

SHASTA AREA GROTTO NEWSLETTER

THE SAG RAG

May - June 1991

Vol. 10 No. 3

OREGON CAVES RESTORATION REPORT by Jay Swofford

The Oregon Caves National Park cave restoration is going quite well. The Arnold Air Society at Oregon State University worked on the North and South Canyon Passages. They uncovered a connection to the upper portion of the Vandose Canyon in the South Canyon area. In the North Canyon area they moved the rubble out to the tour route for easy removal by the National Park Service winter crew. They uncovered the tight passage on the south side so you no longer have to crawl through rubble to get into it.

I have put in several hours on my own removing random bolts and screws from the walls. These were left from the old lighting system. Also, lint and debris was removed from several formations in the cave.

The Jefferson State Grotto removed the water pipe running from the Rimstone Room to Paradise Lost. They also restored the chunks of plutonic dike to the center of the room where they should have naturally fallen. They collected various debris and piled it for removal by the NPS winter crew. It was a lot of fun, and we all had a good time.

We are looking to get one volunteer group a month. These groups will be assigned different tasks depending on how many are in the group. Large groups will remove rubble from the Canyon Passages. We also need more mapping done.

The breeze in the south end is blowing past Echo Dome and into a section marked as dead end on the map. A through inspection of this area needs to be made on a hot day or a very cold night. Recent exploration has shown a few new areas in this section that need to be mapped.

A search of old records show the San Francisco Examiner made an 1894 journey into areas that are not on today's cave map. A crew of exceedingly thin and agile cavers is needed to explore this area. Two months of research and cave time has led me to find one more room that needs to be mapped, and what I believe is the 1894 Examiner crew's trail. This area is located off the Jules Verne's Well area. From their records we should discover "Solomon's Bedstead", "The Big Room", several chasms and domes and "Monte Cristo's Treasure Chamber". The last contains a lake and several bottle-brush stalactites. Air flow is present in the passage I have located, although in minimal amounts.

A study is scheduled for the cave late this year or next. The objective is to find the most compatible trail surface and system and lighting system. The wooden airlock door is scheduled to be removed, and only one door will be left in the Connecting Tunnel. Historical research indicates that only two or three baffles or doors and the restoration of two areas will restore the historic airflows in the cave. Historically they were enough to blowout pitch torches and carbide lamps.

Ed. Comment A lost section of cave. WOW. This is enough to make a person want to get out the old brain bucket and put new batteries in the flashlight. SAG will continue to participate in the Oregon Cave restoration project, and a date and time for our next work weekend will be arranged in the near future. Jay is the Oregon Caves National Park Senior Guide.

The SAG RAG is published bi-monthly by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Editors: Jim and Liz Wolff, PO Box 865, McCloud, Ca. 96057. Printing: Ray Miller. Grotto meetings are held the second Friday of the month at 7:30 pm. Meeting places are announced in the newsletter. Individual and family memberships are \$6 per year, due January 1, and prorated by quarter.

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NEW EDITOR SOUGHT FOR SAG RAG by Jim & Liz Wolff

Jim and Liz Wolff will be stepping down as SAG RAG editors. The July/August issue will be our last. It's time for new blood to take over.

We've spent 6 1/2 years editing The RAG. The first year or two we pecked away at the Facit portable typewriter, which later became a GE electric, and then the Tandy 1000TX PC we now use. We thought it was going to be a temporary job (ha!). Little did we know that it would be a multi-year respons-

ibility! We have had some good times doing The SAG RAG, but now it is time for someone with new ideas and energy to try their hand at editing it.

The person(s) that take the RAG on must understand that long hours will be spent drafting the final copy, pasting up maps and drawings, printing, labeling and mailing The RAG, and be willing to admit your mistakes, but it is all worth it!

SUBSTITUTE EDITOR-TORIAL by Ray Miller

Jim and Liz have spent untold hours over the years keeping the Shasta Area Grotto together by solving the many problems created by a small membership spread over a vast geographic area. Looking through a SFBC newsletter I see where the members they may have to drop this year for non payment of dues is about 3 times our total membership. We have members from Red Bluff to Rogue River, Oregon, and from Eureka to east of Susanville.

The cohesive forces keeping the Grotto functioning are the strong commitment of the Wolffs to the "cause" and The SAG RAG. I'm sure their commitment will continue, but their determination to relinquish responsibility for the RAG is understandable. For a long time they have been trying to pass the RAG editorship to others. This seems to be their way of saying enough is enough.

To date no one willing to accept the job has stepped forward. It has been suggested the editorship be rotated among volun-

teers. With three volunteers, each would have two issues to put out each year. Due to a lack of continuity this would be a lousy way to run the show, but it may be the way we have to go. I personally feel the end of the RAG would mean the end of the Grotto.

Word processing would be a nice feature for a prospective editor to have, but it is not necessary. I understand that BC, back in the dark ages Before Computers, people got out their old Iron Planos and actually wrote stuff directly on paper. Until I researched the matter I thought correction fluid was just something we drank.

No matter how the editorship problem is solved we should be able to continue printing and mailing from Mount Shasta as in the past. Just send us the camera ready copy. There are several computers locally that can generate mailing labels, and a copy machine is available at reasonable rates. I'm sure we can sweet talk Liz into providing artwork periodically.

To summarize, Gang, **H E L P !!**

The 1992 NSS Convention offers trips to Mammoth Cave August 1-9, 1992. Mammoth is only two and a half hours away from the convention site.

NAVSTAR GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM by Ray Miller

I'm sure most of you, like myself, have driven down unmarked forest roads not knowing where you were. Then you experience that great moment of relief when a welcoming yellow K-tag comes into view. Or, if you are a cave surveyor, how often would you be willing to trade your third source of light to know where the #)%&@* you are when you stick your head out of a hole? Well sir, how would you like to have a completely portable 2 pound K-tag that would provide location and elevation data second by second? It exists, and it is available to the public. Now.

The Global Positioning System (GPS) uses a network of satellites that transmit time signals while orbiting 10,900 miles above the earth. Push a couple of buttons on the hand-held receiver, and it processes time signals from 4 satellites to give you a 3-D fix on your location. Wow.

Big GPS receivers costing big bucks ride in trucks, if you can afford a truck after buying the receiver. Their accuracy is within inches if the Department of Defense allows readings that accurate. The precise shape of the earth is classified because that information is critical to spacecraft and missile navigation and to tracking systems. The signals can be modified selectively for "accuracy denial", but the entire worldwide system always has

the same degree of accuracy. In other words, if something like the Gulf War demands the highest degree of accuracy the entire system has the highest degree of accuracy. Current government policy limits normal accuracy to 300 feet horizontally, 500 feet vertically and 175 nanoseconds in universal time. Bad news.

A single hand-held receiver is capable of accuracy of 80-100 feet. Using 2 hand-held receivers together brings the accuracy of the system to 10-17 feet. Reading latitude and longitude from a USGS topo map is usually accurate to within 50 feet. In case you have forgotten how to write, all this neat information can be utilized by plugging the receiver into a computer in the field, or data can be extracted from the receiver's memory at home.

Now for the really bad news. If you want to be the first kid on the block to have your own GPS receiver plan on a dent in your bank account of about \$4,000 - each. The receivers are expected to improve and the price drop to around \$1,000 "within several years". Right now the U.S. of Moneybags is taking much of the receiver production, and that holds the price up. SAG could use a couple of units very nicely, and if anyone out there would care to donate, the Magellan Systems Corp. puts out a very serviceable unit. Thanks in advance.

CORRECTIONS - We GOOFED, BADLY!! From the SAGRAG Editors*

1 In Dick LaForge's Lechuguilla Cave Rescue article: Charlie Festerson is from Sonora; the rescuers did not camp in any delicate areas of the cave; only one place was chiseled to provide passage for the stretcher. We are sorry for any misunderstandings that may have arisen.

2 In Dick LaForge's Lechuguilla Cave Rescue article several errors were made while editing his article for length, even though it was very good reading. Apologies to Dick for making it seem that they had done things

that would have destroyed some very delicate areas of the cave. The rescuers did not destroy any delicate areas, and we are sorry that it may have seemed so to our readers. Also an apology is due Dick for a comment that should have been attributed to the editors of the RAG itself, in his newsletter reviews. We are very sorry for any misunderstandings that may arise from this statement. And lastly, there is no ongoing argument between Lilburn and KMCTF cavers (and as far as we are concerned, the matter is finished!)

* These apologies are noted in the pdf version of issue 10(2) - pdf ed.

CAVERS CALENDAR

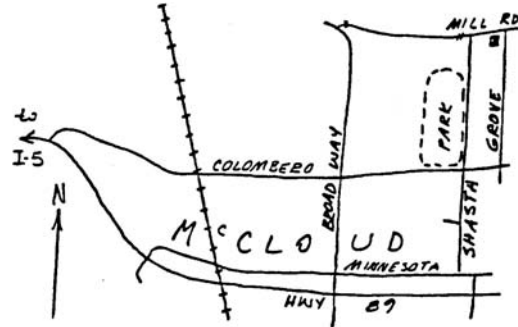
Aug 30 - Sept 2 SAG trip to Eastern Nevada limestones. Contact Neils Smith, (916) 254-6764 for info.

Sept 27-29 We host Western Regional at Harris Springs. BE THERE.

Aug 3-7, 1992 NSS Convention, Salem, Indiana.

July 12. Grotto meeting at Kangaroo Mountain. See notice on last page of this RAG.

August 9. Grotto meeting at Wolff's, 516 Mill Rd., McCloud. 964-3123. See location map to the right.



MEETING MINUTES

May 1991 meeting held at Reel's in Weed. Present: J Kottinger, J & L Wolff, N Smith, G & D Reel. Treasurers report: \$290.90.

Correspondence: Three Level Ice Cave register was pulled and sent to Cave Use Study. Two letters received subscribing to The SAG RAG, one letter requesting membership info.

Old Business: Regional: Trip made to field check location map and campground facilities. Equipment rental/loan/purchase finalized. Logo design chosen.

New Business: Wolff's announced retirement as SAG RAG editors effective September 1.

June 1991 meeting at Subway Cave was changed to an informal field trip. None of the Grotto officers could attend. Sharon Smith, Neils' wife, was hospitalized. Jim K. and Dorothy Reel were both out of town, and Ray was entertaining the spouses of a Congressional group checking on hootie owls and such.

DICK'S NEWSLETTER REVIEW by Dick LaForge

This month your trusty plagiarist almost forgot to write the newsletter review, as he was up in the Portland, Oregon area doing some cave related vacationing. First, he gave an hour long slide show (3-D, of course) to the Western Regional Convention not of the NSS, but of the PSA (Photo Society of America). This is the nation's largest amateur photo society, and consists mostly of senior citizens. These groups love the cave show as it is something new to them, and they are a very lively

and curious bunch. One could certainly do worse when one grows old.

I also did a slide show at a meeting of the Willamette Valley Grotto, after a meeting notable for its almost interminable business and discussion. Well, somebody has to do these things. I also showed Peter and Ann Bosted's slides (copies that I have) of the rescue at Lechuguilla. These prompted a lot of thought and discussion. I am hoping that this incident will increase safety

awareness and increase cavers' interest in rescue techniques and training.

A few days later I went out with Marble Mountains regular Cynthia Ream, Bob ???, and my wife Kathy's son Jon-Erik to visit lava tubes. Make that singular, as it rained heavily and we only got to one. It was a good one, however, with little breakdown and lots of long winding tunnel. It was dripping everywhere inside because of the rain. At one point the basalt of the flow had fallen away, exposing the volcanic ash the flow rested on. We could crawl about 30 feet in a washed-out space with the flow as a ceiling and gritty ash as the floor. There were several casts of logs in the ceiling, and at the end of this little passage one pops up into a small chamber about 3 feet in diameter and 3 feet high. It is actually the cast of a tree stump, obvious by its shape, with the alligator skin texture of charred wood impressed into the lava. We spent a lot of time taking pictures, easily breaking the local record for time spent on a trip into this cave. (OK, Dick - you could at least tell us what state it's in. Ed)

From the SFBC (San Francisco

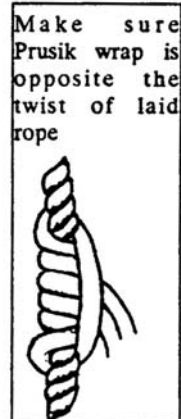
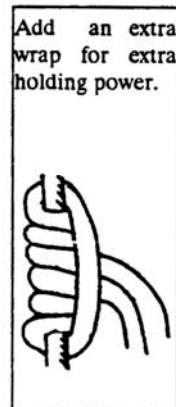
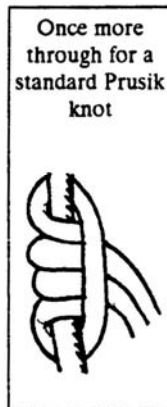
Bay Chapter) Newsletter for May, 1991 comes illustrations of the Prusik knot, which every vertical caver should know. If you make a loop of 8 or 9 mm kernmantle rope that is about 3 feet long (made from about 10 feet of rope) you will have a Prusik loop. Tie this with a Prusik knot onto the rope you are climbing, and put the other end through your seat carabiner. You have an extra ascender for safety, to aid in crossing knots, for emergencies, etc. One of these saved my life once (or at least made it easier). I was the first down a 300 foot pit in the 'Guads once, only to find the rope was 20 feet off the floor. I had attached to myself a Gibbs at one foot and at my seat carabiner, just for this sort of possibility. I could put the foot Gibbs on the rope easily (after locking off the rappel rack), but could not put on the higher one. It has to go above the rack, remember. It takes 3 hands - one to hold the shell, one for the pin and one to hold oneself up to the rope. Was I stuck? No. I just got my Prusik loop out of my pack and whipped it on the rope above the rack, and hung by it, undid the rack and put on the Gibbs. Had I not had the loop, I might still be there.

Knot of the Month: The Prusik Knot

Text and illustrations by Cindy Heazlit

Used for going up fixed ropes.

The Prusik rope should be 2-3 mm thinner than the climbing rope.

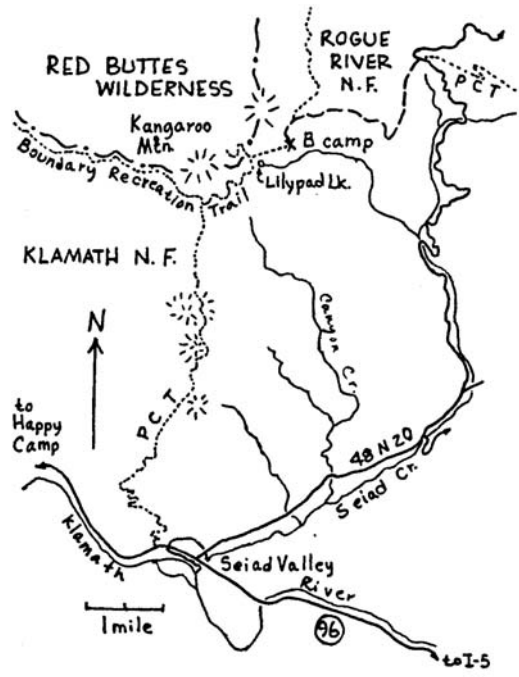


J U L Y M E E T I N G

July 12. Grotto meeting at "B" camp, Kangaroo Mtn., Red Buttes Wilderness. Jefferson State Grotto has changed their meeting date to accommodate us - please be there.

From Seiad Valley, on Hwy 96 between I-5 and Happy Camp, take forest road 48N20 at the east end of "town" and go up Seiad Creek. The road an old road to the Kangaroo Mtn. karst. Several small caves are known. The marble is heavily banded is paved to start with. Near the ridge top at about 5850' elevation turn west on dirt road and travel to "B" Camp. Marc Sorenson sez the road is OK for 2WD vehicles, and the route will be signed.

Saturday AM we'll hike 1 or 2 miles on and very beautiful inside the caves. Most of the caves are at 5750'-6000' elevation and wet. An old mine is located at the top of the karst.



The SAG RAG
 c/o Jim and Liz Wolff
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