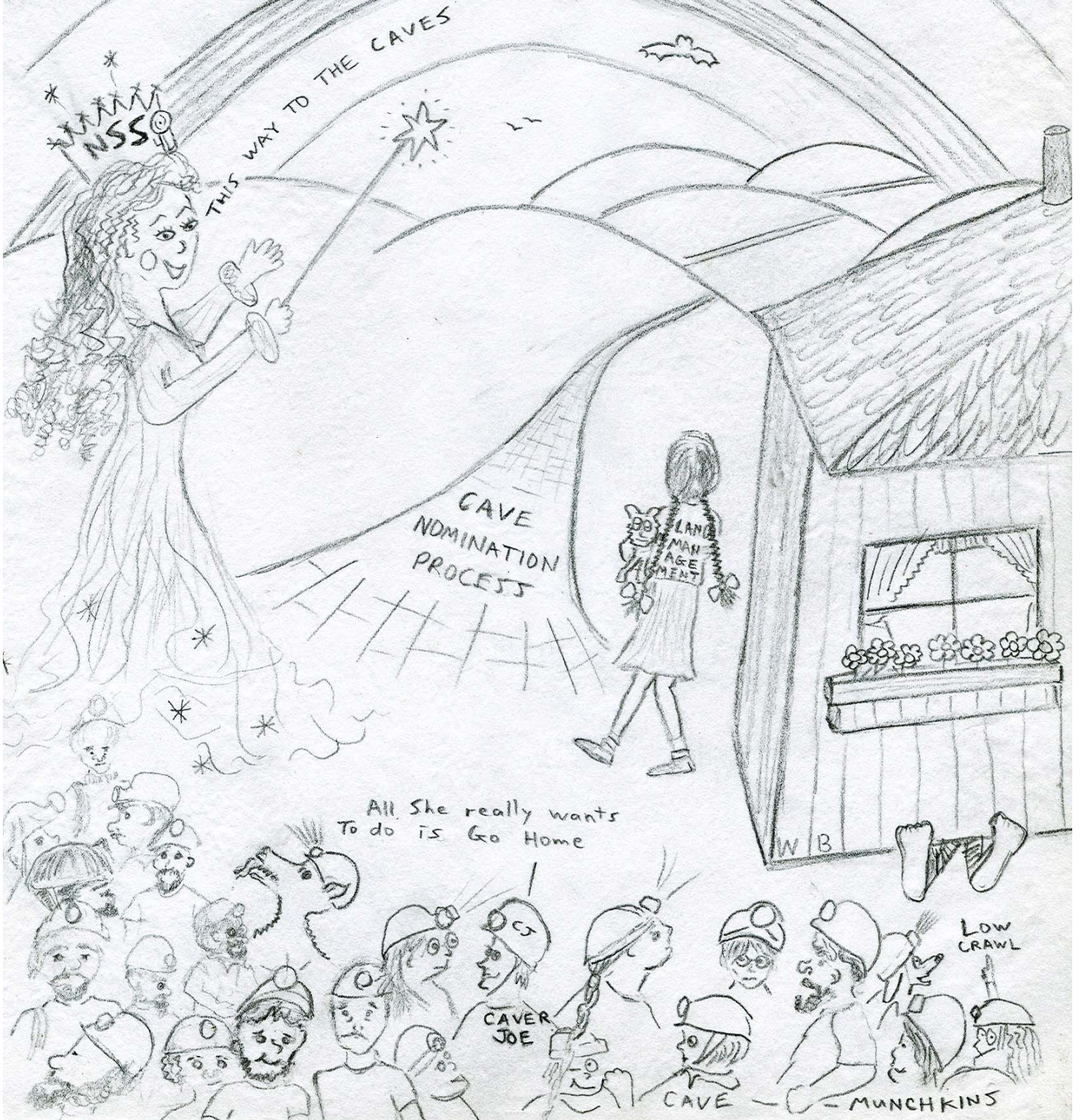


SAG RAG

VOL 14 NUM 1

JAN - FEB 1995

No
Place
Like
Home



The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society, Grotto meetings are held at different locations the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, Membership dues are \$6 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097. Material intended for the next newsletter is due by the 10th of the even month.

Dear Grotto Members and friends,

THANKS!

I would like to thank all those members that put some hard time into "the cause" this year.

Among those I would personally like to thank are: Bill and Judy Broeckel for doing such a great job editing our newsletter, the SAG RAG. And there is Dick LaForge for editing all the exchange newsletters and supplying us with nuggets of wisdom and other bits of news that comes his way. And we can't forget Ray Miller, for his selflessness in volunteering to step in and do the Nov/Dec SAG RAG and help out Bill and Judy keep the newsletter on time. And how about those nameless cavers who supplied the FS with input, when they were asked for review of Forest EAR documents. Or, how about those who submitted nominations for significant caves during the Forest Service's first round of nominations. Without those nominations, our Forest managers wouldn't be aware that they had any caves at all! There are still others who supplied the grotto with moral and physical support during all our projects this year, for instance the restoration at Oregon Caves National Monument. Thanks go to Ray M. and Jim Kottlinger for installing our Jot Dean Ice Cave register. Lastly, to all those members that hosted grotto meetings at their houses, we really appreciate your hospitality. And, to all of you who have played a part in this grotto's history, thanks friends!



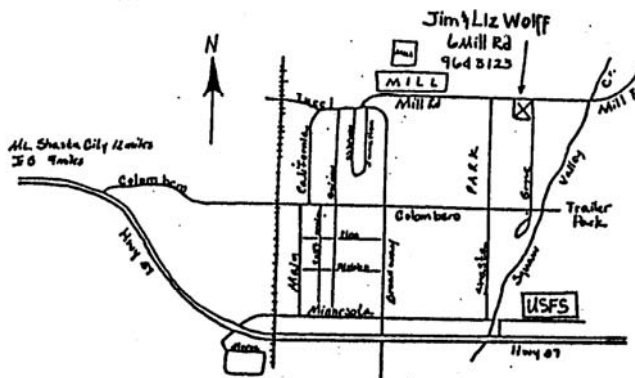
Jim Wolff
X-Chairman

CAVING CALENDAR

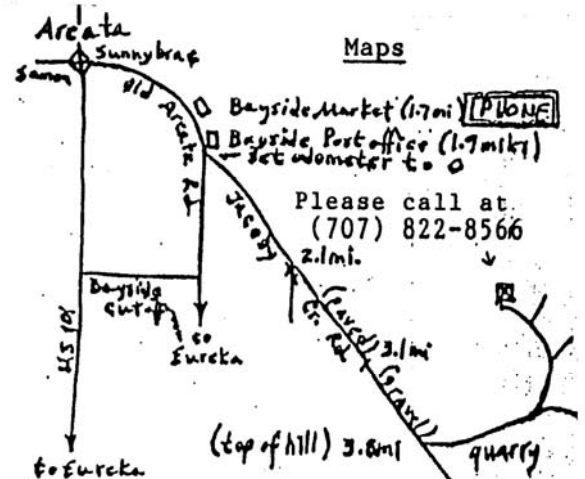
- Feb 24-26 Oregon Caves Restoration – Rubble Crew Contact Bill Fitzpatrick (503) 779-1201.
- Mar 10 Grotto meeting at Wolff home – 7:30 PM.
- Mar 11 Marble Mountain Cave Project Contact Bill Fitzpatrick (503) 779-1201. Bill plans to open the cave most week-ends in March and April, and hopes to remove all debris, record detailed survey data, and do some restoration work on the cave.
- Apr 8 Grotto meeting at Fritzke home – 7:30 PM. Spring week-end on the coast with many possibilities for fun activities. Mark has completely eradicated all poison oak from the entire area. There may be some opportunity for pretend vertical caving.

COVER Judy and the cave Munchkins are asking why cavers should nominate caves for which "no action" is recommended. ?

Maps to the Meetings



McCloud meeting Mar 10



Arcata meeting Apr 8

The Oregon Caves Bobsled Team
or
Someone that went THUD! in the Night
 by Liz Wolff

Melanie Jackson, Neils Smith, Bill & Cheryl Kenney, and Jim & Liz Wolff of SAG all met with the volunteer "cave sitters" at the lodge in Oregon Caves National Monument on the night of January 20, 1995. We were met the next sunny but cold morning by Bill Fitzpatrick with 2 teenage sons and 2 sons' teenage friends, Ernie Coffman, 2 Mikes and an Eric of SOG at an introductory slide program given by John Roth of the monument staff. We were joined in the cave by Chas Davis who took a publicity picture in the Ghost Room. Then the different work parties went their separate ways.

Bill & Cheryl elected to climb in the North Canyon passage with cave sitter Greg Western and ?? from New Jersey. They couldn't locate the survey points that should be there so exited the cave for lunch. Jim & Liz, Neils, Melanie and Ernie with cave sitter Paul Showalter went to the South Room area to resketch the cave walls and other features that hadn't been done to any exacting standard during the 1971-4 resurvey of the cave. The rest, with cave sitters Kevin and Dave, went to Nielands' Passage to remove rubble.

After lunch the teenaged contingent of SOG elected to play in the snow and began a bobsled run on the path to the "110" entrance of the cave. The rubble and climbing crews re-entered the cave to rubble and climb, but the resketch crews didn't get out of the cave for lunch til 2:30 and had to be out by 4 so didn't go back in after lunch.

Dinner was at 5 and people who wanted to go back into the cave did seasonal inventories until they couldn't keep their eyes open. The seasonal inventories included noting running water, ice, hibernating bats and the like that would change with the seasons. One crew climbed into the Bone Dome area and the other elected to visit the Jacobs Well area.

(continued on page 20)

HERES MY CAVING WRITING By Christine LaGrange

It's Saturday January the 14th. We set off about 9:30 AM. Our party consists of Bill Broeckel, Melanie Jackson, Liz Wolff, Jim Wolff, and myself. I have never been to the lava bed caves so I hope it is a great adventure for me. When we started our intentions were to go to Tichnors and Bertha's Cupboard, but due to snow we were unable to reach them.

Bill decided that we should go to the Catacombs because it was warmer than the other caves, which was fine with me because I didn't have much clothing on. I also didn't have a helmet of my own so I borrowed Melanie's. We spent most of the time trying to get the helmet to fit my head, but we never did get it right.

As we go into the cave I can hear the water dripping from the ceiling into puddles that have already formed. There are long tubes that break off and weave in and out of each other. Some tunnels go off and then end with a lava seal. There are hundreds and thousands of small rock icicles called lavacicles covering the ceiling in colors of purple and blue. There were also pieces of the ceiling that looked as though someone had peeled some of it away. Inside those holes were gold-like particles, so it looked like you were in a gold mine. Melanie said that the only way you could keep it was to stay down there with it.

At the beginning I stayed pretty close to the group, afraid I might get lost or something. As time went on I got curious and wondered where all these tubes went that we were passing. So they told me to go find out. Most of them connected with the main tube but some went too far for me to go wandering down alone. There were also some tubes that even I couldn't squeeze through so I had to turn back. Still going further we stopped and saw The Elephant's Rump that you really had to use your imagination to see. There were places on the floor that had big lava rocks called rafts that flowed down with the lava and hardened there.

Cleopatra's Tomb was coming up and we were about to see her grave. We had to squeeze through a much smaller tube up to a place where we could all fit. As we came out of the tube Bill asked us to smile; then he blinded us with his camera. Up a little further then down. We were finally to her grave. Is she really down there? No one knows except maybe J. D. Howard. J.D. Howard found the cave in 1918 when he was searching for shelter. He named the cave and everything within it.

ED: Catacombs is a single entrance cave re-surveyed by Jim and Libby Nieland in 1989-1990 to a total traverse length of 6903 feet.



Senior project student Christine LaGrange (L) in Catacombs with her mentor Melanie Jackson.

Our stomachs tell us that it is way past lunch time so on our way we go. Now that I was a caving stud, I got to lead the way. As we came out, the sun that reflected off the snow that had fallen made it hard to open our eyes all the way without squinting. It felt good to be out and breathing fresh cool air again. The first thing to do before eating was to get off our wet cloths and into some nice warm dry ones.

After eating, we explored some unknown, unnamed caves across the road that Bill had been eying. None of them really went anywhere. Except one did have a hibernating bat that had condensation forming on its back making the bat appear white. So not to wake the bat, we left as quietly as we came. Later we made sure to let the ranger know what we had found.

Our caving adventure was over and what an adventure it was. I had a great time and hope to go back and explore the other caves as much as I can. I don't think I'd ever get tired of going through the caves over and over again. Next time I hope to be more prepared and have all the gear I need to cave safely. Someday I hope to be able to lead my friends through and show them the beauty that lies directly beneath the earth.

Christine LaGrange



Christine getting blinded as she enters Cleopatra's Tomb.



Kneepad check at Howard's Hole.

Surprised (Intimidated, Shocked) by...

by Liz Wolff

It was a stormy day January 23, 1995 that Ray Miller and I set out to count the hibernating bats in Teeter Rock and Dance Hall caves. We had already done Teeter Rock and found only 6 bats in an out-of-the-way part of cave, not optimal for hibernation, and thought it might be because the cave was so warm. Both caves last year had a hibernating population of 11 - 16 bats each. There were boot tracks in the dirt on the breakdown in the back of the cave, so we knew there had been some visitation since October when we had done our last readings.

It was a surprise to walk UP to the entrances of Dance Hall cave and find both of them covered, one stuffed with brush and the other with a lattice of 2x4's, plywood and juniper branches. Ray removed the brush while I moved enough plywood to gain entrance to the cave. It was more surprising to crawl into the cave to find a squatters camp set up in the section of cave between the 2 entrances. It was even more surprising what we found there.

We were reminded that vagrants, people running from the law and homeless people may be anywhere, even in caves on private land. And they may not be friendly. This one, happily not in residence at the time, had a sawed off shotgun with a pistol grip laying on the cot, with #3 buckshot loaded in it and a box of shells ready to hand. Definitely not a friendly weapon or type of shot.

The squatter had been there a while. We found, in addition to the shotgun & cot, a US flag, a generator, water piped in from the surface somewhere (we didn't look around to find out where), quite a pile of tools including power tools, lights of various types and extra fluorescent tubes. There was also a small pile of garbage, but no food stores, kitchen or clothing in evidence. Nothing to identify the person. It didn't smell like a latrine or cooking; a clean camp.

Ray unloaded the shotgun, took the shells, and we prepared to exit the cave. On our way out a voice coughing and cussing was heard outside, so we ducked back into the entrance to be out of sight if it was the unfriendly squatter. He apparently took off, and having no desire to be shot, we cautiously exited the cave and left the area with alacrity.

After having our aerobic workout for the day we set out to find a land owner at home to see if he/she knew the owner of the two lots that contain the cave entrances. We found one who was glad to hear of the squatter and directed us to the property owners association. They were equally glad to hear of him, and gave us the owners' name and phone number, and told us that some stuff had been stolen from the fire house there in the subdivision, including a generator.

Ray contacted the owner, who immediately set up a meeting with the sheriff's office and the USFS (who he says patrols the area) about this. So people who cave in Shasta Valley beware. This could happen to you.

DOUBLE DOOR CAVE By B. Broeckel

Double Door Cave is a lava tube of the Hat Creek flow. It was found on 7-25-93 when a SAG member was looking for another cave, and came upon the trench above the cave at dusk. Two or three bats were flying around in the annex.

The Grotto returned in force on 2-11-95. Liz Wolff was ready and available for field teaching cave survey. SOG was invited and Bill Fitzpatrick accepted the opportunity, and also became an official member of SAG on this trip.

Class commenced with A-team beginning the survey with datum at the east entrance of the annex. Liz, Bill F., and Melanie Jackson proceeded to survey on through the annex.

B-team (Bill B., Neils Smith, and Jim Wolff) skipped ahead to the right hand entrance to Double Door Cave. This cave was named for the two large walk-in entrances side by side at the north end of the jumbo sinkhole. The easiest ways into the sinkhole are to come in through the annex, or to climb down the outside of the pillar that divides the two entrances. Most of the sinkhole walls overhang. Snow covered some of the breakdown boulders in the middle of the sink.

B-team surveyed on into the cave. Many of the rocks were glazed with ice. Halfway through the cave the breakdown ends, and many fine original lava tube features can be seen, such as lavacicles and rafts. The dimensions of the generous cave passage gradually diminish to almost nothing in the terminal crawlway. From here the solid rock crawl continues downflow and blows air, but is too low to enter.

We removed two beverage containers; one Bud can and a brown bottle. That gives a "beer can density" of about 1 per 300 feet of passage. We also found a rusty, bent piece of metal, possibly a pry bar. We left this and some wood fragments as artifacts. Five graffiti sites were located, all with a uniform paint color suggesting a single source. The second site read "Frank Moore '63".

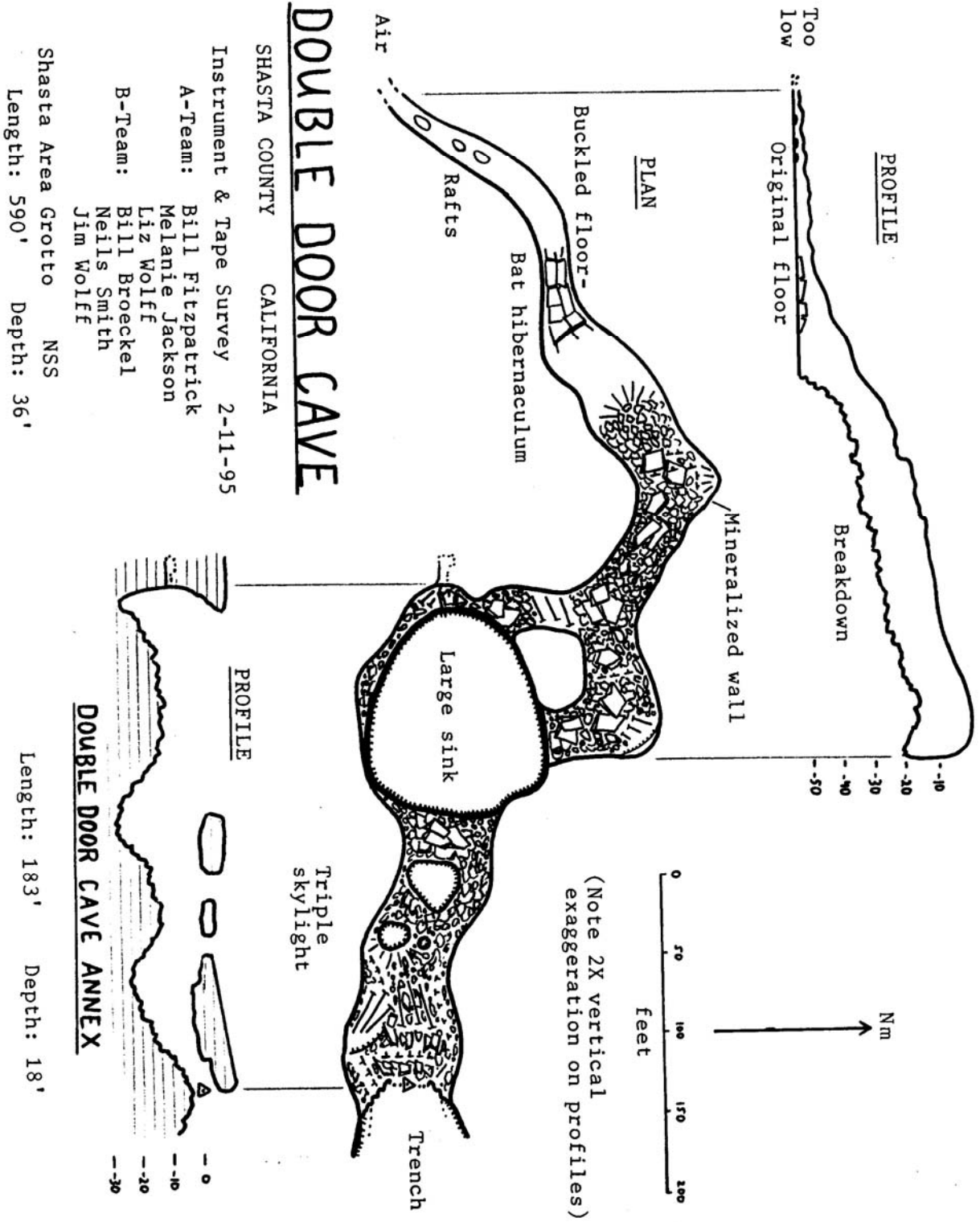
The back of the cave was not frozen, but wet. Never-the-less, there were bats in hibernation. Some were *Plecotus townsendi*, and there were other smaller species. We counted 22 bats on our way out, but did not make a systematic count, being anxious to leave them alone.

Outside, A-team was crossing the sinkhole to link up the survey. B-team surveyed out the other entrance and around the sinkhole, closing a loop with a two foot error. B-team didn't let A-team go in the cave, so as not to disturb the bats any further. Instead we retrieved our lunches and enjoyed some sunny rocks.

In spite of some light vandalism, Double Door Cave remains in shape and is a nice addition to the mapped caves of Hat Creek.



A-team at the right hand entrance to Double Door Cave.



Map: Double Door Cave, Double Door Cave Annex

NEWSLETTER REVIEW FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1994

By Dick LaForge

This review really was written in October, but it seems as relevant now as then, so I am letting it stand. Life is better now for us in 2/95. I have a car that works, have done some good skiing, have an invite to a Lech trip, and time heals.

The past two months have been pretty tough. In the previous review I mentioned my dad having cancer and my plans to visit him. Well, he died just after I wrote that. All of us 4 of his kids did go visit his home in Montana, but he unfortunately wasn't there, in the body anyway. We had a good visit with each other and his wife Virginia, but it was sad too.

Then at the beginning of September my older son Seth rolled my old white Volvo on his way to college in S. CA. In the car also were son Evan and my wife Kathy. Seth is a new driver and was trying to adjust the tape player and drifted to the edge of the road. He then became aware and over-corrected. The car rolled three times and was wrecked. He escaped injury, Evan got a few stitches, and Kathy got a head cut, a minor crack in #6 vertebra, and lost most of a finger. Pretty minor stuff really. Volkos are pretty tough.

Next the October 94 Devil's Advocate arrived, telling how Diablo Grotto Chairperson Laura Kalgerou died after rolling her MGB coming back from an Oakland Raiders game in LA. I didn't know her personally but certainly have heard of her.

Now, Jim and Liz Wolff called just recently with news that Claude Smith, whom we all have known for a long time, has taken his own life.

So what about all this, besides putting a somber cast on this Fall? One of the features of life as we grow older (and the average caver age is increasing – mine personally is also) is seeing how our lives develop, for better or worse, and how the factors of entropy, ageing, decisions, and luck affect our lives. And then there is the simple fact that, while 100% of us living are still alive at this moment, in the future the percentage will always decrease.

It also makes me think about safety. Safety is a trend, I'd even say a fad right now. It is an attempt to minimize the damage caused by the aforementioned factors. But we tend to view safety in a far too narrow way. Even the word "safety" is narrow. It usually means avoidance of risk, which is a strategy of diminishing returns. As cavers we purposely go out and take risks, by caving. To us, safety more usually means developing rescue capabilities, being better able to cope with the results of taking risks.

All this is OK and good, but narrow. None of the incidents I mentioned above involved caving or even purposeful risk-taking as most people see it. They were just incidents in ordinary life.

It seems to me that a better concept is "Survival-oriented." The strategy is not so much to be "safe" as to be "survival-oriented". This orientation does not tell you to avoid risks, but to recognize them and choose them wisely, and to learn how to deal with them. It tells you to recognize them wherever they are – in driving, in the food we eat, in the exercise we get or don't get, in our preparations and plans or lack thereof, and very importantly in how we organize our lives and what we do with our minds. A survival orientation allows you to take more risks, which if done wisely means more adventures, more experiences, more knowledge, and more fun. And that's what life is about, to me. The older I get the more I appreciate living and doing things, and the more I want to survive to do them as long as I can.

So, fellow cavers, please be survival-oriented and survive! Let's have a break from these disasters. We cavers are a special sort of community of friends

and families that all have an unquestioning love and appreciation for each other because we share a love of the same thing – the caves. When we survive, we survive for each other as well as for ourselves.

Well, that was pretty exhausting. How about the newsletters?

On the lighter side, there is an account by Neil Hedgecock in the Devil's Advocate. September 1994 entitled, "SPELUNKING". In it he describes his introduction to caves and cavers. It's always amusing and revealing to see how we are seen by outsiders.

The 8/2/94 issue of the Underground Express has the KLAMATH MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION TASK FORCE 1993 report, which summarizes activities and progress in the Marble Mts and also Oregon Caves and other caves in the Klamath Mountains.

Another good article for reprinting is a report on "Lost Soldier's Cave clean-up trip" by Karole Ward in the Valley Caver, Fall 1994. This is one of California's classic caves, and is well described by Karole. In addition, there are cave conservation, dramatic adventures, and philosophical reflections, in keeping with my mood this month.

Finally, we have a newspaper article from our local Eureka paper the Times Standard, dated Aug 28, 1994. It is titled, "Lake County Spelunkers seek Mythical Cavern." This is accurate. The subtitle is a lot more dubious: "Search is on for the world's largest cave". Actually reading the article, it seems that a group of cavers is trying to dig into a huge cave known only from old anecdotes, and have so far dug 67 feet. I guess it's easy for a cave to be the world's largest if it isn't found yet. I am sending your Editor a copy of this article for reprinting. Hype aside, we can all understand the urge to try to dig into the unknown.

Actually, if you go back a hundred (or less) years you can find in the newspapers of any cave region all sorts of thoroughly documented reports about caves that go on forever/have no bottom, /caves that go from here to the ocean, /caves that the Indians went in and came out in the next county, /caves full of Spanish gold, including skeletons in armor, /caves that aliens/bigfoots/etc. live/lived in, /you name it. These caves have one thing in common: they're lost.

A little insight into this phenomenon was illustrated by our stockroom clerk at the lab where I work. She came in after this article appeared and said, "Did you hear that the biggest cave in the world was found under Crater Lake?" I asked how she heard of it. "It was in National Geographic."

After discussing this with her I learned that: she had not actually read or seen the article; her husband had mentioned it to her. He had been reading the newspaper and National Geo that evening and she wasn't really sure which this news came from. But when she wanted to tell about it, "the biggest cave in the world", "Crater Lake", and "National Geographic" made a better story than "67 feet", "Mt. Konocti", and "The Times Standard." I'm sure this phenomenon was quite active 100 years ago also.

Good Caving!
Dick

DID IT AGAIN

And How We Got Out Of It

As mentioned, I have not had time to go caving much. But I didn't want to let the summer go by without taking my now grown kids Seth and Evan out on an adventure. So we decided to go to the large rock crack cave complex at Patrick's Point State Park in Trinidad, which is about 25 miles north of Eureka on the coast. It features a 153 ft drop into a long fissure which extends some hundreds of feet and is mostly roofed over, making it a true black cave. This would be Evan's first cave rappel, and he was looking forward to it.

The plan was to do a through trip, which would be new for me also. First we went into the side entrance, a long, descending fissure in the side of the hill. At the end, in nearly total darkness, there is a hole dropping vertically into the lower level, about 30 feet down. We tied a rope off to a convenient boulder and tossed it down. Then we went to the top of the hill and prepared for the 153 foot drop.

We didn't have a long enough rope, so we tied two together. The plan was to stop at an intermediate ledge 40-50 feet down, cross the knot while on the ledge, and continue. I would bring one set of vertical gear which we could take turns using to get up the 30 foot exit.

We all rappelled to the ledge, which is still in daylight. There was plenty of room to gather and retie the knot in just the right place. Then we descended, in turn, into the black hole that ends on a rubble pile which descends further in both directions to a water level. This really is a nice drop, I thought. When we were all down I had the feeling that something was not quite right, and soon figured out what it was. No cave pack! I had left it, containing the ascending gear, at the intermediate ledge! Hey, kids, this is how to go caving!

There was no possibility of climbing out the way we came in. The rock is not limestone with the usual ledges and dissolved pockets. It is some sort of serpentine ultramafic chunk of former ocean bottom, and is very ledgeless and slick. The 30 foot climb would be a wide chimney, very dangerous without a belay, and perhaps not even possible.

Fortunately I had the answer immediately, so we did not have to worry. I was out in 15 minutes, went to the top of the hill, rappelled in again, got the pack, and was soon at the bottom with the vertical gear. So in case you are ever at the end of your rope with no ascending gear, here's how you can get up and out:

I noticed that there was plenty of extra rope at the bottom of the 30 foot drop. At the end of it I tied a large loop, maybe 4-5 feet across. This I tied as a double-wrap prusik knot around the rope as it hung down in front of me. Clipped into my seat harness, I could hang on it. Then I tied a loop at knee level. The strategy: put one foot into the loop, stand up, slide prusik up, hang on it, tie new foot loop higher up, put foot in it, stand up, slide prusik up, etc. You just have to try it to see exactly how to do it. An 11 mm rope does not make a very grippy prusik when wrapped on itself, but should it slip you will be stopped by the nearest foot loop you have tied beneath yourself.

Better than being late for dinner!

Dick

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I won't be able to get all of this in one bulletin, but here's the first part of Neil's report on Spelunking.

SPELUNKING

by Neil Hedgecock

Spelunking. Spelunking is the sport of exploring underground caves. When I first had the idea to do my "I Search" on this sport, I had no idea what I'd be getting into. I figured I could pass with a couple of interviews, and that would have done it for me. That may have been so, but my further research was probably the biggest contribution to my paper.

I had been spelunking twice before, and I thought it was very fun. I thought it would be interesting to learn more about the sport. I started my research by calling a sporting goods called REI. I asked if there were any clubs that advertised through their stores, or if there was anyone who worked there who was a spelunker himself. The lady I talked to told me to call back in a couple of days, because the only expert spelunker who worked there was on a caving trip at that very time. The lady also told me that I couldn't get information about spelunking over the phone because of the liability. She also told me to come in and look at the books the store had. This part of my research was just as frightening as any. I have a great nervousness when calling up stores or people I don't know, especially to ask for an interview.

I eventually reached the expert caver at REI, and she was very helpful. She told me I should maybe try some commercial caves, ones that you pay to get into. Some of these that are nearby are California Caverns and Moaning Caverns. She then told me about her sister (or cousin) who is the vice president of the grotto I eventually came to know.

A grotto is a club of spelunkers. The grotto I came to know is called Diablo Grotto. Some other nearby grottos are the San Francisco Bay Chapter Grotto, the Colombia Grotto, and a few others near or in the Bay Area. These grottos from the bay area and others from Northern

California make up a certain region. All of these regional groups of grottos come together under one name, the N.S.S. (The National Speleological Society) I got in touch with Vivian, the vice-president, a few days later. She told me there was a meeting the next night, and that I could come.

I arrived at around 6:45 P.M. at an elementary school in Walnut Creek where the meeting was to be held. I had come straight from school. I and a 2 1/2 hour tennis match right after school and left straight from it to go to the meeting. The meeting was held in the teacher's lounge. I arrived early and waited and talked to people out on the jungle gym who were practicing ropes. I mainly talked to a friendly guy named Merv. He told me that he is a 7 year spelunker. He told me that the number of active members in the group is about 40 although 62 bulletins are sent out. I learned later that there are 9000 members of N.S.S. in all of the United States and membership is continually rising. Merv also told me that the age of the people ranges from a 17 year old to a 68 year old. This age shocked me because I expected to walk into a room of young people not much older than I. I figured the average age would be around 18 to 25. Most of the people in the group seemed to be in their 30s, 40s, or 50s.

Merv told me that lava tubes have beautiful ice formations and that some were so delicate that by breathing on them they began to melt, and you would start to feel guilty. He also told me about that permits are often required when you're going to go in a cave. He said that some caves even have gates on them; in which case you have to get a key beforehand to enter the cave.

I asked him about injuries, and he felt that there haven't been that many serious ones. He said that most accidents, such as falling and cutting or dislocating something, happen outside the caves when hiking on the trails which lead to the caves. He told me though that he is trained in spelunking rescue. He explained that not many rescue workers, such as firemen, could make it into and out of a cave carelessly or fast enough. He says it is a rarity that rescue work is needed, but feels it takes knowledge of

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caves to help in a rescue. Of the accidents that do take place in caves Merv thinks they are mostly dislocated knees and torn quadriceps. He was originally claustrophobic. He said at that time he wanted to backpack and his wife (or girlfriend?) wanted to cave. He was pressured into spelunking by his wife. This evening his wife, Laura, was practicing tying knots and rappelling. She was very into the color purple. She said, "Color is very important." Laura also happens to be president of the grotto.

Later I talked with a guy named Dan. He told me that usually about eight people will go on a trip. He also told me about the cave I have been to twice. The local name of the cave is "Hell's Hole," but the real name is IXL. He says that at one time it was a beautiful cave. But he says that once a cave becomes popular it will get trashed. He and others joked about how everyone in northern California has been in IXL. He was right, because when I was there were no formations, crystals, stalagmites or anything of that sort. Just mud, rock, trash and spray paint. Although the cave I had been to was trashed, I remember it being very fun. I think I am more into roaming around in caves than I am into the beautiful formations. Dan told me that he has been caving with the N.S.S. for nine years. He got interested in caves because of their history. He and some others of the group agreed that they got into caving because of their first interest in mines. It was stressed to me that "Mines are unsafe!" But they said if I was to go into a mine I should thump the timber that supported the mine before I stepped on it. He said that much of the wood is so old you can stick your finger right through it, that's why you should test its strength.

At the meeting that started at 7 there were eighteen people in the room. The grotto meeting ran kind of like a student council meeting, with the reading of the minutes, agenda, and then the open discussion about topics. A major topic was concerning a Mormon Boy Scout troop. The club was having a hard decision what to do. The Boy Scout troop wanted to be taken on a trip, and the club didn't know if they should do it. There were different arguments for why they should or

shouldn't take the Boy Scouts. One argument was that this grotto wasn't a group for giving tours. They felt that if the boys wanted to join the grotto individually, that would go along with the rules. But, they didn't want one person to join who would be doing it just to find out where a cave is. They felt a leader might try to join just to be able to find a cave to lead a troop to. Boy Scouts might show their friends, who might show their friends. The members felt they should at least educate the Boy Scouts whether they were going to take them on a trip or not. They wanted to educate them about delicate formations inside caves. They don't mean to be selfish about the caves, but they are afraid that if a lot of people find out about a cave, without being educated, the cave will get ruined. At the end of the meeting I don't think that the club officers knew exactly what they were going to tell the Boy Scout troop.

The meeting dragged on for a long time. Magazines with cave articles were constantly being passed around as well as other clippings and pamphlets about caving. There was talk about how caving was getting much more popular. Many agreed that was due to the increase in attention, especially a large article about caves in Hawaii. An interesting article I read was about NASA researchers exploring some recently found and unexplored caves. It talked about how some of the conditions are much like out in space. They were looking for organisms that may live down in these caves. They also felt that these organisms and/or bacteria may be useful in the cures for leukemia and other diseases. The meeting wound down with a slide show. It was of the caves on certain trips. At one part of the slide show it was funny because Vivian came to a picture of a stalagmite that looked like an erect penis. She asked the whole group, "Remind you of anything?" She got the reply, "Not anything I've seen in the last ten years," from a 59 year old guy named Doug Bradford. The group was humorous as well as concerned about the serious topics, such as conservancy of caves and the request from the Boy Scouts. In one of the slides it was shown how the group worked on cleaning a cave. They used water from a river to pump and fill a 2000

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foot hose to clean the cave's formations. There were impressive pictures of before and after shots.

The meeting ended at around 10 to 10:30 P.M. I give my mom a lot of credit, because she stayed out in the parking lot waiting for me the whole meeting. After the meeting, a pregnant lady told me that it might be a good idea to get interviews after the meeting. She said many go to Denny's after the meeting for a more social gathering. It was a nice suggestion, but at that time it was already late. In fact, I got home so late and I was so exhausted that I didn't get any homework done at home. Before leaving, Vivian encouraged me to consider going on an upcoming caving trip. I talked to the leader of the trip, Doug Bradford, and to some other people there to arrange a ride and borrow equipment. Before I left for home I was set up for going on a Diablo Grotto Spelunking trip. I worked out the fine details in the week before the trip and before I knew it the trip was there.

On Saturday, May 21st, I woke up at 4:45A.M. to go to San Ramon, where I would be getting a ride. I arrived at the home of a nice guy named Chuck Chavdarian at about 5:30. At 6:00, Chuck, his friend Stephan, and I set out toward Colombia. I tried to be considerate and stay awake, but I just couldn't do it. We arrived in Colombia around 8:30. We were much earlier than the other members and decided to eat. Colombia, a state park, is a place where the whole town is a museum. Even where we ate, the lady was dressed up like she belonged here during the Gold Rush. In fact, Colombia was a boom town which is a part of a series of mining towns known as the Mother Lode. I had hot chocolate and blueberry pancakes while my other two friends had coffee and a muffin each. Stephan was very generous and covered the bill which made me feel good. We went out to the parking lot where other members started showing up. Last, but not least, the leader of the trip, Doug, eventually arrived. He had a five hour drive to Colombia and was a little late. After going to the bathroom to get out any excess liquid I didn't want in the cave, I watched some knots practice. Don jokingly said, "That's all there is Neil. Time to go home now."

After a few more lessons on knots, we were on our way up the hill to the cave. It was about an hour drive up the hill to where our hike began. On the way it almost felt like we were in automobiles made for battle. We conversed back and forth with CBs with another car from our group. We also were going over terrible roads. At one point the river ruts were so deep that our car was temporarily stuck in a small ravine.

Arriving where the cars were to be parked, we started back down on foot into a canyon where the cave was. The hike down was very steep and it seemed like coming back would be terrible. Hiking down we could see across a canyon to there we had driven up from Colombia. We reached the mouth of the cave, talked a while, and proceeded in. But before going in I was told a story which will probably stick with me for a long time. It's scary as well as funny. Damion, who is from London told about when he was caving and he crawled through a small hole with a puddle at the bottom of it. He says that the temperature changes so often in the United Kingdom that you have to worry about puddles like this freezing. He told of a time when a puddle did freeze, and to try and get the puddle unfrozen he and his friends urinated on it. Neither this nor chipping at it got them through. Someone on the other side eventually brought boiling water about two hours later to get him and his friends out. The way the story was told to us made it very funny. I don't know if it was the circumstance of the strong accent that made "pissed" funny, but that story made my day if nothing else. It also made me laugh when he and Dan were talking about wet underwear. They were talking about how wet cotton underwear really makes your backside itch. Damion says he hates an itchy "bum" so he wears nylon underwear. Damion was interesting to talk to. He happened to be visiting for a few months in the U.S. on business, and he said he was missing caving.

More next month!!
Merv

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From Valley Caver, Fall 1994, pages 4-7.

LOST SOLDIERS CAVE

Clean-up Trip

by Karole Ward

Date: 11 June 1994

Cavers: Heather McDonald, Matt Leissring, Karole Ward, Marc Hasbrouk, Bob Horton, and our fearless leader Rich Sundquist.

Cavers, but sitting this one out: Medori Sundquist, Forest Sundquist, and Gaiety Thas.

The definition of an omen, according to Webster's Dictionary, is: A thing or happening supposed to foretell a future event. The event can be good or evil but, after Hollywood got through with the concept, mostly it has a bad connotation. Sometimes the word 'Omen' can dredge up religious meanings, especially if you've seen the movie, but Webster doesn't mention any religious significance, simply any event that foretells the future. Now, for the astrologically inclined, any event is subject to debate as to whether it is or is not ominous. Proof of this fact can sometimes be found in the Sunday paper. As for me, I typically don't consider myself given in to such frivolous, not to mention unscientific, prattle regarding how I should conduct myself when my sun is rising. Perhaps this could be why I did not detect the omen even as it slapped me across the face, quite literally, in the form of a branch of poison oak.

The trip actually began with a long, gruesome, five hour drive from Sacramento. Matt, Heather and I had pulled in the campground about 11:30 and were greeted by Gaiety and Mark who were just about ready to turn in. Bob was sleeping in his camper and Rich and Medori were nowhere to be found. They pulled in later about 1:30. I woke up about six AM after a fitful nights sleep. Unfortunately, I had pitched my tent on a downward slope and spent most of the night in a crumpled heap at one end. Now I was wishing that I had had the foresight to have extracted my coffee bag out of Matt and Heather's car the night before. (They spent the night in their bucket seats!) However, not having taken that opportunity, I was constrained to keep command of myself and not let my caffeine withdrawal symptoms annoy the rest of the party. But as the sun slowly began to rise in the sky, Cavers started slowly rising from their bivouacs, slowly being the key word.

It was not until 10:30 or 11:00 that we began the march across country to the cave.

At first the going was easy, we traveled down a dusty path that was lined with low growing shrubs. The sun sneaked through the loftier trees above and skipped along the top of leaves of the lower shrubs lighting them in a brilliant green display. The sky was a crisp blue and the late morning sun hinted that the day would be brutally hot, but at this point it was still bearable. Soon we turned off the main path and followed a lesser trodden trail. As we progressed down the trail little insidious sticks of poison oak began to sprinkle the path. First just a twig here and there, then a clump over there, then bushes on either side, and soon it became rather hard to avoid. Now, I'm the first to admit that I like a good challenge, which is why I wore shorts, but sometimes its better to throw in the towel, if you know what is good for you. However, I did not perceive this was towel throwing time because I had, nestled in my pack, a bottle of the mighty Technu. (I did not realize the bottle was pitifully empty) So on I pressed, throwing caution to the wind and laughing in the face of each branch. That's when I became careless and the "ominous event" occurred.

When I finally reached the mouth of the cave, Rich had already opened the gate and was peering in at several hundred feet of garden hose which looked like rubber spaghetti decorating the floor. Everyone else was gearing up to go in. The hose extended about 15 feet into the cave and made negotiating the passage fairly difficult. This was Heather, Matt and Mark's first big cave trip, so I stayed at the top of the first drop, which was about 30 feet deep, and doubled checked their gear before their decent. Once everyone had reached the bottom, I slid down the rope and caught up just as Heather was about to start the chimney passageway to the "Angel's Seat".

This chimney area is one of the many awesome parts of the cave. Its a fissure that extends about 60 or 70 feet horizontally and is maybe four to five feet wide. The fissure has boulders and bridges of limestone wedged here and there, enough to give one passage but not enough to ensure that a misplaced foot would send one careening into depths unknown. The fissure ends at the top of a large room whose floor is around 80 to 100 feet below. In order to clip onto the rope, one must swing between two blades of limestone and guide one's arse into a shiny dished out surface called "The Angel's Seat". At this point you're on your own, there's room for only one arse, but once seated snugly into this position, a Caver can enjoy a nice view and casually clip onto the rope with relative comfort and ease.

As I mentioned previously, I was the last one in line. I maneuvered across the chimney and waited patiently for Heather and Rich to descend. Everyone else had gone on down the drop and was now at the floor of what is called the "Waiting Room" Then when my turn came, I swung between the two blades of limestone when suddenly my foot

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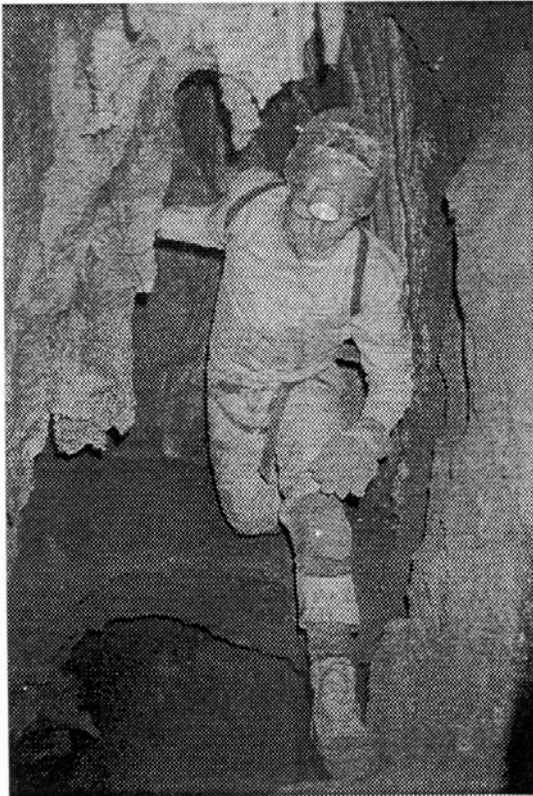
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slipped and I landed on the "Angels Seat" with only one cheek. For a second I dared not move for fear that I would lose my precarious position. I wanted to scream but nothing came out. I just held my breath and waited. I could see the article in the NSS Caving Accident issue. "Caver does it half-arsed and takes the plunge! Read all about it on page 5." I had to get hold of myself. I did have one hand on the rope, but if I slipped I knew I wouldn't have the strength to hold on. Then, strangely, I became very angry. A plethora of expletives went careening through my brain. But still I sat motionlessly. Soon these thoughts passed and other images followed. It was as if my life was passing before my eyes. I saw my house in greater suburbia. It was spring and all the lowers were in bloom. Then the image of my bed room floated across the grey matter in my mind. There were the freshly painted walls and beautiful new furniture Tom and I had just bought with the money from our tax return.

The scene changed and I saw myself on my way to work (late as usual). I could see my office - a little grey cubical with a chair, a computer, plants and books. The usual. A strange sadness passed over me. This is not how I pictured my life. I had always seen myself living a lifestyle that was... out of the ordinary. I don't know, something like running a coffee plantation in the lush, green mountains of Costa Rica, or owning a little used bookstore on the streets of downtown



Rich in Lost Soldiers.

Valley Caver, Fall 1994

Seattle, or even having my own travel agency, "Travels With Karole", where I would lead adventurous individuals who have lots of money to exotic places in Central and South America. I thought again of my office and got a sinking, closed-in feeling. Extraordinary? I think not! I thought about the everyday ho-hum of my life. I get up every morning in my home that looks like every other home on the block, and the next block and the next; I go to work, I'm there at 7:30, coffee break at 9:00, lunch at 11:00 and home at 5:00; then its laundry and cooking and vacuuming and mowing the lawn just like every body else. I didn't mean to sound ungrateful or as if I was complaining. I was just making the following observation: My life is ordinary as hell!!!! I felt lost in anonymity, just another face in the crowd. Hey, this is the stuff that mid-life crisis are made up of.

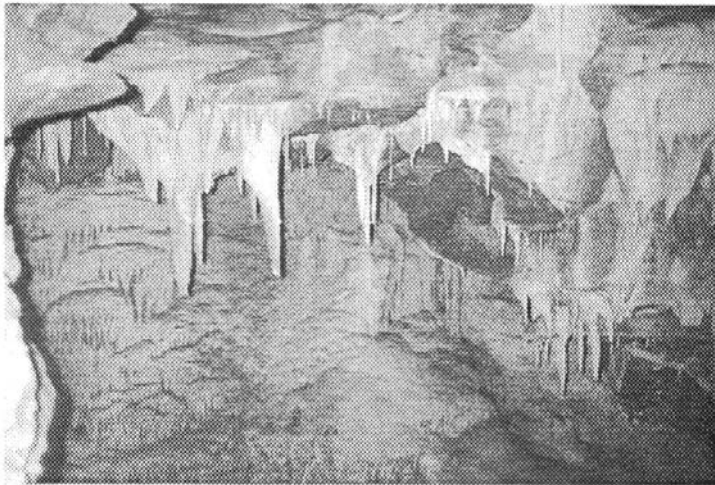
But then once again reality hit me in the face with the back of its hand, just like the poison oak branch had done. "One wrong move and you loose that ordinary, mundane, run of the mill life." Suddenly, it didn't seem so bad. And then, instantly, I knew what I was doing here. This is no ordinary sport. It's a special, limited resource not for the wimps or those who are weak at heart. Down here in this underground world I could be all that I can be. I looked down at the empty space under my feet. Indiana Jones never had it so good! Crocodile Dundee, eat your heart out. Heck, not even Batman could hold a candle to me here. Here I am different from the common masses. Here I become California K (just call me CK forshort); Seer of Darkness, Pusher of Puny Passages and Passer of Mighty Pits. That's right, Passer of Pits, and this pit ain't the pits, it challenges! So slowly I leaned toward the backwall, placed the side of my foot on the blade of limestone and carefully positioned both cheeks on the "Angels Seat". They don't call it that for nothin'. Yip, the way I figure it, I wore out at least a dozen of my guardian angels just then. They created a new place in heaven where my angels can go for R&R and the way I was feeling now, they had better have made it BIG!. I clipped onto the rope and silently slid to the bottom. Maybe its good that I didn't recognize the omen when it slapped me in the face.

A pile of cleaning equipment; buckets, water, brushes and such, had been stashed near in The Waiting Room. These items were to be left in place so that supplies would be readily available for cleaning teams. When I reached the floor folks were ready to move on so I quickly gathered what cleaning equipment I would need and followed. We traveled down a passage that went off to the left until we came a chamber called the Aragon room where we paused for a moment to admire the beautiful crystals that lined one side of the wall. The room had already been partially cleaned. I sat on the mud floor and surveyed the scene. On the left side, as if in competition, lovely aragonite flowers stretched into the moist cave air, each flashing its crystalline petals as if they were dancing in a Las Vegas show. I imagined the scent of lilacs coming from the delicate little clusters. The other side of the room paled in comparison to its companion's showy display.

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It was a limestone and wall partially covered with flowstone wall that ended in a muddy bank. A portion of the bank had been cleaned revealing that it, in fact, was not a mud bank at all but instead a mirror image of the other wall, except that the aragonite flowers were crushed beyond recognition. This area must have been a sacrificial wall. Over time mud had covered the flowers so that Cavers had no clue as to what laid beneath. My eyes shifted to the end of the room where a crystal curtain seemed to ripple. I watched Heather disappear through a small opening and followed.

Rich and Bob stayed to clean the back half of the Aragon room while the rest of us slipped through the curtain and entered a second chamber that was about the same size as the Aragon room. I learned later that both rooms were considered the Aragon room. Go figure. So technically, Rich and Bob cleaned the back half of the front half of the Aragon room and the rest of us cleaned the front half of the back half. This is true only if you consider the front half is that half which is encountered if one were coming from the Waiting Room. If not, and one considered the front half as that half

**Formations in Lost Soldiers.**

of the room which is encountered if one were entering from Ruby's route then, Rich and Bob were cleaning the front half of the back half of the Aragon room and the rest of us were cleaning the back half of the front half. Get it?

Matt and Marc choose a large column to spruce up. Heather and I cleaned flowstone to the right and left of the Column. The formations in this cave really do clean up nicely. After several hours, the column that Marc and Matt were working on had been transformed from a dull brown to a dazzling white. Rich and Bob had done an equally superb job on the curtain at the end of the aragonite room. These formations cleaned up more dramatically than the flowstone because of the lights ability to "set them on fire", but the flowstone that Heather and I worked on looked pretty good too. Feeling a sense of accomplishment, we decided to call it quits, not to

mention that we had run out of water, so we packed up and headed out.

While waiting for our turns to ascend the rope, Rich and I decided to take a look down "The Well". He led. True to its name "The Well" is a forty foot shaft that is about 2-3 feet in diameter. Its temporarily rigged with a rope and a cable ladder for the duration of the cleaning operations. Playing it safe, I clipped onto the rope and started my decent feeling like "Alice in Wonderland" chasing the white rabbit. I half expected to find a tiny bottle of potion at the bottom that said "drink me". But instead I found ... rock. "Rich" I shouted and a faint voice answered. I took off in its direction and soon saw a flash of yellow that was Rich's coveralls. The passage trended in a downward direction twisted, turned, doubled back and I can't even remember what else but finally it opened into walking passage. As I strolled along the passage, I pictured in my mind a soldier lost in the inner reaches of this hollow. Perhaps walking this very passage that I now tread. With each step the soldier would lift his head in wonder at the magnificent crystalline formations. The eerie

silence would bid him onward as the lure of the limestone took hold. He would raise his solitary candle over his head straining to see just past the fringes of the shadows. Then a nagging sensation would lead his vision to the floor. He gasped and stopped just in time. His toes were hanging over the edge of a large pit that encompassed the entire floor of the passage.

The soldier melts from my imagination as I watch long-legged Rich step quite easily over the right hand side of the pit. Without missing a beat, he continued down the corridor then stopped realizing I had not followed. "Just step across on the right. There is a great handhold just above your right

shoulder. It's a lot easier than it looks". He said as a matter of factly. Now, I'll admit that I may have a lack of ability in correctly judging distances. I was taught from an odd scale, if you know what I mean. But, in this case I was fairly sure that for me to step this distance would require an old gymnastic trick that I had not done since high school, the splits. I hesitated for a moment. Then I remembered that I am "California K. Passer of Mighty Pits!" I had to give it my all, it was my duty. So I stretched my right leg forward and found myself straddled between the two mud banks like some cartoon character out of loony 'toons, and Yes, I was doing the splits. "Excuse me, Rich" I cleared my throat "Do you suppose you could be so kind as to lend me some assistance?" I requested with the utmost politeness. (NOT) He willingly came to my urgent plea giving me a tug that sent me careening across the room, which was much preferable to

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careening down the pit. Thanks Rich!

Hungrily, we pushed deeper into the cave until we chanced to find ourselves in a vertical labyrinth of dry, dusty limestone with sculpted holes and tubes that seemingly lead nowhere. I felt like we were two rats in Swiss cheese heaven. This area was devoid of formations. I followed Rich, he seemed to know where he was going, then suddenly the passage forked and both tunnels emptied onto a sheer cliff that overlooked a huge canyon. It shot out perpendicularly in both directions. We appeared to be 20 to 25 feet above the bottom of this canyon. There was no way to climb down and it was far enough that jumping might prove harmful. Rich was sure that, on a previous trip, he had found a way down but at this time could not remember the secret. I peered long in both directions feeling like most cavers do upon reaching an impasse.

We had been gone about forty five minutes and were feeling like we really should get tback. So with bold adeptness we retraced our steps and joined up the rest of the group in the Waiting Room. Matt had finished the climb and Heather was about 20 feet up the rope. Marc and Bob were just hangin' out. Heather worked her way up the rope and was almost at the top when her pack became wedged in a small constriction. Her tether was so long that she could not reach



A cleaned cave formation.

THE VALLEY CAVER Fall 1994

the pack to free it. She was unable to climb down with her ascenders and after about 15 minutes bit, Rich suggested that Bob go tandem on the rope and try to free her pack by either loosening her pack from the constriction or cutting the tether. As Bob climbed the rope, Rich pointed out that his tether was also too long. Bob had no problem assisting Heather and soon she was working her way to the top of the drop. Bob hung out at the constriction. When Bob, Heather and Matt had all worked their way out of the chimney, they took a break to rest. By the time Marc started up the rope several hours had passed and I was getting uncomfortably cold.

I think we ought to invent a line dance for these waiting occasions. We could call it the "Helectite Hustle" or the "Soda Straw Slide". It could be danced to the tune of "Friends in Low Places". Nothin' like a good dance round to keep you warmed up. Ok, so finally, as I ascended, Rich pointed out that my tether length was also too long. Armed with that knowledge, I proceeded with caution so as not to get hung up.

Rich was the last to ascend. By the time he'd caught up with us at the bottom of the first drop Matt had reached the top and Heather was on the rope. With sufficient time to think, we all decided that we would not return to the cave on Sunday. Unfortunately, we had left the cleaning supplies unkempt at the bottom of the second drop in anticipation of returning. Rich went back and put them away. When he returned to the rest of the group Marc was just clipping onto the rope and Bob and I were still waiting. Marc made it out with no incidence; however, Bob's pack got wedged somewhere and it took him awhile to free it. All in all it took us four hours to get out of the cave!

I learned a lot on this cave trip. It helped me get in touch with myself and why one reason that I enjoy this sport so much. I also learned a lesson on tether length. If your pack is tethered so low that you cannot reach it, you run the risk of getting it hung up on something. If your pack does get stuck, Murphy's law takes command, meaning that you will most likely be in a precarious situation that preclude the ease of climbing down the rope to free yourself. And lastly I learned the importance of the phrase "keep it moving". Its OK to take a break to eat or drink something as long as one person is on the rope. If we had been in a cold cave, such as those that are in The Marbles, hypothermia would have been a real issue even if we were all doin' the "Borehole Boogie". Cha Cha Cha.

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From Eureka Times-Standard Aug. 28, 1994

Lake County spelunkers

Search is on for world's largest cave

MOUNT KONOCTI (AP) — In hard hats and coveralls layered with dirt, a trio of diggers huddles 67 feet under the ground, burrowing into the earth of Mount Konocti.

For most mortals, the confinement of the craggy cave, the weighty boulders hanging from above and the musty smell of dirt and rock would be too much.

But these men are on a mission.

They're looking for the world's largest underground cavern and a lake inside the mountain. They seek signs and artifacts of an ancient people said to have lived in the mountain before the Modern Age. They're out to solve a mystery.

It's a job that was supposed to take about three hours. They've been at it for nearly four years.

"I keep thinking we're going to see something that hasn't been seen for thousands of years," said self-professed "cave nut" Bob Pace.

Fellow cave-digger Patrick Ostrander said, "We might be crazy. It might not be there, but we think it is. It's addicting."

Mount Konocti, Lake County's ancient and mysterious mountain, has intrigued generations as it rises 4,300 feet above sea level, thousands of feet above the southern shores of Clear Lake.

"Little people" were said to live in the mountain during the "cold time" before modern man. Some Indian tribes regard it as a sacred, revered for its healing powers. There are stories of underground lakes inhabited by blind fish, tunnels leading from Clear Lake into the base of the mountain, and a gate into the "Upper World," guarded by a large spider.

Early residents reported visits to a bottomless shaft inside the mountain, where objects could be dropped into a hole and found weeks later in the waters of Clear Lake.



Working 67 feet below Mount Konocti in Lake County in mid-July, Jim Russel, right, waits to haul away dirt that is being drilled from the cave by "Digger" Dan Dougherty, at the far end of the shaft.

It is this volcanic vent, a secret passageway to what may be a large cavern, an underground lake and a network of tunnels, that the Konocti Project crew has sought for four years.

"We've got an agreement that the first guy to fall in down there has got to scream all the way down so we know how deep it is," said Bob Zalusky, a retired 747 pilot and adventurer.

Zalusky, 73, started the project after decades of fascinated research into the mountain towering above his home on Clear Lake's Fraser Point.

Years ago, an elderly curator at the old Lake County museum told him of going as a young woman to the top of the mountain and entering a cave with a hole in the floor. She went with the Howard boys, brothers from the prominent family

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seek mythical cavern

which owned the peak until 1942. The boys threw rocks in the hole, and lowered a weighted string more than 1,100 feet without hitting bottom.

Zalusky and Homestake Mine geologist Norm Lehrman tracked down old-timers and documented numerous stories detailing visits to the cave as far back as the early 1900s.

Among the stories is one concerning Campfire Girls in the 1950s who dropped painted cans

“ We might be crazy. It might not be there, but we think it is. It's addicting ”

— Patrick Ostrander
searching for cavern

down a hole and later found them floating in Horseshoe Bend below the mountain.

Another Lake County resident went to a cave with some friends who carved names on a 5-inch log that turned up in the lake about three weeks later. A third told of dropping a flaming bundle down a shaft and watching it disappear.

Most said they entered the mountain through an opening in the side of the hill that led to a

diagonal tunnel and finally, the vertical shaft.

But the cave's entryway had become hidden by dense brush and trees and Zalusky could find no one who knew or remembered where it was.

Then in 1990, two hikers took Zalusky to a cave they'd found. Inside the entry, names were carved in the wall, including one of the Howards, signed "Euvette Howard 1934."

But the cave had collapsed about 25 feet from the entrance and Zalusky's team has been working in near secrecy ever since to dig through the obstruction and somehow intercept the vertical shaft.

Once inside, they hope to find a lake with blind fish, a network of tunnels to other caverns, and archaeological evidence of people living in the mountain more than 10,000 years ago.

"It's almost an obsession," Zalusky said. "We know it's there."

Volcanic geology supports the vents and cavern structures the crew expects to find inside the mountain, Lehrman concluded. More importantly, a magnetic survey he conducted in 1990 identified a large gap in the magnetic field that could only be explained

by a deep shaft or large, empty cavern.

The team is working on the theory that molten lava drained from the base of the mountain millions of years ago and left an internal cavern 2,000 feet wide and up to 3,000 feet high.

Zalusky and a handful of volunteers wind their way up the mountain each Wednesday and Saturday, pass through a locked gate and hike to the work site.

A noisy generator runs outside, feeding current to a string of light bulbs placed sparingly down into a vertical passage the crew believes runs parallel to the vent they seek.

A separate extension cord powers a drill used to excavate at the bottom.

The first two or three workers in the hole scramble quickly to the bottom on iron rungs pounded into the side of the vertical tunnel. There they prod the ground for soft spots, drill for voids in the earth and debate the merits of going one direction or another. Frequent "smoke tests" are conducted using a cigar to determine which crevices are drawing air.

Oregon Caves Report (continued from page 3)

The rest sat by the fire and talked or played the piano, and the bobsled team continued working on their run by cave lights. This was not without some hazard — trail signs, trees and a switchback being the most notable. They came in to warm up and dry off whenever they turned the right shade of blue/purple.

That night, while everyone slept (even the hapless victim of his own turnings) someone fell out of bed, waking other sleepers with his THUD! Fortunately he was on a bottom bunk and didn't have far to fall.

Sunday morning dawned cloudy and coated with ice. Cheryl, Melanie, Liz, bobsledder Matt, and local volunteer Paul? went back to the South Room to continue sketching. It was complicated locating all the flags that might be there and we even found one without a number, but we got them all we thought. We had to be out of the cave by noon and at the last minute Melanie and Paul found another passage with flags that exited the South Room along another survey line. And Just when we thought we could take the sketch out to the Shovel Room.

The rubble crew was joined by Jennifer Gould of SOG and went back to hauling rocks. Some opted not to go back into the cave.

The time has come to renew our yearly SAG membership dues and SAG RAG subscriptions. The price remains the same as before!

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- Precision machined—stainless steel and anodized aluminum
- Engraved Serial Number
- Self-lubricating rollers

\$105

Optional Harness \$22
 (yellow, blue, black)
 Shipping/Handling \$5
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STAMP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 2	Grotto business
Page 3	Oregon Caves
Page 4	Catacombs
Page 6	Teeter Rock and Dancehall Caves
Page 7	Double Door Cave
Page 8	Cave map
Page 9	<u>Newsletter Review</u>
Page 11	Patrick's Point
Page 12	Spelunking
Page 15	Lost Soldier's Cave
Page 19	Mount Konocti

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