

sag rag

28:5 Sept-Oct 2009



Two views of the upflow entrance to Yellow Tuber Cave



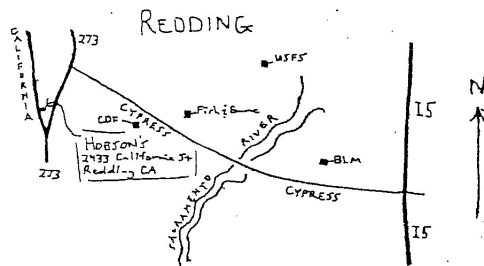
BEYOND THE GAPING HOLES – DEFINITELY

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 or <jbroeckel@snowcrest.net>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

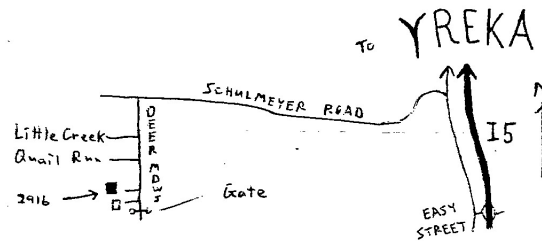
CAVERS CALENDAR 2009

| | |
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| Nov 20 | SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Hobsons in Redding 530-242-8707. |
| December | No meeting. |
| Jan 22, 2010 | SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Broeckels in Yreka 530-842-3917. |
| May | Rescue training – Lava Beds weekend |
| June | East Oregon BLM lava caves with Ken Siegrist 541-536-1900. |
| August | International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology, Australia. |
| Aug 2-6 | 2010 NSS Convention in Vermont, contact Ken Moore. |
| Oct 8-10 | SAG hosts Western Regional at Lava Beds 530-964-3123. |

MAPS TO MEETINGS



NOV 20 - Redding



JAN 22 - Yreka

SAG RAG SUMMARY By Bill Broeckel

Once again we go beyond the Gaping Holes; this time with a beautiful and definitive Liz Wolff map showing *five* caves; this time including the best one of the bunch, Arch Sunk Cave, and even revealing its secret side passage. Maps of Yellow Tuber and Go Worm Cave appeared in a previous SAG RAG as individual caves. Now we can see exactly how all these caves interrelate. Arch Sunk Cave is a 475 foot long lava tube cave.

Once again we can balance the issue with a new limestone cave from Shasta County. Rock Block Cave length is 65 feet. Thanks to Steve Hobson's efforts in providing on-the-water transportation, this has been a great year in Shasta County limestone. Brian Marshall brings us a great detailed report on what some of these grotto cave hunts have been all about. The last item was intended for a future Cow Caver, but was deemed too time sensitive to wait. Remember, this is a humorous piece and is not to be taken seriously. The Post Office wants you all to staple your own SAG RAGs. Just pop one into that upper corner, and we're good to go. All uncredited photos are mine.

BB

MINUTES FROM SAG MEETING – September 25, 2009

SEPTEMBER SAG MEETING 9-25-09 at Vern & Linda Clift's home in Big Bar. Present: Ed and Virginia Bobrow, Jim and Liz Wolff, Dave Smith, Steve Hobson, Hans Stein, Kelly Carbaugh, Jim Dancy, Judy Broeckel, and Vern & Linda Clift.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jim Wolff at 8:31pm. Treasurer's report: \$12 check cashed. Website: Bat message. Website could use photos. Library: Old issues of SAG RAG, first years of SAG. Data Base: picking up entrance photos and GPS data on entrances.

Correspondence: Jim W. called Shane Fryer re: mock rescue 10-31-09.

Old Business: Regional: 1/2 day project for Western Regional members to do. Confirmed for 10-8 thru 10-10, 2010. Loop A reserved. Planning on use of RC, but cost not yet known. Possible pre- or post-regional trip to Ancient Palace Cave – Steve Hobson.

New Business: Next meeting 10-30-09 at Lava Beds. Cave rescue training. Mock rescue. November 20 Redding, at Steve Hobson's home. Bring cookies or pie. Ancient Palace Cave project. Missing first decade of SAG RAGs [these have been located – pdf ed.]

Trip reports: Jim & Liz Wolff, and Bill Broeckel to Airy Ice. Bill & Judy Broeckel, and Jim & Liz Wolff to Wild Side. Liz led a group of women into Barnum Cave. Steve Hobson – Lassen County last week. A search and rescue officer knows of several caves and cave entrances in this area.

Meeting adjourned: 9:37 pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Judy Broeckel.

JB

MINUTES FROM SAG MEETING – October 30, 2009

OCTOBER SAG MEETING 10-30-09 at Lava Beds R.C. Present: Ed & Virginia Bobrow, Jim & Liz Wolff, Dave Smith, Steve Hobson, Hans Stein, Kelly Carbaugh, Arley and Brianna Kisling, Shawn Thomas, Neils Smith, Bill & Judy Broeckel, Ken Siegrist, Bill Defraud, and Vern & Linda Clift. Elaine Smith, Shane Fryer, Cyndi Walk, 4 dogs & 1 cat were not at the meeting, but were nearby.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jim Wolff at 8:20 pm. Minutes of 9-25-09 (Judy's birthday) meeting approved as read. Treasurer's report: \$213.21 bank statement. \$88.00 cash. Total \$301.21. Conservation: website found, over 200 local caves listed and located by lava flow.

Correspondence: Shane Fryer called about Lava Beds & WCC. "Ideograms": elementary school cave trip kids wrote thank-you notes to Liz Wolff. Gem State & OHD Grottos request comment on the gating of two sensitive BLM WSA caves. Bob Stroud and Matt Skills of the BLM are looking for formal documentation of surrounding grotto support for the plans. Steve Hobson expresses concern that gating allows for appropriate caver access and use of the caves. Dave Smith moved and Bill Defraud seconded a motion as follows: **SAG recommends to Northwest Caving Association (NCA), Gem State Grotto, and Oregon High Desert Grotto that the two caves in question be gated and that a trustee be established to allow cavers appropriate access to these caves.** The motion passed unanimously. Formal documentation of this needs to be sent to the NCA and the two grottos.

Old Business: Western Regional 2010 Lava Beds. RC with campground loop A reserved for camping for attendees. WCC would like to put on a dinner and Schnapps tasting fund raiser. This is under consideration. There is tradition behind the dinner, and the fundraising auction. Plans include a farewell breakfast Sunday morning, with Linda Clift and Virginia Bobrow as head cooks. Vern Clift is head bottle washer and clean-up crew chairman.

New Business: New Business Rescue training and practice exercise tomorrow with Steve Hobson and Shane Fryer. Elections: SAG officer nominations in November. Ballots to be mailed with SAG RAGs. WCC: Mary Ann inquires are we interested in hosting a meeting? Upcoming grotto meetings: 11-20-09 at Hobson's. Bring desserts. No December meeting. 1-22-10 at Broeckels in Yreka. May 20, 2010 Rescue training at Lava Beds, weekend before Memorial Day – work with Lava Beds staff, joint training and practice, may include seasonals. June 2010 Ken Siegrist announcing 3rd annual Eastern Oregon trip. Please send your choices and advice regarding best June weekend for participation. All potential BLM volunteers/participants should e-mail Ken.

Trip reports: September grotto legendary trip to Manzanita Ridge Cave. "A good time was had by all." Two school groups had conservation and cave safety educational field trips to Barnum Cave. On 10-25-09, B. Broeckel surface surveyed five small caves between Odyssey Ice and Stinking Rat Hole.

Meeting adjourned: 9:54 pm. Respectfully submitted by Judy Broeckel.

JB

ARCH SUNK CAVE, AN EARLY WINTER'S TALE 12-6-08 By Liz Wolff

It was an unseasonably warm day in December following the SAG meeting and cookie pig-out when Ray Miller, Vern Clift, Linda Jennings, Bill Broeckel, Ed Bobrow, Dave Smith and Jim & Liz Wolff returned to Yellow Tuber Cave to survey the parallel Arch Sunk Cave. YTC was the site of a SAG survey sketching school in August 2008. YTC is an upper level cave on the deep and multi-level main lava path, with Arch Sunk on a smaller and shallower side branch. Survey began at YTC's entrance station, progressed through the prominent and scenic arch of Arch Sink, to the sunken arch that gives Arch Sunk Cave its name. There is a short, breakdown-filled cavelet under the sunken arch which can be traversed to a barely passable exit in the next sink. Team two of Bill, Dave, Ed and Jim who were with us to this point, left to survey Go Worm Cave, also on the side distributary, and the next cave upflow from Arch Sunk.

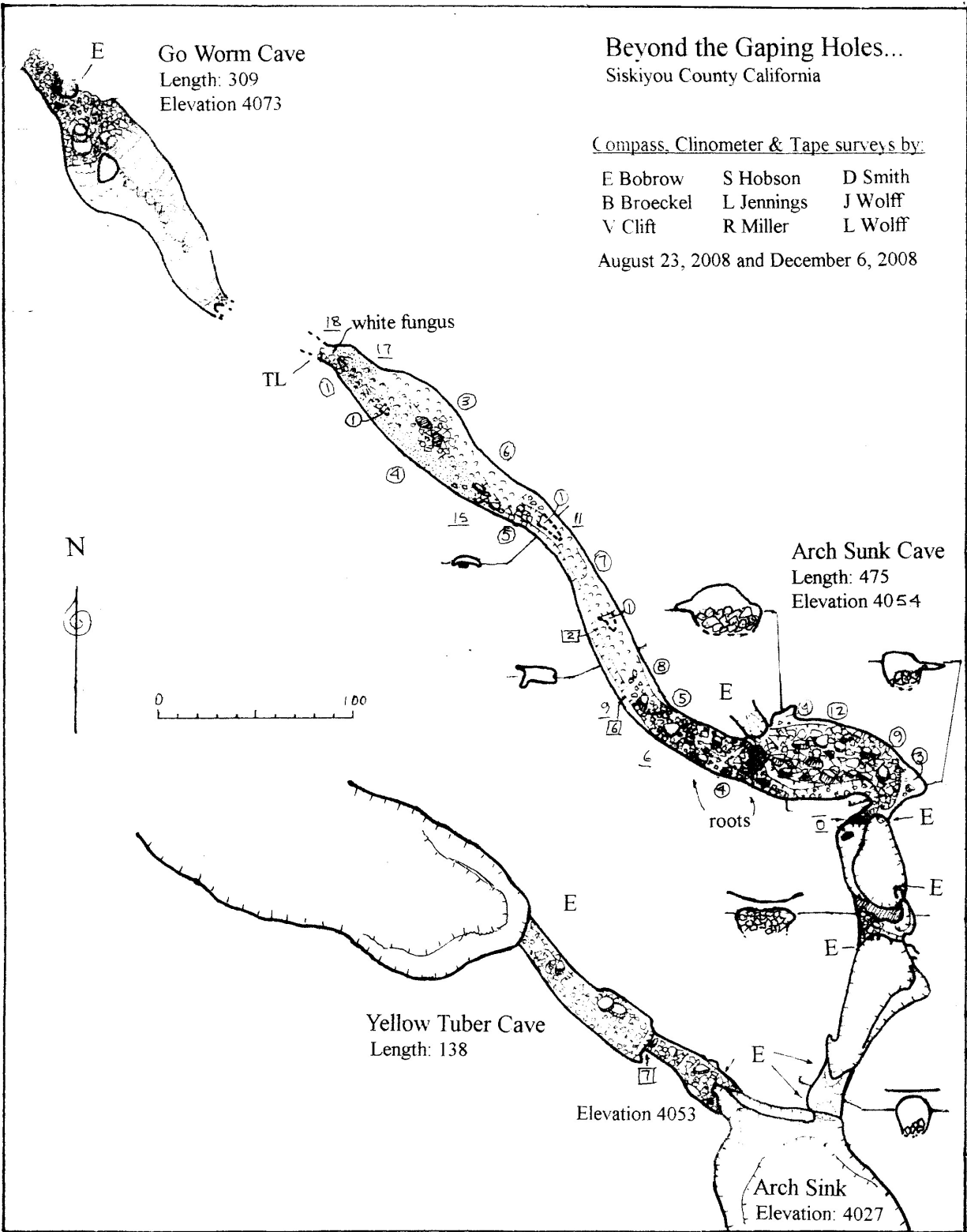
Arch Sunk looked to be a short cave, as an upflow entrance was not far away. The entrance room is "L" shaped and completely breakdown floored. A high ceiling and wide passage between the two entrances give this 60 foot long, 40 foot wide room a twilight feel. Around the upper entrance the cave looks like it is completely choked with breakdown, but following a little poking around a way was found through it. Ray bailed on the survey at this point.

Vern, Linda and Liz continued through the choke, which was roomier than it appeared, into nice walking passage. The passage is mainly intact after the breakdown choke, and damp where the outer room had been dry. Roots festooned from ceiling cracks for the first two hundred feet. A raised aa floor houses a short tube-in-tube, the first of four found in this section of the cave. Ledges line the walls for a short distance. As the passage shape changes from high/narrow to low/wide, a breakdown pillar divides the passage for a short distance.

The passage ends with the floor coming up near the ceiling, a bit of mud, an incredible white lacy fungus and passage too small to get through. Larger passage is visible beyond the tight spot, but not a hope of getting through the four foot wide by four inch high, solid lava constriction. Arch Sunk Cave is 475 feet long and 18 feet deep. Exiting the cave, the two teams met up, compared survey totals, and retired to the trucks. **LW**



Upflow entrance to Arch Sunk Cave – 6-10-08



Map: Arch Sink, Arch Sunk Cave, Go Worm Cave, Yellow Tuber Cave

ROCK BLOCK CAVE, A SUMMER STORY By Bill Broeckel

One day Brad Rust and Steve Hobson were out cave hunting by the spongiform rock, when Steve dropped his hat down a cliff. Luckily it landed on a ledge. Steve scrambled around to the ledge, and when he reached for the hat, he noticed some rocks were covering the top of a nice pit. Unfortunately, the key rock was too big to pull out. The previously unknown cave was added to Steve's lead list. Yep, the hat just happened to land right there, and the cave was duly discovered.

June 12, 2009, and we were able to catch a ride on Steve Hobson's Friday cave boat excursion. He kept a boat docked in the lake this summer exactly for this purpose. Bill Broeckel, Dave Smith, and Jim Wolff joined Steve to go look into that pit blocked with the big rock. But first there was a cave lead to investigate. We came upon a likely looking outcrop, and Steve had heard there was a cave "two thirds of the way up to the left". The landing craft was beached and the cavers were deployed. We swarmed the limestone battlements above, but the cave eluded us. We found some phreatics too small to enter, a couple dirt-filled sinkholes, and at the very top of the castle, a dangerous and venomous serpent politely requesting that we should back off.

On to the pit we go. We parked the boat at a cool swimming hole which Jim and Dave immediately recognized as a good spot for some R&R. That left Steve and I to scale the steep slope and hopefully, to go caving. Steve led the way along an ancient, overgrown trail through the jungle. We came to a creek crossing. The limestone started on the far side of the creek, and the slopes were full of leads, digs, and signs of caves. It was a hot, sweaty afternoon fraught with flies, mosquitoes, and fully leafed-out poison oak. So we had to find a pace, and keep ready for moving that big rock at the top of the pit.

Steve found the cave. This time he found it from below, and there were two entrances, and he checked the cave. When I got there, we set up the survey, and I was glad to get inside where it was shady and cooler, with fewer bugs and no poison oak. The straight baseline passage looked joint-controlled and had a floor littered with forest detritus. The phreatics came in from above. The best caving was chimney climbing up into the dome pit. It was fun to wiggle right up underneath that big rock at the top, which we didn't have to move after-all.

Back at the creek, we got lost in terrible overgrown blowdown with millions of lady bugs. Still we hurried back to our friends waiting at the boat, where I immediately stripped and went for a swim. Apologies for the display of public nudity, but anything to wash off the sweat and the *Toxicodendron diversilobum*. I only ended up with a few streaks of the poison oak rash on my forearms.

BB

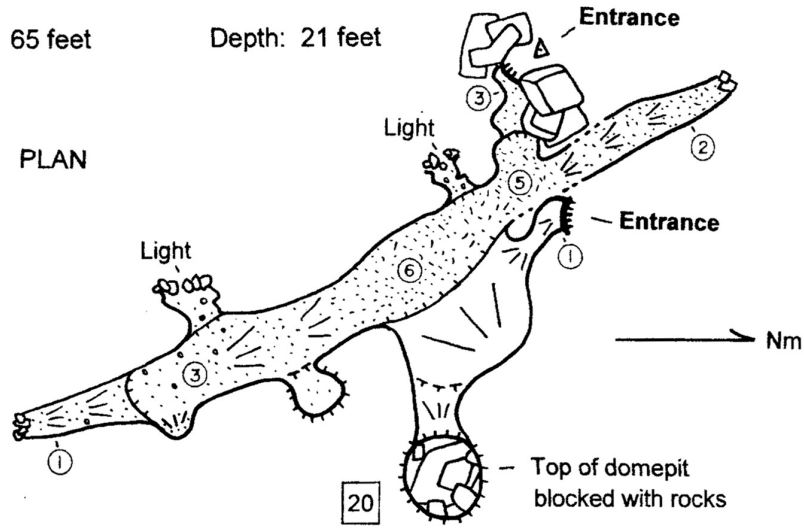
Rock Block Cave

SHASTA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

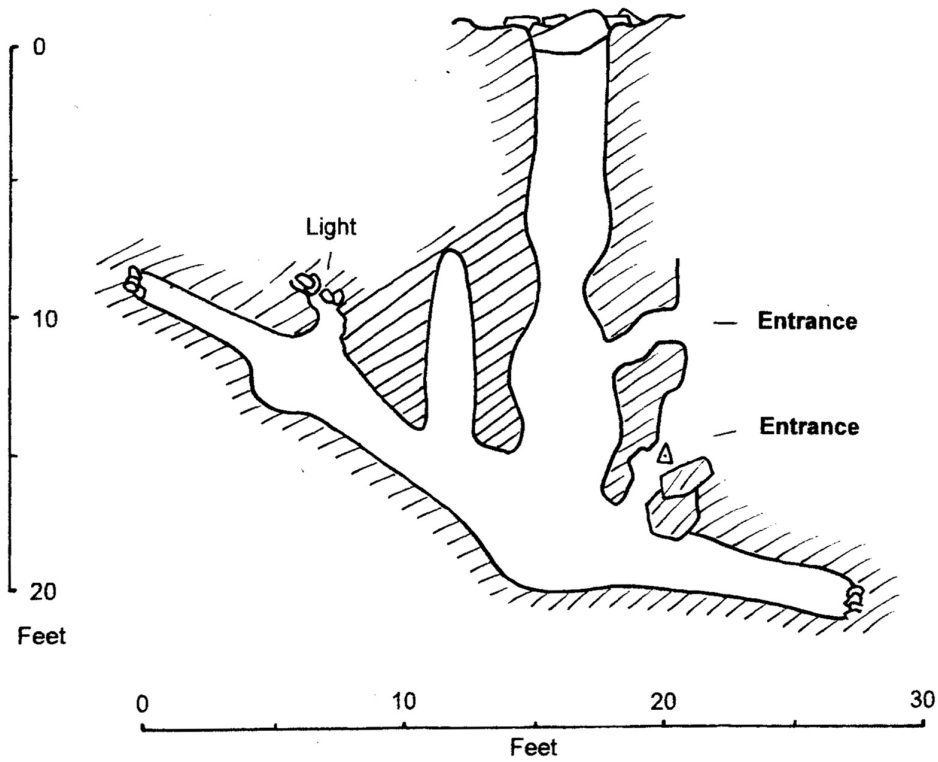
Length: 65 feet

Depth: 21 feet

PLAN



PROFILE



Tape and instruments survey: 6-12-09. Bill Broeckel and Steve Hobson
Shasta Area Grotto, N.S.S. Cartography/Copyright 2009: Bill Broeckel.

Map: Rock Block Cave



Captain Steve Hobson pilots the caving patio boat and landing craft – 6-12-09
The good ship captain can also perform weddings at reasonable rates



Some of the holes we find are actually swimming holes – 6-12-09

JULY PRE-MEETING KARST WALK By Brian Marshall

We all met at 10:00 a.m. at the boat launch, the group including Steve H., Jim W., Dick L., Dave S., Hans S., and myself. We all loaded our gear and food onto Steve's brother's patio boat and were on our way. We didn't really have a plan, but thought we would go to Lake Level Cave and do some karst walking. I suggested we look for caves first as it would get hotter later in the day. Steve took the boat up a finger of the lake. There was plenty of limestone to look at up the finger. We settled on a section at the east side of the tip and parked the boat there. We all started up a mostly dry creek bed toward the saddle, thinking it would be the best way up to the limestone.

At the first bit of limestone, we all kind of split up, some went to the top, and Dave and I went around the bottom. I came across a small cave about 20" in diameter, and 20 feet deep, with a little cool air. Unfortunately, my long-sleeved shirt was back at the boat, so I GPS'ed the opening and moved on. Dave and I finished checking around the bottom, and made our way up to meet with Hans. We came upon Wolff as we headed up toward where Dick was. At some point I lost everyone else in the thick brush, so I hurried upward to catch Dick. Dick and I continued on up and found a lot of nice looking limestone. There were lots of dissolution holes and flutes in the stone, just none that went anywhere.

Our view from the top of the crag was quite nice, at about 600' above the lake level. At that time Dick and I started wondering about the rest of the group, being as we hadn't heard from anyone in a while. We figured we'd work our way back across the bottom of the stone and look for drain holes, but not until we checked a little more lime to our North. Our trip back across the bottom was much easier than the top, but didn't turn up anything.

Dick and I were surprised to be the first people back to the boat. I was happy to be back with my jug of ice water and jumped in the lake to wash the poison oak off. Steve and Hans showed up shortly after that and we ate and drank a while. We finally decided to go looking for Dave and Jim, who turned out to be just up the dry creek. They managed to get on the wrong side of some very thick berry bushes. By the time we all made it back to the boat, it was time to head on. The boat ride was nice and the company was good, so even without caves it was a good day. Thanks group. **BM**



Jim Wolff and Dave Smith begin a Shasta County karst walk – Summer 2009

MOVE THE NSS OFFICE TO YREKA By Bighorn Broeckel

Since other folks are back there promoting bids for the location of the NSS headquarters, we thought this would be a good time to suggest moving the whole works, lock, stock, and barrel, right out here to beautiful Yreka, Calif. After all, Yreka is the county seat to one of the biggest and greatest cave counties of the entire west coast. Here are some really wonderful particulars that need to be seriously considered.



Help the locals: It is not so much what Yreka can do for the NSS, but what the NSS can do for Yreka. The boost to the local economy would be greatly appreciated. The new sidewalks, street lights, and property taxes alone, tacked on to the project, would really spiff up the town, and would easily be afforded by the cavers. Newcomers who actually work are definitely welcome. This would be the biggest boon in these parts since the NSS Convention came along in 1990. Yes, this place has been depressed for a long time. When the recent recession hit the nation, people around here didn't even notice anything different. Yreka has been on the skids ever since the easy gold ran out in the 1850s. Folks, we could really use some help.

Investment potential: Start up costs should be quite reasonable. As always, property prices are dirt cheap around here. What about the return on the investment, you might ask? Well, when California drops into the sea, Yreka could well be in the part that stays. The tectonic plate dynamics are a little complicated up here, but we have the vision to see this town as future prime-time beachfront real estate, the new Malibu. We see this happening real soon, too, so we better move on this fast, and maybe we can also get in on the Brooklyn Bridge promotional. If we as a Society can act quickly in the next few days on certain Yreka properties, we can also gain a percentage of interest on the Brooklyn Bridge. Sammy Capone, the itinerant land broker from New York, gave me his solemn word that this was true.

Strategic location: An NSS office in Yreka would be in a perfect position to keep a much closer watch over one of the most suspect and disreputable grottos in the entire Society, namely, Shasta Area Grotto, commonly referred to as "SAG". This renegade band of brigands, misanthropes, and old burned out paleontologists with beards, puts the good name of the NSS at dire risk on each and every cave trip, and definitely needs some increased scrutiny and supervision.

Improved Back-up: The NSS will be forced to back-up the whole operation 2 or 3 times over, creating a stronger system for everyone. Why you might ask? Well, in addition to the frequent light'nin strikes and power outages, Yreka does have this kind-of high propensity for totally devastating natural disasters such as forest conflagrations, swarms of high magnitude earthquakes, and the complete spectrum of volcanic eruptions and explosions. But that can be a good thing. Darth Capone (Sammy's brother), the illiterate insurance agent, assures me that everything can be covered on a special umbrella plan, with payments lifted right out of the mortgage statements, as long as our deductibles exceed the cap limitations.

Brand new caves: Shasta area is actually overdue for major eruptions, and a good chance for some modern-day speleogenesis. You don't see that very often (never mind Hawaii). The Yreka location will position us to better serve the future of American caving, well, at least in the 48 contiguous States.

Many caves: Staff and visitors will have many present day caving opportunities nearby. Gas prices around here always exceed the "highest in the nation", even higher than Hilo, Hawaii, so the proximity of caves becomes very important. Well, we have like over a thousand caves within two hours' drive of Yreka. No lie. O.K., they are mostly just short little ones, but there are lots of them. Other than the overpriced gasoline, there is very little to spend money on or do, so caves are especially valued and highly regarded.

National convenience: The Interstate 5 freeway actually detoured itself to include Yreka, and serves the town with, count em, three exits! If the freeway can do this, so can the NSS. Furthermore, thanks to the freeway, the major airports in Portland and San Francisco are a mere 7-8 hour drive away, assuming light traffic in the cities.

Green operations: Staff and visitors can walk or bike to the facility, with minimal traffic. Gas prices are too high anyway. Yep, it's a pretty small town, and the neighbors are friendly. Open range laws apply, so when the cattle wander onto the NSS property, the NSS automatically will assume the full responsibility for any ensuing problems, such as busted fences, property damage, injury, death by stampede, and what not. So, them neighbors have nothing to worry about, and will always be happy and easy to get along with. Now never mind the manure, flies, and the wood smoke, the air up here is very clean. In fact, the air is so clean, lots of the locals don't even have to take baths very often.

Normal rattlesnakes: Here is a nice advantage most folks might not think of. The local rattler species (*Crotalus pacificus*) envenomates with pure and simple straight-up hematotoxin, none of that added-on neurotoxin like those nasty Mojave Greens (*Crotalus scutulatus*). Yep, that there's one of them really great local vantages, yesiree. We also get a good hard winter freeze, and it mightily slows down those hordes of big black widow spiders for a few weeks every January, without exception, a very dependable and reliable effect that can certainly be counted on.

No Shelta factor: There are no known caves underneath the town of Yreka, so less complications about the use of the property. However, there are some mine shafts and tunnels under there. Ever see the movie "Paint Your Wagon"? That's Yreka. One morning we woke up and Greenhorn Lake was gone, and the police department downtown was up to their snouts in a flood of water. Yes, that is true, that really did happen.

O.K., there you have it, and man-oh-man, with all those really great vantages, how can we not move the NSS headquarters right here to Yreka. So now, contact your DOGs, COGs, BOGs, and other OGs, even the Og of Bashon, immediately, and insist that the Society move the whole works right here to ... where? That's right, YREKA! Not Eureka. Yreka. Make sure you get that "Y" in there. You also have the "why" of Yreka, so come on now, what's say lets get this thing done. **BB**



Caving boat moored at base of a karst walk – 6-12-09



Middle entrance to Rock Block Cave measures 1 x 2 feet – 6-12-09

SAG RAG

2916 Deer Mdws. Rd.
Yreka CA 90967

STAMP

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