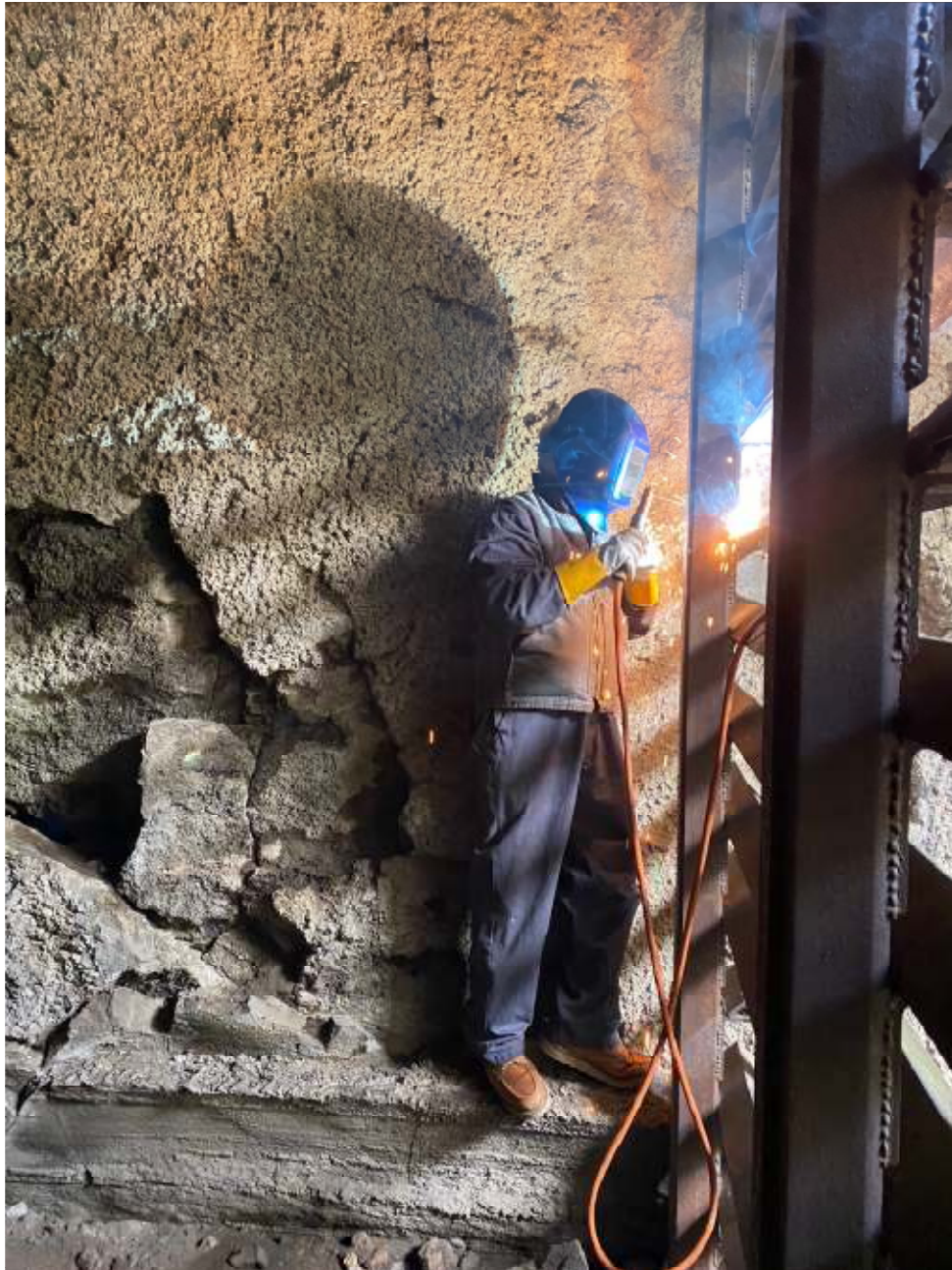


# sag rag

43:3 May-June 2024



**Sand Cave Gate Repair (Mike Spiess) March 24, 2024**

**INSIDE: April and May minutes, cave conservation events, and a new lava tube!**

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 welcomed for consideration, to Dave Smith, 321 Mesa Verde Ct., Chico, CA 95973 or <theotherdavesmith@gmail.com>.

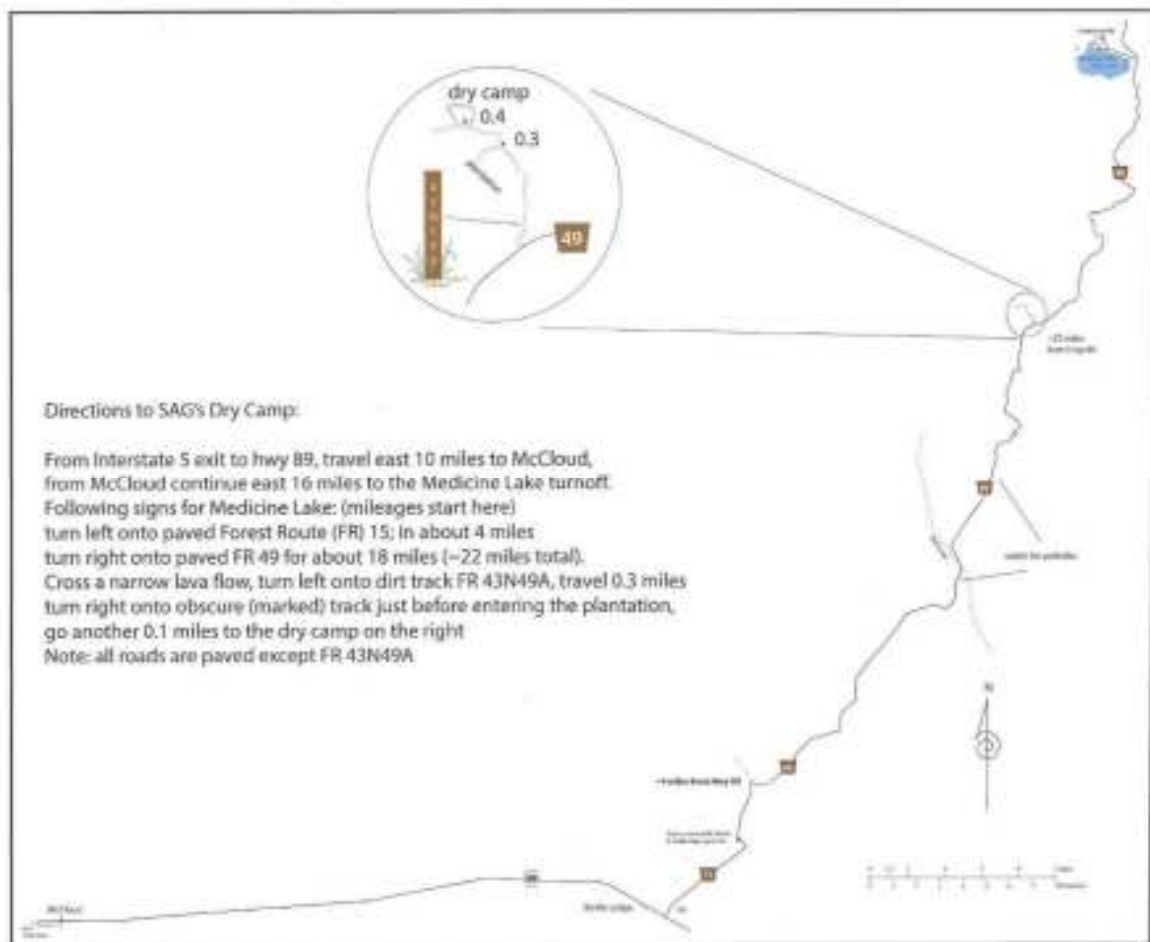
## Upcoming SAG Meetings:

### Fri-Sun July 26-28. Dry Camp. Meeting Sat, 7:30 pm

Directions (see map):

**From the south** exit I5 at Hwy 89 (McCloud) and continue east 26 miles to Bartle. Turn left onto Medicine Lake Rd (FS15), and at 4.4 miles turn right onto FS29. Continue another 21 miles to **FR 43n49a** on your left. If you overshoot, Jot Dean Ice Cave is 1.3 mi. ahead and an easy turnaround point.

**From the north**, follow state line road CA161 to Hill Rd. and continue 12 mi to the Lava Beds National Monument entrance kiosk. There is an entrance fee, which you should not have to pay if you let the attendant you are going to Medicine Lake. Continue about 8 miles to the Medicine Lake cutoff, FR49. Continue 17 miles on FR49 to the FR97 intersection. (Note: the first 11 miles are gravel; there are also side roads to be careful about.) Passing the intersection, continue another 7 miles on FR49 to Jot Dean Ice Cave. The Dry Camp cutoff **FR43n49a** is 1.3 miles farther, on your right.



## Upcoming Meetings, contd.

Mon-Sun Aug 5-11. Marbles trip. Plan to arrive at Lovers Camp Sun Aug 4, as gear is loaded onto the mules Mon. morning.

### Directions:

Take **I5** to exit 773, **CA-3 South / Fort Jones Rd/South Main**. At about 15 mi. turn right onto **Scott River Rd**.

Continue 14 mi to **Indian Scotty Campground Rd / Forest Route 44N45** on left.

At about 5 mi take the left cutoff for **43N45**. (There may be a second left to watch for a short distance ahead, I'm not sure.) Either way, you continue on 43N45 another 2 miles to the Lovers Camp parking area.

Sat Aug 24. Meeting at Steve's.

## SAG RAG Summary by Dave Smith and Dave Mundt

Lots of trip reports are coming in, which is wonderful! Everyone is doing a great job. Limestone and lava, ridgewalking and roadhopping – summer weather is caving weather (along with fall, winter and spring of course!).

## Shasta Area Grotto Meeting – April 27, 2024

Meeting called to order at 5:53 pm by Jim Wolff, vice president, at Shasta Caverns

Present: Liz and Jim Wolff, Anna Chincilli, Brody Blacet, Mike and Barb Stufflebeam, Melanie Jackson, Dave Mundt, Dave Smith, Dave Todd, Tessa Richards, Daniel Hewitt, Kit and CJ McKinley

March minutes read and approved.

Trip reports still due, please email to Dave Mundt. Lava Beds – Tessa, Sand Cave repair – Kit, Shasta Caverns clean up – Dave Mundt

Steve Knutson passed away and SAG has authorized monies to help buy a rope box for the Marble Mountains. Mark Fritzke will lead the effort. Spencer Haggard has offered to do the plaque. CJ will follow up with both of them to coordinate.

Stickers for the back of the SAG cards at Shasta Caverns were done and handed off to Dave Mundt, he will let CJ know when he needs more.

Communications: Facebook posts and requests have dropped off. Encouraged members to post photos and fun to bring the traffic up. There is a weekly post that drops the dates of all the cave trips planned so that others can plan for dates. No new emails off the SAG NSS web page. The member list is updated and is the best and safest way to get sensitive cave information to members. The Facebook page is open to the public, reminder to not post locations on that site.

Daniel Hewitt has replaced Brad Rust and is taking over management of the cave data at the Forest Service. He has still to learn the entire scope of the job but would love if grotto members would email him any interesting biologic or archaeological data that we find in caves over the summer. He has been encouraged to reach out to the grotto if he requires any cave information, surveys, or maps.

Brad Rust reported to Steve Hobson that there was identified a pit opening on a logging landing and it might lead to a cave. He provided locations. However, snow and ice need to melt prior to exploration. It is reported to be in the Twin Crater flow

Tessa, Kit, CJ, Brody and Ernie Maier will be attending the National Convention in Tennessee in June, Melanie and Steve will be driving out. They have offered to bring cave gear if anyone needs help.

Mentioned Western Cave Conservancy performing the Natural Bridges clean up. Michael, Stephanie and James Newell are there now and will be expected to present information at the next meeting.

Liz's Lava Bed Survey is coming up on 17-18 of May. Please let her know by May 1st if you can help so that she can secure accommodation. Email or text her please.

The next WCC cave meeting is May 5th and CJ will be attending. She will discuss the desire for the grotto to have a trustee.

Marbles trip reminders. We may be able to haul up the rope box. CJ will contact Mark Fritzsche to see if it is ready.

Discussion about 2027 Western Regional, SAG to host. Steve Hobson wants to have the convention in the limestone areas around Shasta Lake. These present difficulties due to camping/convention type accommodations for this area. Concerns were also expressed about what type and numbers of caves were available for the trips for those not able to be vertical and climb up the steep trails to the caves. There are also very sensitive caves in the area and how can we protect them. Many alternatives were presented including Lava Beds and Yreka. During the weeklong trip to the Shasta Lake area in October, attendees will concentrate on attempting to make a full list of caves available in an attempt to flesh out enough for a convention.

**Treasurer's Report:** Melanie Jackson \$385.48 in checking, \$116.00 in petty cash for a total of \$501.48.

**Trip Reports:** CJ, Kit and Tessa had gone to Lava Beds the previous day and had visited Mazed, Goldendome, Mammoth, and Black Stout where they saw a bunch of obsidian in

fragments. During that day, they had gone to Discovery 1, 3 and 4 with Brody Blacet and Anna Chincilli. The rest of the group had done the clean up in Shasta Caverns.

Liz reported taking Adrianna Paschetto from Italy, Spencer Haggard's friend, to Lava Beds where they spent some time in Mako's Mouth.

Meeting adjourned at 1855

### **May 18, 2024 Shasta Area Grotto Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 pm at the Research Center in Lava Beds National Monument by chairman Steve Hobson.

Those present: Melanie Jackson, Dave Smith, Dave Todd, Jim & Liz Wolff, Steve Hobson with friend Dan Mauro; guests from So Cal Grotto: Brit Wylie, Leo Balestri, and Christopher Leet.

The minutes were accepted as corrected.

The treasurer's report has \$405.48 in checking, \$116 in petty cash for a total of \$521.48. A check for \$100 was sent to the WCC in memory of Peri Frantz and a nice letter of thanks was received.

No money has been sent to Mark Fritzke yet for the memorial rope box for the Marbles. A check will be sent when we know how much & where to send it. Mark contacted the packer about taking the box but has had no response yet.

Facebook site seems to be working fine.

Web page had one contact who left no info about himself, he was not contacted.

Listserv should be up to date; it may be a while before vacationing Doug will be able to make any more changes. He reported that Google had made some kind of changes in how things work, but he did say that the new names were added.

The membership list has been updated to include Sam Cuenca of the Klamath National Forest. Sam gave SAG a new Barnum Cave key.

Daniel Hewitt of SAG is now the official keeper of the caves for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

Western Regional registration is now open; regional September 19-22, 2024 in Cougar WA.

July 1-5 NSS convention; Steve & Melanie will drive.

Aug 5 mules to the Marbles; Steve reached out to the KMCTF about it, no response yet.

No SAR training planned for this year

APC has bats and is closed until October

Don Swanson (USFS?) was pleased with the turnout and work done at the Natural Bridge cleanup April 27.

**Calendar:**

June 28-30 Hat Creek campout

July 27-29 campout at Dry Camp

Aug 24 SAG meeting at Steve's

Sept 28 SAG meeting at McKinley's outside of McCloud

Oct 20-27 campout at McCloud Bridge; meeting the 26th

Dec 7 SAG meeting at Steve's; nominations for 2025 officers

Dave Mundt was pleased with the results of SAG's Shasta Caverns work in April. Want to do it again?

He plans to do a "Mid-summer Madness" issue of the RAG.

**Cave trips:**

-Lava Beds: nine attendees surveyed in four caves in two days:

Friday: Mushpot Cave 581.3' in the main passage with two side passages and two upper levels still to do or copy from the old Water's map. The bitter end is in a 25' diameter room with a lava seal after a very low cauliflower crawl. Power to the cave was off until 2:15pm to facilitate the survey. Liz, Jim, Melanie, Dave S, Steve H.

Saturday: crew 1: Not Well Cave (105.2' total); Running Lizard Cave got a partial survey due to bats, 35.5' plus some complexity found before retreating; Lilliputian Loop was left unfinished as the surveyors had to return to the RC for dinner & meeting, 23.6' surveyed. Brit, Christopher, Leo, Dave S. in all three caves.

Crew 2: Spearmint Cave was visited & deemed too small for the survey sketching class, so nearby Coronary Cave was used. Liz helped Dave M and Daniel with sketching with Jim, Mel, & Steve as survey help.

-May 11 Dave T found a little hole that descended into a long crawl into a good sized room south of Lava Beds. Today he took a couple of cousins to Tichnor's Cave. The cave entrance is swallowing the road.

-Jim & Liz reached the dirt pit on the logging landing. It is 4'X6' and 12' deep. Trip to drop it will be May 26.

-on his canyoneering trip, Steve visited a balcony cave about 200' wide & deep with ruins in a dark zone, in Arizona.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.



## A New Lava Tube by Liz Wolff

Wednesday, April 30, 2024 Jim & I made it out to a dirt pit that the Shasta- Trinity National Forest reported to SAG a month or so ago. The lava tube cave is located in a heavily mantled lava flow with a lot of brush and trees. Few caves are known in this particular lava flow that is classed as a basaltic andesite. Little to no surface rock is visible in the area with the exception of a fault line's vertical displacement.

The pit opened over the fall or winter and was found by loggers going out to work. It was easy for us to find due to flagging and reflective posts that were set up to keep the loggers & their equipment safe from caving in any more. The opening isn't very big and the nearest anchor point is at least 40 feet away. The entrance appears to be in an alcove to the side of the passage. The entrance drop is 12' to the high side of the rubble pile; it slopes steeply away to the south & east. We didn't take rope and vertical gear with us so didn't enter it, but it looks like it could have some good-sized passage. Some stabilization of the entrance may be needed during entry and exit.



Jim by flagging and entrance pit. 4-30-2024



Entrance and rubble pile 4-30-2024.

## Sand Cave Trip Report by Kit Mckinley

Members in attendance were Steve Hobson, Mike Speiss, Melanie Jackson, Luke Vroegop, CJ McKinley, and myself, Kit McKinley.

The weather was cooperative that day for March, without rain and pleasantly overcast. We finally had the opportunity to make repairs to the gates of Sand Cave. Great thanks to the Forest Service for use of their towable welding equipment and the fabrication expertise of Mike. I played my typical role of mule to ensure the efficiency of time spent working vs. time spent playing/cleaning. Steve manned and executed operations above ground at the equipment, while I prepped the pieces and locations for Mike to weld in the pieces that had been cut out by whomever had breached the gates. Luckily, they left them in the cave so we could use them. One bar of each gate (upper and lower) had been cut out by a cutting torch which made it possible for people to get into each side of the cave.

Meanwhile, Melanie, CJ, and Luke searched the upper end of the cave for a bat count and any new trash or any trash we may have had missed on a cleanup we did a year or two ago. Without much collected and minimal bat occupancy, they moved on to the downstream leg to continue trash patrol and occupancy inspections. Three buckets "full" later (see photo) and a report from Luke that he witnessed enough bats to warrant vacating, they returned in almost synchronized timing as Mike finished his welds and I was hauling equipment and supplies back to the surface. Once everything was repacked into the truck for Mike to return to the Forest Service, it was time for him to make way for his next engagement for the day. Next, the team moved on to correcting the drainage problem. The winter weather had redirected all the road water down into the cave causing a lot of erosion. The team moved rocks, gravel and dirt such that the wash off from the road would return to the ditch.



Ditch work Mar 24, 2024

Steve also had other commitments to attend to leaving the remaining four of us to head to nearby Barnum for another trash/bat check which ended up more productive than we expected. We ended up with another decent haul of glass and other trash. And not terribly far in, enough bats to again to give us cause to evacuate until another time.

continued





Barnum Cleanup Crew (from left – Luke, Melanie, CJ) March 24, 2024

## Hawaii trip part 2 (Part 1- Goat Skull – is found in Sag Rag 43(2))

On Jan 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>, Trip leaders Emily Davis and Kim Fredrick took CJ McKinley, Katrina Smith, Kit McKinley, Mike Werner, Tomisla Gracanin, Vetta Hackell, Scott Engle, Steve Bailey, Xochi, Jessica Davis, Bruce Dunlavy, Burt Ashbrook, Jeannie Bailey, Peter and Ann Bosted and others to the **Stone Steps** and **Natural Bridge** portions of “Kipuka Kanohina Cave System”

The Kipuka Kanohina Cave System (KKCS) is a unique and special lava tube system in the Ka’u District. It flows through the Ocean View subdivision. It has been measured around 50 miles contiguous off the slopes of Manua Loa. This is not one solid continuous cave but reflects all the surveyed passages within this multiple lava flow system. Much of this contains breakdown entrances, braided passages, and side by side flows. It has been dated to be 750 to 1500 years old.

The Cave Conservancy of Hawaii has purchased many of the lots with entrances to the cave in conjunction with the Legacy Land Conservation Program to lessen the damaging effects of vandalism and thefts of artifacts.

The meeting place was at the Ka'u Cave Farm, owned by John and Mary Wilson, and is the home of the Hawaii Grotto. Members of the Hawaii Cave Conservancy were also present and helped with the leadership of the convention. The participants drove to the Stone Steps entrance which was utilized for both days, however, the tours went in different directions each day, the second day going through the Natural Bridge section. Each day the attendees spent at least 4 hours underground exploring passages and learning about the cave.

## **January 31, 2024 – Kazumura Cave**

CJ and Kit McKinley, Katrina Smith and Harry (tour guide)

After doing research and speaking with the Hawaii Grotto, the decision to do a vertical day in Hawaii was formed. The Kazumura Cave system is on the eastern part of the island, closer to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. This is a unique and special cave being only 400-600 years old. There is minimal breakdown throughout the cave system and so many of the features are intact. This cave has many interesting facts: longest cave system in Hawaii at 42.5 surveyed miles, longest known continuous lava tube in the world, 33rd longest cave in the world, 7<sup>th</sup> longest in the United States, the deepest cave in the United States at 3,613 ft and has over 101 entrances (breakdown) into the cave. Most participants from the convention went into a separate, walking portion of the cave the same day.

The team went with Harry from the Kazumura Cave Tour web site. As he has an entrance on his property, he can do a variety of tours depending on the level of experience. The team, of course, did the longest and highest difficulty so that some vertical practice could be experienced, and they brought their gear so it had to be used. This is called The Maze Tour and only covers about 2 miles of the cave. There is a ladder down into the main passage of the cave.

Because the cave is so young and so little breakdown has occurred, features such as lava straws, dribble piles, smooth ceilings and floors, benches, evidence of each different flow, areas where you can see how eddies occurred, and how the hot lava patterned the walls are everywhere. Also present are areas of cave slime and multiple bacteria spots representing all the silver and gold colors, but there is a unique bacteria that produces pink slime. The tour takes you down to four different lava falls. The first, Mongoose Falls which is a 10 ft drop that is easily climbable. Next comes Eureka Falls which is 37 ft drop that requires repelling gear that drops down into the most amazing feature, the remnants of a lava lake. This lake measures over 48 feet across in almost a perfect circle that has big pie shaped collapses of the floor. The colors of the lava here are red and green. The ceiling is over 45 ft from the lake surface.

Downflow from the lake is Twilight Falls and Red Column Falls where the tour turns around and climbs out a ladder to an upper passage called The Sexton Maze. Most of the maze is crawling passages but this area has so many wonderful features of lava cooling that it is worth the crawl. Harry has rigged some rope so that the "window" back into the main passage is easy to navigate from about 15 ft up the passage wall.

On the way back CJ and Katrina laid down in the middle of the lava lake. Shining headlights up to the ceiling provided "shooting stars". Since that side of the island had recently gotten a good amount of rain, drops of water were falling from the ceiling and the light was reflecting them transforming them into falling stars. You could dodge them or catch them.

The tour then headed back to the original entrance. Harry was a very interesting and informed guide with lots of history about the area and the flows that created this unique lava tube. The tour was not rushed and lots of exploring and picture taking was encouraged. If you

find yourself on the big island with a day to explore, this tour is highly recommended. Find more information at [Kazumuracave.com](http://Kazumuracave.com). And then stop at the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park for more history and unique features of this growing island.



An example of the tree roots throughout the tubes on the island, flooftail plant hoppers are found on the roots.



these long lava straws were everywhere in Kazumura, Kit's hand for size comparison

### All aboard for a Lake Shasta Caverns Clean Up!





Lake Shasta Caverns thanks SAG for a cave cleanup! On April 27 a group of volunteers gathered to assist the busy caverns staff with some much-needed project assistance.

Note that tours were not stopped while the clean-up was conducted. This was strategic, as it gave the opportunity for several hundred people to see "SAG IN ACTION" - not just talking about cave conservation and practices, but applying it and living out the principles we believe in.



The group split into two teams, with the first team assigned to the bottom half of the cave to help work on moss removal. The other team went to the Basement Room, where field trips are held. The floor of the Basement Room had been pounded into near concrete hardness by the feet of thousands of kids over years of time, and SAG reclaimed about 30 square feet of usable space to help teach kids about caving!

### Cave with Care!

As summer temperatures approach triple digits, be sure to keep well hydrated and watch each other for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke!

HEAT EXHAUSTION		OR	HEAT STROKE	
faint or dizzy			Throbbing headache	
Excessive sweating			No sweating	
Cool, pale, clammy skin			Body temperature above 103°	
Nausea or vomiting			Nausea or vomiting	
Rapid, weak pulse			Rapid, strong pulse	
Muscle cramps			May lose consciousness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to a cooler, air conditioned place</li> <li>• Drink water if fully conscious</li> <li>• Take a cool shower or use cold compresses</li> </ul>			<p><b>CALL 9-1-1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives</li> </ul>	
<a href="https://www.weather.gov/socialmedia">Weather.gov/socialmedia</a> <a href="https://www.weather.gov/heat">Weather.gov/heat</a>			<a href="https://twitter.com/SacramentoOES">@SacramentoOES</a> <a href="https://www.sacramentooready.org">SacramentoOES.org</a>	

**SAG RAG**  
**321 Mesa Verde Ct**  
**Chico CA 95973**

**STAMP**

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