



Bat Week is coming!!

A Lesser Long-nosed bat (Leptonycteris yerbabuenae) on final approach to a Cardon Cactus in Central America.

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at various sites or homes on the fourth Saturday of most months at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, subject to changes by email. Membership dues are \$5 per year, due at the first of the year, and include SAG RAG subscription. Send dues to treasurer Melanie Jackson at 708 Yama St., Yreka CA 96097. Original material submitted for the SAG RAG, unless otherwise noted, is copyright to the SAG RAG. Within the caving community, such may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside the cave community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication, always welcome for consideration, to Dave Mundt, 1969 Bechelli Lane, Redding CA 96002 or mundt.dave@gmail.com

SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Dave Mundt

This issue includes the Cave Calendar for the remainder of the year. We also have Trip Reports (thank you Jason and Liz). CJ has sent a template for Trip Reports to the SAG email list, we hope this will make the report easier. Don't hesitate to ask questions if you have any!

Also – SAG recognizes Dave Smith for faithfully producing the SAG RAG for years! Well done, Dave, your contributions to SAG are gratefully acknowledged and appreciated!

DM

Cave Calendar through December 2025

1. October 25th – Mike Spiess house in Montague, 7:00 PM (106 Montair Drive, Montague CA 96064).
2. (No Meeting Thanksgiving Week)
3. December 6th – Christmas party at Steve's house

SAG minutes, April 26, 2025

Present: Liz and Jim Wolff, CJ and Kit McKinley, Steve Hobson, Sierra Heimel, James Newell, Dave Smith, and Suzanne Swanson

0645 Meeting called to order – introductions made

Treasury report: \$606.48 in the bank, \$116 in petty cash for a total \$722.48.

Trail/road to Adams Homestead has been blocked by Sierra Pacific Industries, less than 1 mile walk. Not much to be done about it without involving SPI. Will explore other roads to get into the area or just make a parking spot for walking to the cave.

Steve received a strange inquiry via the web page, CJ to follow up.

Forest Service is in turmoil, no money for anything other than fire mitigation.

2027 SAG regional – Steve has talked with the Legion and the Horseman's – they would both work. Jim & Liz are meeting with Emma at Lava Beds of the 16th to discuss using the park.

Fender's Ferry road has been washed out on the way to lower Gray Rocks, unclear if it will be fixed. Daniel Hewitt will be looking into the Forest Service fixing the road. Will cancel the Marble trip for this year due to Kit and CJ being unclear if they will be available.

Sierra discussed having a lit camp for Oregon Caves and would like to invite the grotto. She will provide information as it becomes available.

James discussed a possible clean up in Del Loma Cave.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

NOTE: There was no May meeting, thus no minutes for May.

SAG minutes, June 28, 2025 – Hat Creek Campout

Present: Steve Hobson & granddaughter Kiera Frandsen, Jim & Liz Wolff, Mike & Barbara Stufflebeam & friend Shirley Knight.

Steve called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm.

April minutes were approved as read. There was no May meeting.

Treasurers report: no change from April: \$606.48 in checking, \$116 in petty cash, total \$722.48. Two people joined the grotto but dues haven't been received yet.

Regional: No new 2027 regional updates currently.

Correspondence: KMCTF histories of beginning caving

Dick LaForge is going to be doing trail work to Bigfoot with a crosscut saw to clear the trail from July 12-14, 2025. All help would be welcome.

CJ McKinley talked to Anne Karoly of the Hat Creek Visitor Center and asked Liz if she would be willing to give a cave talk. After talking to Anne and discussing it at the meeting, it was decided to do it August 23, 2025, at 10 am at the visitor center. It would be open to campers and anyone else who wants to hear it. For the talk we will camp at Hat Creek campground and the August meeting will be the evening of the 23rd. Elizabeth Symington didn't get the lookout job this summer, so the meeting place had to be changed.

Cave trips: Sand Cave gates were checked, and the drainage is all intact, no trash noted.

Kit & CJ took a group ice caving and then through Gelsies Grotto.

Steve took visiting caver Marc Heins to Harris Mtn Cave then searched for Rediscovered Cave but found a new cave instead. The next day Kit, CJ & Steve toured the cave, naming it Bear Necessity Cave.

McKinley's & Wolff's went the next weekend to survey. Kit was coached on the book during the survey. Bear puns flew out of Kit while we were setting up the survey.

Steve, Kiera and McKinley's went out to Blue Ribbon and Cave Awaiting to play in the breakdown. They hiked across ½ mile of breakdown to get to the cave and found an almost smooth path back. Driving some of the other back roads they found Burgermeister Bridge.

Today we visited Trial Cave, Flashlight and Patrick's Caves; the road out to Christmas Tree is completely obliterated.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

SAG minutes for July TBD

SAG minutes August 23, 2025 – Hat Creek Campground (Pending Approval)

Present: Sharon & Thorne Bertrand, Barbara & Mike Stufflebeam, CJ & Kit McKinley, Melanie Jackson, Liz & Jim Wolff, Jason Palmer, Mike & Pat Spiess, Steve Hobson, Hannah Yakovac, and Andrew Lauer.

Treasurer's report: \$606.48 in checking, adding \$45 in dues collected and \$116 in petty cash for a total of \$767.48.

July minutes read and approved.

2027 Western Regional – Hoo-Hoo Park has approved for camping there. The Boy Scout lodge at the park has a kitchen. We would need to obtain portapotties and fencing. Western Cave Conservancy will be doing the dinner that Saturday along with a possible breakfast. Looking at the last weekend of September but not firm. September 16 Liz and Steve are meeting with Emma from Lava Beds to discuss the possibility of using the park.

Oregon Caves is hosting a lint camp clean up on October 23rd. Flier posted on the Facebook page and sent to the list server.

Brad Rust is talking about going out to Gray Rocks on September 13th, contact him if interested (since found out it has a closure order)

Next meetings September 27th – Liz & Jim's in McCloud

October 25th – Mike Spiess house in Montague

December 6th – Christmas party at Steve's house

Meeting adjourned to go caving.....

SAG minutes September 27, 2025 (Pending Approval)

Present: Steve Hobson, Melanie Jackson, Jim & Liz Wolff

No minutes or treasurers report were given.

Discussion of the possible venues and activities for the 2027 regional meeting with pros & cons of each possible site, plus caving, swag & possible speleo-ed were the entire meeting. We are leaning toward McCloud as the site due to the costs involved. We want to keep the costs & regulations down.

Proposed dates: Sept 17-20 or Sept 24-27, 2027. Possible number of participants: 120-150.

Lava Beds: no amenities other than camping w/flush johns; current costs for holding the meeting there include:

- \$25 Park entry fee per vehicle
- Special Use Permit required, \$50 non-refundable fee: include fire bays & conference room use w/tables, chairs & AV equipment; no wifi hookup, cell signal spotty; no power for recharging phone/tablet; no showers; *be specific & STATE clearly that all fees charged are “not for profit”*;
- Camping: \$20/campsite/night with up to 8 people per site; group site is \$60/night limit of 40 people; overflow parking in Loop A & at the VC
- RC use \$65/6 people/night; trailer pads ~\$10/night, hookups available but extra; reserve 1 year in advance; kitchen available for WCC dinner/breakfasts held in the big WR tent
- Special cave trips pre-reg only (eg: Crystal Ice, Steamboat Frank, Post Office, Fossil Ice, or Fern?)
- No gas/market/dining/motels available: go to Merrill, Tule Lake, Dorris or K Falls

McCloud:

- Camping: Hoo-Hoo Park, gazebos? soccer fields; reserve 1 year in advance, currently \$100/day; RV parking no hookups; RV's in Dance Country Park; parking on Shasta Ave; Wifi & cell signal strong, power for recharging phone/tablet, create mobile 'hotspot'?; no showers
- Other necessities: port-a-john rental, meeting rooms, kitchens, WCC dinner/breakfasts use big WR tents

Scout Hall, \$___/day + kitchen extra; Legion, \$50/day + kitchen; Horseman's \$300/day w/kitchen; Friday's Resort.

- Security required: badges/stickers for cars;
- Ice/food availability: McC Market; dining: White Mtn, Bogey's, Floyd's, Meat Market, Sage,
- Motels/B&B: several in town; 2 gas stations

Costs for all venues:

- Guidebook (Mike Stark get 2021 guidebook info from Joel?) (w/SAG history?)
- WCC dinner/breakfasts/auction?
- WR meeting Saturday evening
- SAG Sunday breakfast – but not if WCC does breakfasts

Goodies, swag, stuff:

- SAG history (or part of guidebook?)

- Canvas tote bag with logo. Proposed logo revamp 2010 logo to reflect new dates
- Logo on pin/patch/stickers? *Spencer?*
- T-shirt – SAG patch reproduction on front shoulder, detailed cave maps (by t-shirt size?) on back; GHG logo modified, not same color as 2010
- Mug, cup w/logo?

Possible Activities:

- Caving: McCloud: SMLH, limestones; LABE; Volcanic tour; guided &/or self
- Howdy party on Friday strictly BYOB; snacks provided?
- JD Howard & Polly Merrill – a living history presentation

Proposed Speleo-ed classes: 1-3 days pre-regional; costs separate: pre-reg only, limited participation

- Publications / session materials copying costs; added camping days
- Survey notetaking, data reduction, cartography: 8 only; Liz
- Photography: limit? Michael Stark, Dick LaForge?
- Rescue (SPAR class): limit? Bouf?
- Biology of local caves: limit? Tom R?
- LABE project: Possible graffiti & micro-trash clean up in Catacombs



BAT WEEK
October 24-31

Celebrating Bats and Their Vital Role in Our Ecosystems!

Bat Week is an annual international celebration dedicated to raising awareness about the critical roles bats play in maintaining healthy ecosystems around the world. Held from October 24-31, Bat Week is organized by a diverse group of representatives from conservation organizations and government departments across North America. The event strives to highlight the importance of bats and the ongoing conservation efforts needed to protect these incredible creatures.

Why Bats Matter

Bats have graced our planet for more than 50 million years, contributing essential benefits to ecosystems worldwide. With over 1,450 species, bats make up about 20% of all mammal species, making them the second-largest group of mammals on Earth. Bats are unique as the only mammals capable of true flight, and their longevity is remarkable, living on average 3.5 times longer than other mammals of similar size.

Fun Facts about Bats

1. Bats are the only mammals that fly. Scientists classify them into an order called “Chiroptera” which means “hand-wing.”
2. The Mexican free-tailed bat is the fastest animal in horizontal speed, reaching 99 mph (160 km/h), and, at the highest altitude recorded for any bat—10,800 ft (3,300 m).
3. Fruit-eating bats can carry fruits up to 20 to 40% of their body weight.
4. Nectar bats possess tongues longer than their body length and can move it faster than any mammal.
5. Small bats (less than 200 grams) are found all over the world. They have large ears, small eyes, and small bodies, and commonly use echolocation to find food. They eat a wide range of food, including insects, nectar, fruit, frogs, mice, fish, and blood.

And some good news: Wildlife authorities in Wisconsin report that the state's bat populations are rising for the third year in a row.

TRIP REPORTS:

Daystar Cave by Liz Wolff – May 31, 2025

During a trip to Porcupine Cave on September 28, 2024, I went out to chase down some gps leads. Hiking up alongside a monster a’a patch I found all the leads, only one of which went anywhere. It was a low crawl with a pillar in the entrance. Being a hot day, I retreated into a patch of shade to take a water and lunch break. But what is this??? The best hole of the day, hidden in the shade, a star-shaped entrance that dropped about four feet to the top of a breakdown, with darkness extending in all directions. I was by myself so didn’t enter it, just gps’d it and headed back toward the cars. The Porcupine group had either rappelled or climbed a ladder to enter and explore the cave, putting some vertical training into practice. They were Kit & CJ McKinley, Jim Wolff, Steve Hobson, Melanie Jackson and Dave Smith (others?).

A few days later Kit & CJ went out to check the one low surface tube, found about 35 feet of passage and named it Surface Clover. They went further north to check the one entrance I hadn’t hiked out to and found about 50 feet of low passage

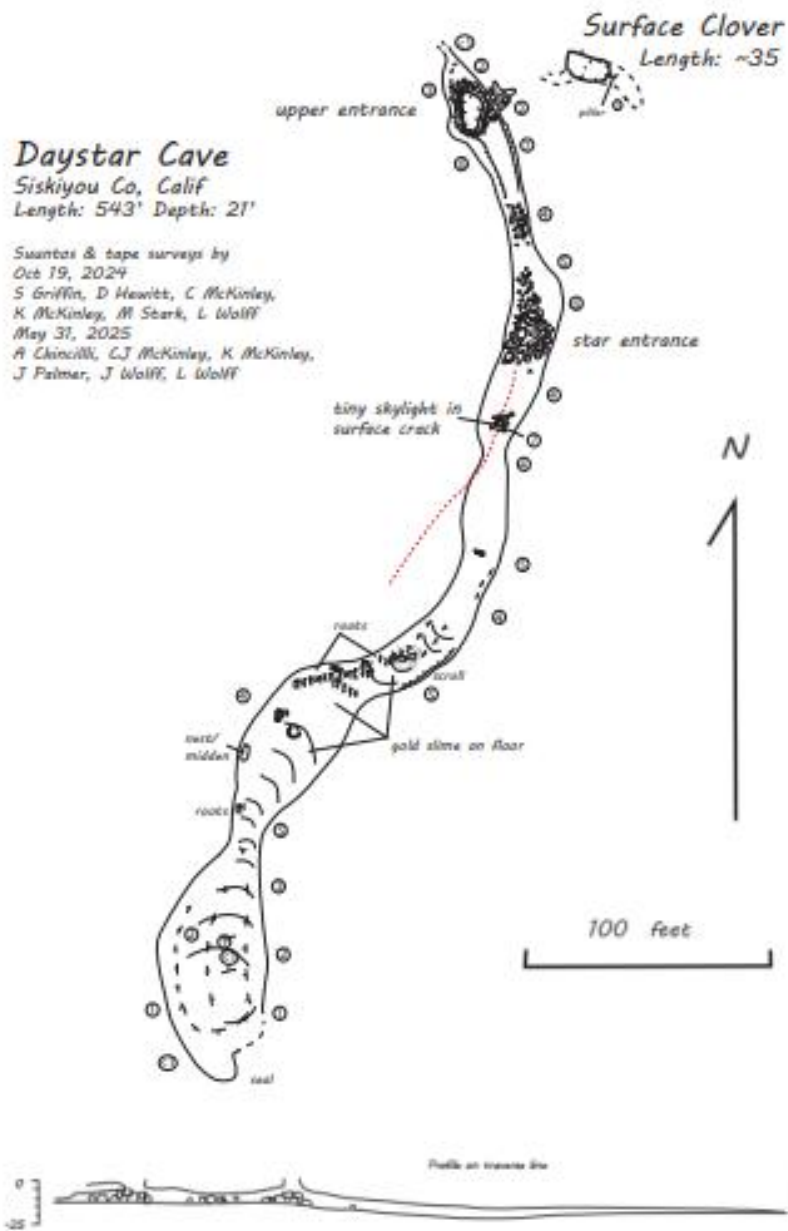
that ended up in a room six feet tall. Due to the shape of the cave, they called it Double Sideswipe Cave. The other end of the curved sink had a very tight entrance into a short room. On their way back to the cars they found my star-shaped entrance, wondering how they could have missed it on the way upflow; as I had done! They entered to check it out and found going cave with mostly walking and stooping sized passage ending at a very low passage. The star entrance led to a short passage north and another entrance with passage surrounding it. CJ estimated about 500 feet total for both the north and south ends. In the south there were curtains of roots crossing the passage in places.

Following a week of bad weather Kit & CJ, Michael Stark & Stephanie Griffin, Daniel Hewitt and I returned to survey the cave on October 19, 2024. We started at the upper entrance, worked our way laboriously around the upper entrance and into the main cave. Being a sketching school day with Kit & Steph both keeping a book alongside me, it was a slow day. CJ, who had been learning to do the physical survey and set stations, and Michael, totally new to survey, ran the tape and instruments. They did a good job.

All the time we surveyed, Daniel went looking for bugs. He found several white bugs and two bats in the south end of the cave. By the time we had gotten to the star-shaped entrance it was getting late, so we called it a day. Leaving after 278.5 feet of survey, we found several other interesting looking holes while hiking back to the cars.

Finally able to get back to Daystar on May 31, 2025, another survey sketching school picked up the survey from the Star entrance ready to head into the unknown. Anna Chinchilli, Jason Palmer, Kit & CJ McKinley, and Jim & Liz Wolff worked on the survey. Jim helped CJ with station setting and instrument refreshers, while Liz got Jason started on his first day of keeping the book and reminded Kit and Anna how to start their notes. Support on the surface was done by Daniel Hewitt and Marc Heins; they were holding the shade down well when we finally got out of the cave. They had gone off to try to find the Original Porcupine Butte Lava Tube but hadn't found it. It had been elusive for years, hiding out beyond a huge a'a lava patch.

The survey progressed from the star entrance to a room 41 feet wide and mostly less than a foot tall. While note-taking we noticed a fly bat and a butterfly in the cave. There was a mildly cauliflower floor in most of the cave, parts of which had golden slime coating it. Roots festooned the ceiling in portions of the cave, and one area had moderately wide cracks in the ceiling which let in dirt, and small critters had left green leaves on a breakdown block under the crack. In a narrow place in the passage pahoehoe ripples began showing up flowing down the cave, and then we found ripples coming from the other direction, a backflow from the very end of the cave. Jason got as close as he could to the end of the cave from passage less than a foot high and could see the lava seal. Total survey for the cave is 599.9 feet long and 21 feet deep. It has two entrances and is mainly stoop-walking sized.

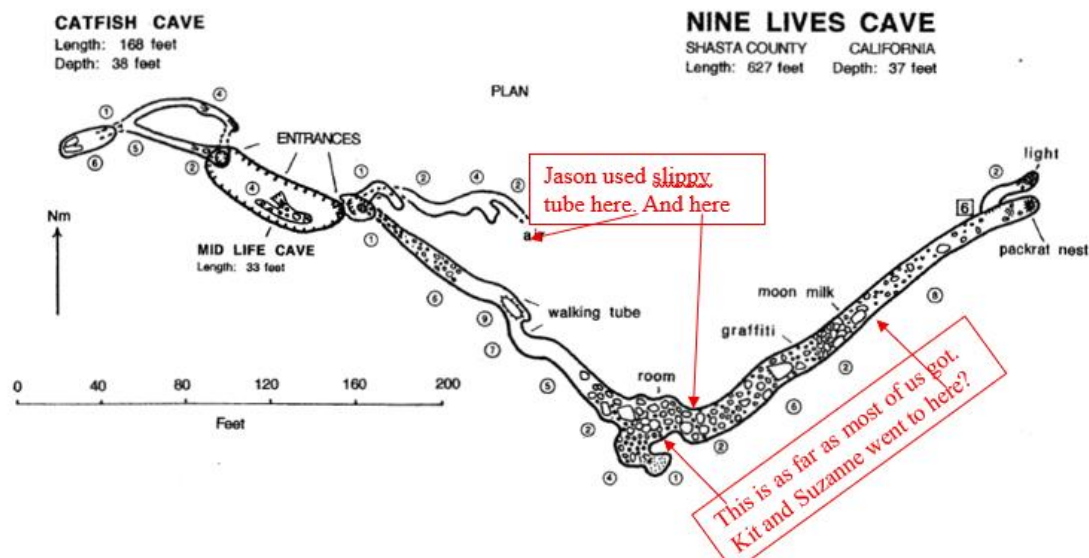


Nine Lives, Catfish, Bargain Basement and Pie Crust – by Jason Palmer, August 24, 2025

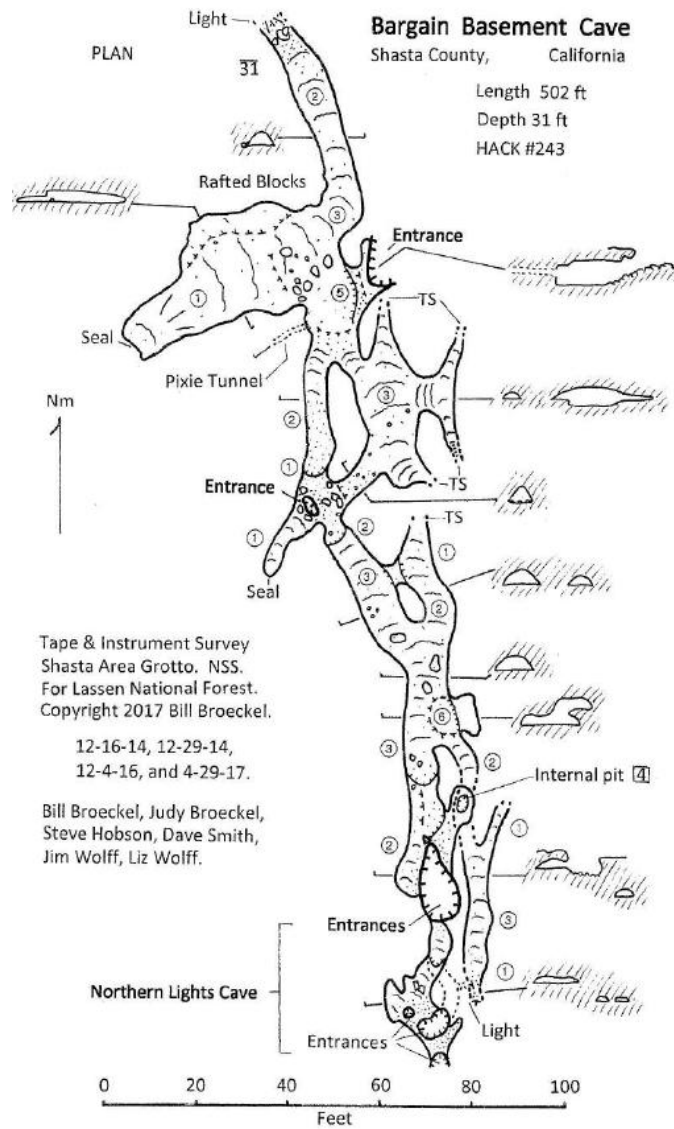
Kit McKinley was the Trip Leader, attendees included Kit, Jason, Suzanne, Sam (second timer and Suzanne's brother) and Sofia (Sam's wife). The caves had very cool flow patterns and lava colors, and the "squeeziness" was rated as medium, unless you wanted to go into very squeezey crawls! Access to Nine Lives and Catfish was up Spattercone trail, Bargain Basement is off trail.

The diversity of experience level and ambition on this trip made things a little wonky, and people were separated for perhaps too long for the comfort of some. We had an absolute beginner, and Nine Lives isn't exactly the best cave for an absolute beginner. However, Sofia pushed herself and entered parts of the cave that many more experienced cavers would probably pass on due to intense crawling and slithering. We also had Suzanne who was coming into her own as a caver and finding that she was comfortable with tightness that scared her before, so she was off to the races. Jason, as usual, can't sit still, so he too was off in the obscure recesses using his new toy, CJ's medical device technically termed "slippy tube" to get into tight spots (none of which went anywhere). This differential stretched the group out quite a bit, but due to Kit's leadership, nothing unsafe occurred.

Watching Sofia break out of her comfort zone again and again as Nine Lives seemed to end but then would just keep going, and going, and ... we never did get to the end. We'll have to go back. Catfish has a fun tube that goes back toward the entrance, and from its end, you can communicate with people at the entrance through a few holes. I called that cave Communiqué for that reason, until I saw that it was already named on the map. Also, the views of Lassen as we searched for Bargain Basement were amazing, plus we found a bunch of interesting holes for future exploration. We were caught in a nice thunderstorm with rain that cooled us off on our walk back to the vehicles.



Jason, looking very “cave-ish”



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STAMP

TO:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1	Cover: Bat Week!
Page 2	SAG RAG Summary & Cave Calendar through December.
Page 3 - 6	Meeting Minutes – April, (no May mtg.) June, July (TBD), Aug & Sept pending approval.
Page 6	Bat Week Article.
Page 7 - 12	Trip Reports – Daystar, Nine Lives, Catfish, Bargain Basement, Pie Crust = Liz Wolff and Jason Palmer.