Dark Hole. We rigged a rope, and Joe went down first. The Dark Hole was dead bottom at 22 feet deep. After the pit, Bill set to digging by the Dark Hole while the rest of us went further to where the other 20-foot pit was. Bob did this one, which again was dead bottom. It was 23 feet deep with 25 feet of survey at the bottom. Then we split up into three teams. Bob went on to make a better sketch of the high lead in the stream passage, while Joe and I tried to make a voice connection from different sections of the cave. No luck. Joe and I then joined Bill at his dig. Dry sand with a top layer of clay. It was easy digging. But not a one-day dig. After an hour or we collected Bob from the stream pas-

sage and exited after 6 hours. Survey this day was a piddling 92 feet.

11/1: McClung Cave, WV. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaite, Bob Alderson, and Nick Socky. We met at the Food Lion at 11am because this was not supposed to be a really long trip. We went to the Junction Connection passage (off the Breezeway) to bolt climb several high leads. The first one was a 40-foot water fall dome at GDS56. Nick placed one nail and two bolts to get up the 20-foot climb. Turned out the water was coming out of a 5" high horizontal crack another 20 feet up. There were no other leads. We all climbed up and surveyed the dome/room getting 100 feet of new cave. Our next goal was a waterfall climb near the Junction Complex. We didn't make it there because we did a high lead at GDS19. Bob did this one with two bolts - it was 12 foot off the floor, but really funky to get on and off the rope he installed. But the lead went. Bob explored a little over 100 feet with no end in sight. We surveyed two shots into the lead and left it rigged. It would have to be surveyed another day. Eight hours and 175 feet of survey!

11/5: 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, Joe Zokaite, Bob Alderson, and Mark Minton. We went to the upstream historic section to survey the high lead that Bob Alderson and company had climbed this past April. We surveyed over 300 feet and did not reach an end. More trips planned!



*"The Wave" in Dunn's Cave.
Photo by Joe Zokaite*

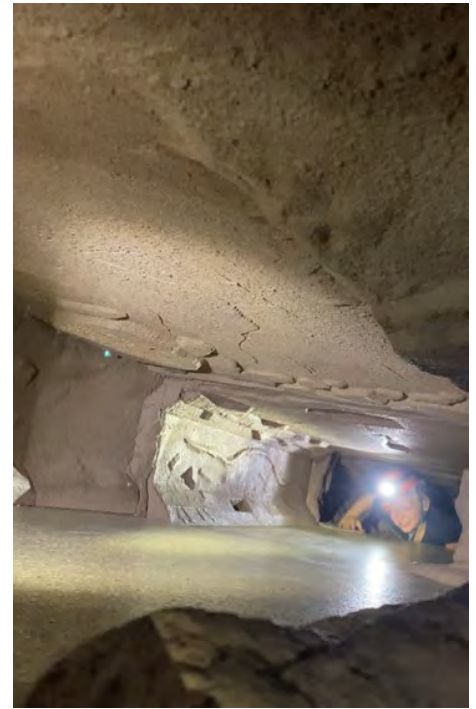
CaveSim at GoFest 2025 Report

Article by *Dave Jackson and Mary Sue Socky*

2025 GO Fest events were made possible by CCV funding

CaveSim opened to GO Fest attendees at 9AM on October 18, 2025, and remained open until 8PM. Dave Jackson and Geoff Lawrence organized the crew. We had sufficient volunteers to help with a variety of stations, including the mobile cave, vertical caving tower, squeezebox, and an information table where volunteers shared information about CCV, the NSS, local grottos, and show caves. We had a long line of visitors the entire day, and we used this line as an opportunity to educate kids and their parents about cave conservation and science. During this first day of GO Fest, kids and adults took 536 trips through the mobile cave.

On the second day of GO Fest, visitors took 506 trips through CaveSim, which means that during the two days of programming at **GO Fest visitors took 1042 trips through the mobile cave.** Several families told us that CaveSim was the only reason that they came back to GO Fest. While it is difficult to estimate exactly how many people participated, it is safe to say that we educated over 1000 people about cave conservation, science, and exploration during the GO Fest event.



Children explore inside the mobile cave. Photos by Dave Jackson.

Thank you so much for volunteering with CaveSim at the Roanoke VA GO FEST, October 18 and 19, 2025! Area cavers participated: Robert Balch, Susan Burr, Doug Feller, Barry Ferguson, Helene Ferguson, Jeff Huffman, Bambi

Marshall, Marian McConnell, Derek Nash, Jen Perdue, Nick Schmalenberger, Dave Socky, and MarySue Socky.

We were a small but mighty force!



A few of the people who helped run CaveSim during GO Fest, including, from left to right, Dave Jackson, Dave Socky, Mary Sue Socky, Nick Schmalenberger, Geoff Lawrence, and Bambi Marshall.

Photo by City of Roanoke staff.



Visitors entering and exiting the mobile cave during GO Fest with a CCV sponsor sign at right. Photo by Dave Jackson.

2025 ELECTION INFORMATION

The November meeting is always extremely busy and well attended, 'cause November 21 is the evening BRG officers are elected for the next year. Whether you want to run for office or railroad your caving buddies, a few basic rules must be followed, as described in the BRG constitution & bylaws:

- 1) Voting** - in order to vote, you must be an active (paid up) NSS member *and* a BRG member: aka Regular or Regular Family grotto member status.
- 2) Candidates** - to be an eligible candidate for office, you must be an active NSS member AND have been a BRG member for at least one year.
- 3) Term of Office** - for one year, ending in November. No officer can hold the same office for more than two years in a row. Elected officers are expected to attend all meetings, or be impeached and executed by the grotto.

BRG NOMINATIONS FOR NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

The current officers are eligible to run for another year. So, the following candidates fulfill all BRG qualifications and have been nominated for grotto office.

Chair:	David Socky	NSS # 16334
Vice Chair:	Susan Burr	NSS # 53888
Secretary:	Mary Sue Socky	NSS # 24206
Treasurer:	Marian McConnell	NSS # 37358

Nominations will remain open until elections on November 20, 2025. Even if you prefer not to run for office, **VOTE!** If you can't make it to the meeting, please be sure to fill out the absentee ballot (below) and mail or email it ASAP so it will get to Roanoke *before* November 20, 2025. You can also **email a ballot** to the email address listed below:

Mary Sue Socky
6572 Woodbrook Dr
Roanoke, VA 24018
sockymss@cox.net

Handy Dandy BRG Absentee Ballot

Chair: _____ •

Vice-chair: _____ •

Secretary: _____ •

Treasurer: _____ •

Submitted by: _____ •

(Your name) (NSS Number)