

sag rag

43:5 Sept-Oct 2024



“Ho ho ho – a caving we will go”

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at various sites or homes on the fourth Saturday of most months at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, subject to changes by email. Membership dues are \$5 per year, due at the first of the year, and include SAG RAG subscription. Send dues to treasurer Melanie Jackson at 708 Yama St., Yreka CA 96097. Original material submitted for the SAG RAG, unless otherwise noted, is copyright to the SAG RAG. Within the caving community, such may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside the cave community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication, always welcome for consideration, to Dave Smith, 321 Mesa Verde Ct., Chico, CA 95973 or <theotherdavesmith@gmail.com>.

Upcoming SAG Meetings:

Dec 7 SAG meeting at Steve's at 7:30. Officer nominations and planning for next year.
Dinner at 5 pm, Steve will be cooking tri-tip and asks everyone bringing other dishes to let him know so we don't overload on one or two sides.

January 25, 2025 meeting will be at Jim and Liz's at 7:00

SAG RAG Summary by Dave Smith and Dave Mundt

This month's SAG RAG includes Steve's proposed schedule for the first half of 2025, with campouts of up to a week planned for May through August. Hopefully fires won't force changes or cancellations. We are also caught up for now with September Minutes.

2025 preliminary schedule

By a vote at the Oct meeting, all 2025 meetings will begin at 7:00 pm Saturdays rather than 7:30.

Jan 25	Liz and Jim's	May 12-17	LABE
Feb 22	Steve's	June 23-28	Hat Creek
Mar 29	Mel's	July 21-26	Dry Camp
Apr 26	McKinley's	Aug 18-23	Marbles

Minutes for the September 28th, 2024 meeting

Attending: CJ and Kit McKinley, Liz and Jim Wolff, Melanie Jackson, Steve Hobson
Called to order at 6:45 pm by Steve Hobson

- August meeting minutes read and approved.
- Treasurer's report: \$395.48 start plus \$10 in dues plus \$116 in petty cash: total \$521.48
- A memorial rope box was repaired and hiked into the Marble by Mark Fritzke, stash cave was adjusted, and box now fits inside.

2024 Western Regional was held and many representatives from SAG attended. Had a meeting with Boof and Eric from the Western Regional and Chris Wylie and Kim Luper to discuss our hosting the regional in 2027, notes from Liz Wolff are attached separately (below).

Highlights:

1. Registration with "reg-fox" for \$1 and 1% per person – we should use
2. Forest service permit nightmare – should be avoided with Daniel Hewitt on board
3. Lava Beds RC vs Tule Lake Fairgrounds for camping
4. EIN number, we can use Western Regional's EIN number
5. Kim Lupe volunteered to help with website
6. start everything early.
7. need to follow up on insurance, NSS used to have insurance, but we may need to pay now, and to make sure we have a waiver

Discussions at Western Regional Meeting:

1. Newsletter, looking at reestablishing the Western Caver where all grotto's send monthly articles, but need an editor.
2. Training committee – looking at training for grottos to teach and for bringing SPAR and Cave.
3. Rescue classes more often to the region.

Discussion about 2027 SAG regional:

1. Start classes on Wednesday and Thursday, such as a cartography class by Liz
2. Kim Luper will help with the guidebook.
3. Book to include history of SAG and lava caves – Liz to come up with history, Michael Stark to help with photos?
4. CJ will pull help from other grottos for trip leaders and wants to be in charge of cave trips.
5. Date of regional will depend on venue.
6. SAG will need to come up with money for deposits – need to problem solve. Guidebooks this year cost \$25 and they charged \$30.
7. Kim or Eric will get us the name of the NSS insurance coordinator.
8. Steve would like a live auction vs a silent one – need to start getting donations. now, and need a brochure or plan to present to companies willing to donate.

9. Advertising and marketing – do early, lots of photos, web site, NSS magazine, vendor and professional brochure.
10. Liz will begin talking with David Todd for information about the fairgrounds in Tule Lake.

McCloud Bridge Campout – October 19-26

1. Kit and CJ will get there the 19th, Steve and Mel the 20 or 21st
2. CJ to advertise on list serve and Facebook
3. CJ will talk to James Newell about a day for cleanup at APC
4. Steve wants to do a day out at Chirpchatter (Grey Rocks), pump out water from Hole in the Wall, check on sink hole
5. Other suggestions are Riley's, Pipevine, and Melvin.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

CJM

Notes from Regional Q & A Meeting 9-20-24 Liz Wolff

Steve Hobson: What software did you use for registration?

RegFox from RegFox.com. The cost is \$1 per person plus 1% of total. The drawback is that you must supply a social or an EIN with it. If a social is used that person has to claim it as income on their taxes. **Steve:** the WR should have an EIN. Boof will look into it. RegFox prints badges. (Matt Bowers later at the regional meeting: the region owns a subscription to RegFox & has an EIN) **Steve:** does it print badges? Yes, it does.

Steve: Funding: Kim & Eric: the three grottos put up matching funds. RegFox sends deposit info to the grotto.

Steve: Guidebook. Kim Luper did these. The big books cost ~\$30 each; the actual cost was about ~\$25 each. They were printed in Vancouver WA by a local printer. Melanie knows a local Yreka CA printer.

Steve: permits: Kim: permits were needed to enter caves on the Mt St Helens NM & local forest caves. Steve noted we would likely need permits for some non-tourist back-country caves in Lava Beds & the southern Medicine Lake area (USFS). Kim recommended having a list of likely caves, then double or triple it as the feds weed out caves that can't see heavy visitation; (as if our local FS office would care) for all three forests Klamath, Modoc & Shasta-T.

Steve: what about insurance? We got insurance through the NSS insurance coordinator for our last regional event. FS may require a copy of the coverage.

Steve: should we have a silent auction, a real auction or a raffle as a fund raiser?

Advice from Kim Luper & Eric Jorgensen:

1. Kim recommends having all arrangements done at least a month ahead: including buying supplies; maps, t-shirts, & guides printed; plans for monitoring any changes to the caves, contingency plans (for stuff like fires in the areas); camping & facility arrangements.
2. Start planning early & regularly
3. Arrange for the camping at least 1 year in advance
4. Organize trip leaders early; with group contact (e.g.: googlegroups)
5. Check on permit requirements & permit fees (check with Daniel on this)
6. meals; Sat dinner or Sun breakfast (facilities available?)
7. Create a pool of info on putting on a regional meeting
8. Liability waiver? Maybe...
9. thresholds: guidebook, trips, forms, web page (advertises in NSS, region, to grottoes), site computer, trip events.
10. Marketing (make a photo montage)
11. Set up website with event focus; contact vendors for donations, w/professional brochures to impress them

LW**WNS UPDATE**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on 10/28 gave a press release that the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome in bats has been detected in several counties across California this year, although bats with visible signs of the disease have yet to be observed in the state.

In 2023, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) first confirmed definitive presence of the fungus in a bat roost in Humboldt County. In 2024, the fungus was also confirmed present in Sutter, Placer, Amador, and Inyo counties. Inconclusive laboratory results suggest the fungus may also be present in Trinity, Siskiyou, Shasta, Plumas, Alpine, San Diego, and San Bernardino counties. Additional results are still pending for several other counties around the state. The fungus has been detected on several bat species in California, including the little brown myotis, Yuma myotis, long-legged myotis, big brown bat, Mexican free-tailed bat, and Western red bat.

While white-nose syndrome has not yet been observed in any bat in California, the presence of the fungal pathogen suggests the disease could manifest in California's bats within the next few years.

The full release can be accessed here:

<https://www.fws.gov/press-release/2024-10/invasive-bat-fungus-confirmed-five-california-counties>

And decontamination protocols can be accessed here:

[National White-nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol \(updated March 2024\)](#)

TRIP REPORTS

A Cluster of Surface Tubes... Or, Which Way Do They Flow?

Late last week Tom Rickman contacted me about a map for a particular cave. A buddy of his is working on his doctoral dissertation and needed a map of a cave. I didn't have anything in that area, and Bill Broeckel had a few, but none were the one that was wanted. So a quick survey trip was organized for Saturday October 12, 2024.

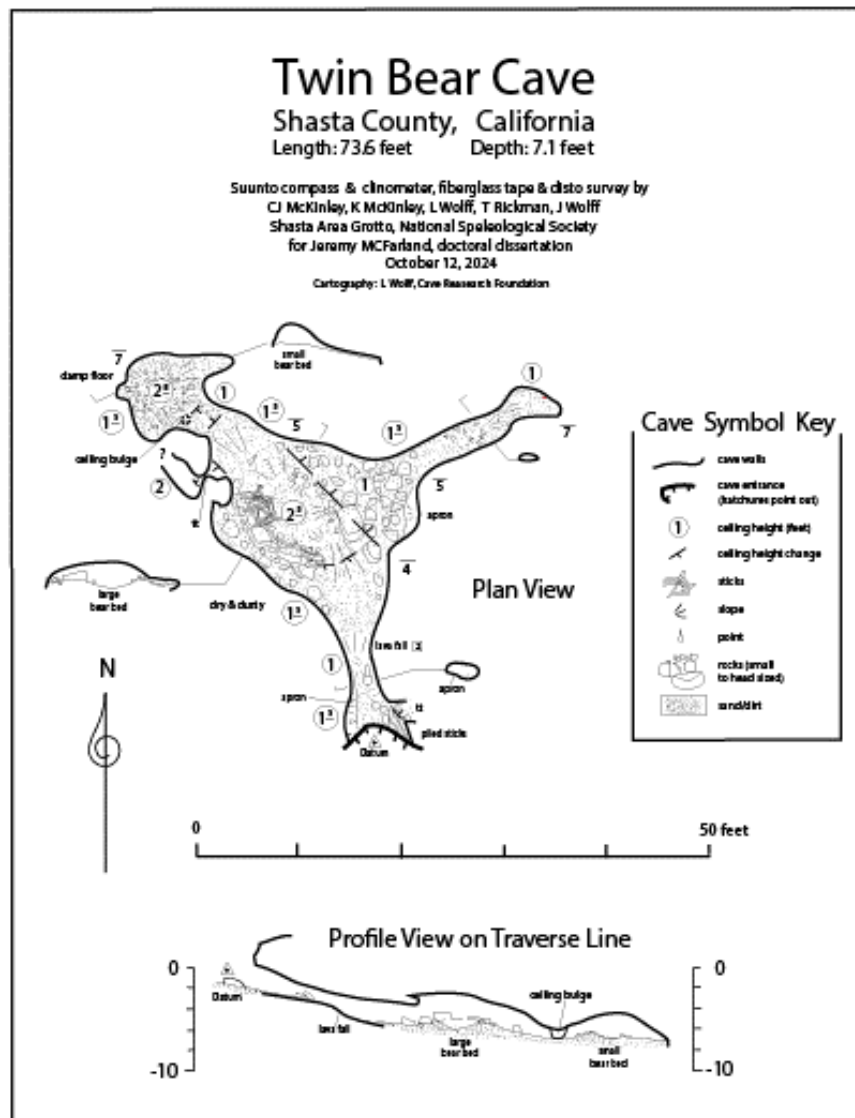
On a rainy/sunny/cloudy day, Tom met Jim & Liz Wolff and Kit & CJ McKinley at the Hat Creek Visitor Center to caravan out to the cave. It is located in the burn area of the Dixie Fire of 2022, which made travel over the lava easier, but the cave was way dirtier, with ash on the pumice dust. Looking in the immediate area (within 50' of the target cave) we noted two other entrances, one tiny skylight into small passage, and one possible entrance; two others were a short way further. Tom told us the researcher wanted to name the cave Twin Bear, so we went with that name.

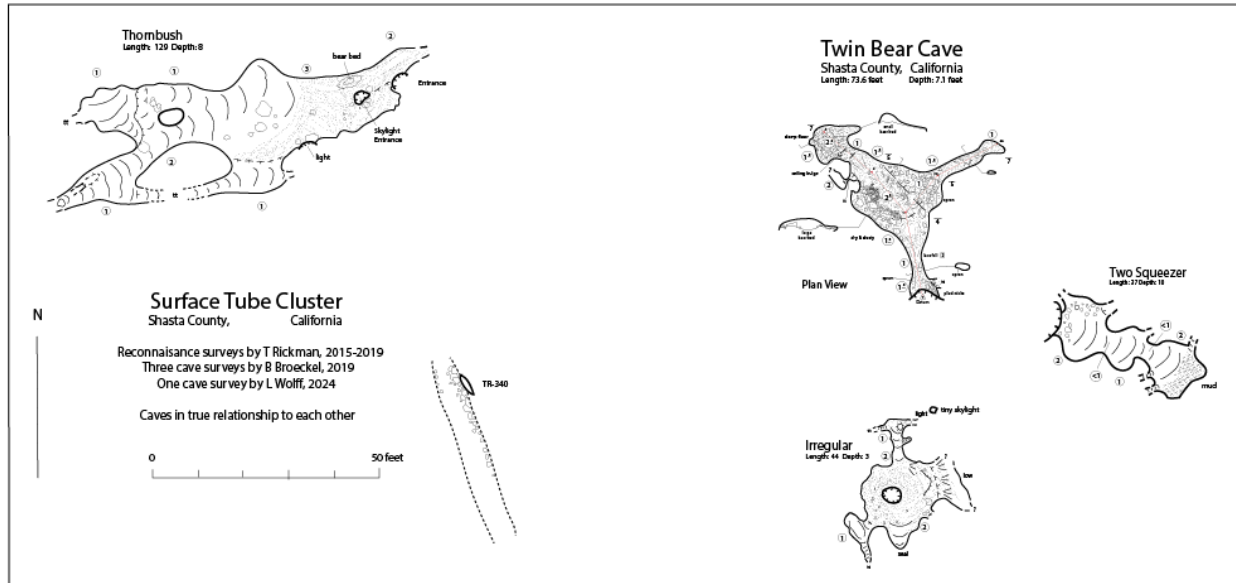
CJ took the tape into the cave, down a small lava fall and onto the dusty floor. The magnetic anomaly that plagues basaltic areas was in full operation, with the compass needle exhibiting swings of up to 20 degrees! It looked to be a single, simple passage, until we looked to the right and into a side passage. Moving a few blocks and much groaning and squirming got CJ into the passage. A disto shot from her station to the seal at the end garnered 26.6 hard won feet; as I lay comfortably in the first bear bed, she rolled over small rubble and mud. Kit had worked his way down to the first station and helped guide her feet out of the low passage and replaced the two big blocks that had been moved.

The second shot was a short one over the bear bed. I don't know about the bears, but laying on some of the manzanita sticks that lined part of the bed wasn't comfortable. At the second station a small hole through solid lava led into a larger side passage on the left; we couldn't get through but could see about five feet before it turned a corner. From here the cave is more constricted. The third station was beyond a low spot with a small ceiling bulge on one side of the passage. The last station was set just shy of the end of the cave, crossing over the second bear bed. This one was small rocks and mud, not as comfy as the first bed, but the ceiling was a little higher. This final room of the cave is damp where the rest of the cave is bone dry and dusty.

Twin Bear Cave was named for the two bear beds in the cave. The main passage is 47 feet long and the side passage 26.6 feet. Total for the cave is 73.6 feet in length, and 7.1 feet in depth. The researcher wanted a detailed map of this small cave. The survey took almost five hours to complete in this very short cave. While the crew played, Kit & Liz finished up the drawing in Twin Bear.

The rest of the caves? Three were surveyed by Bill: Irregular, Two Squeezer and Thornbush. The upper cave was gps'd by Tom a few years ago and guesstimated at about 40 feet in length. Jim, CJ, and Tom went to look at it; Jim says it goes both up and down-hill from the drop-down entrance. For the rest of the day, we took an entrance tour. Surf's Up & Flat Rat are easily found, but the road into the old quarry that houses Jeffery Pine, Kiva, Folded and some others had been burned over and deadfall jack-strawed all over the road. Then it was off to Fuzzy Bunny Cave. From there Wolff's headed home and McKinley's headed to Rusty Cave. All in all, a really good day.





29 Lava Tubes over 5 Days – I’m happy and exhausted

Last month, CJ and Kit McKinley visited me (Elizabeth Symington) in Modoc county. We stayed at the same RV park and caved for five days straight. Sunday, we explored two caves. Monday, we crawled around nine caves. Then on Tuesday we logged 10! By Wednesday, I texted a caving friend, Dave Todd, that I didn’t know how I could keep up this pace. CJ and Kit cave hard! Thankfully it snowed that day, so we caved for half a day and then retreated to Kit and CJ’s trailer for spiked hot coco and Yahtzee. Then on Thursday we just did six caves. Altogether for the week, we logged about 23 hours underground!

Caving Highlights:

1. I got to use my vertical gear for the first time! I wasn’t scared until I looked down into the pit entrance of Duffys Old Still Well. It was absolutely worth it!
2. I signed up for a free Geocaching account and logged my first two finds. I also discovered that I’ve driven right by several caches for months!
3. I got to explore several caves that have been on my list, like Caldwell ice cave. I knew where it was, but I wanted to explore it with friends since the floor disappears quite regularly.
4. Dave Todd, aka Dave #3, joined us for a day of caving. He took us to Glittery Hole, a cave that he discovered decorated in gold bacterial mats. It was an odd shaped cave, with a long crawl that made several 90 degree turns.

By the end of the week, I feel like I leveled up all thanks to Kit and CJ mentoring. Thank you for teaching me! I learned four new knots and I did a changeover for the first time. I also have a better idea of what I want to carry with me: a fleece vest and more snacks! I love being a part of SAG and experiencing the joy of caving together. I'm covered in bruises and couldn't be happier. Until next time!

We explored so many caves, I don't even remember the name of this exact one.

I do recall discovering how much I LOVE caving in coveralls; they're so warm and I didn't care if I ripped them. Plus, the Dickies ladies' cut is somewhat flattering.





There was a three foot long, thick cobweb hanging from a cave ceiling, that appeared to have a dead bat inside of it!

This week we also saw a petrified bat that was clinging to the ceiling and a grey fox skeleton. It was all very fitting given that it was Halloween week and Bat Week. Photo by Dave Todd.

Four Cave Day – by Dave Mundt

September 14, CJ McKinley and Tessa Richardson were our Trip Leaders for a fast fun day of caving. We had some new faces join us - Daniel Hewitt brought co-worker Karli Atwell, new SAG member Suzanne Swanson was in attendance, and Zach Laibinis visiting from Oregon (Zach worked at Oregon Caves this summer) also joined.

We visited James Brothers, Sign, Three Level and Bat Cave. I had always been fascinated by the idea of going into a cave with ice in it, and Tessa did not disappoint at taking us into Three Level! It was Zach's first lava tube, and he had a great time – and had a shredded shirt to show it.

Daniel had the key for Bat Cave and allowed us to go in under caution. We were surprised, not by bats, but by a scorpion Karli found. Also seen on our trip underground were a frog, a beautiful black beetle, a small bone (probably from a small rodent) and some frost in Three Level. Tessa showed us all pictures of Three Level when there is more water and the cave has a lot more ice and frost, and we took a little “absolute dark” break in the area just past the Sarcophagus.



Zach, Karli and Suzanne (entering the room) looking at the ice floor, in some places 4-5 inches thick!

SAG RAG

STAMP

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