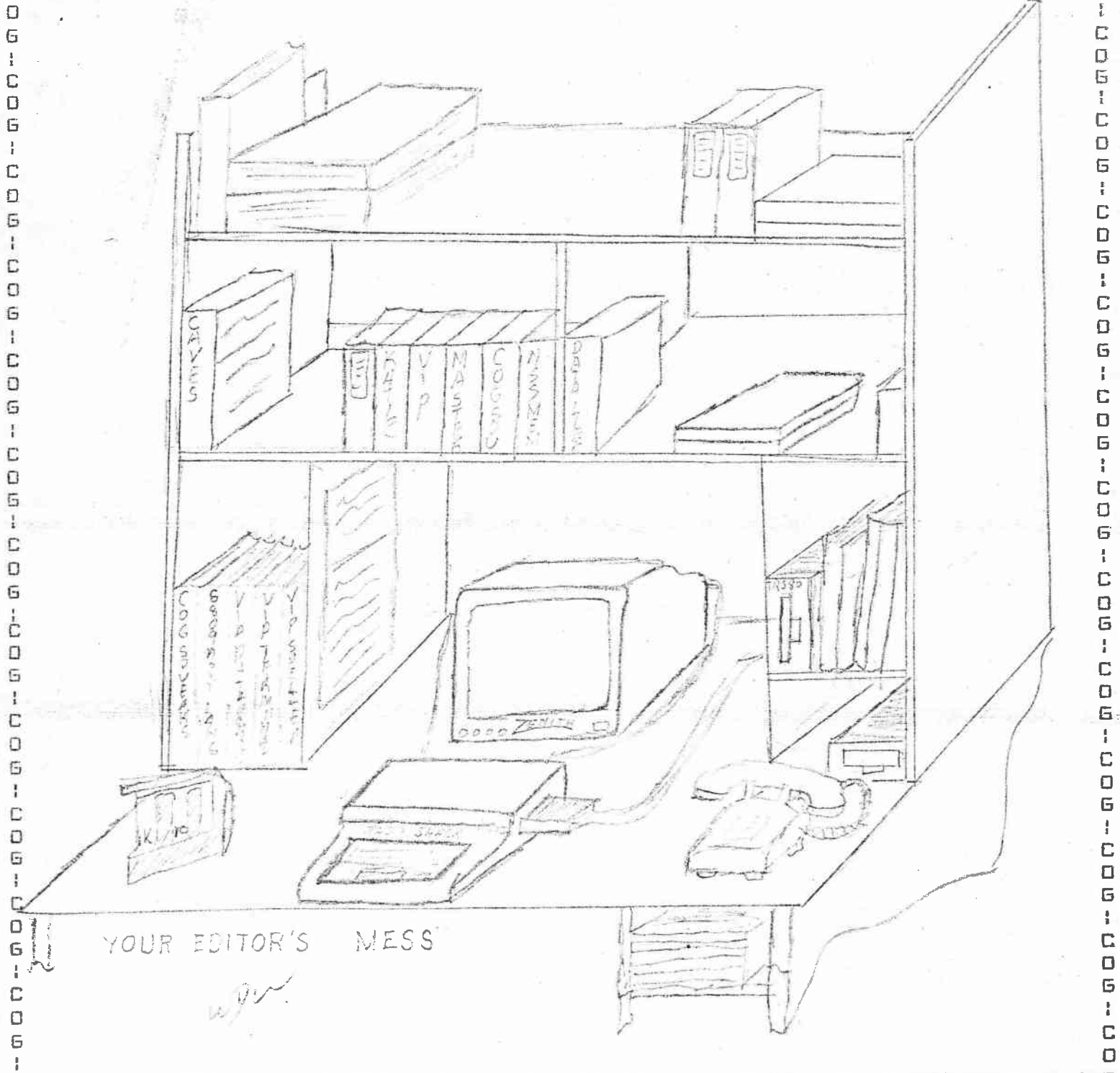


COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-COG



YOUR EDITOR'S MESS

COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-SQUEAKS-COG-COG

COG SQUEAKS AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1984

Building this issue.

by your editor, Bill Walden

Looks like I'll just meet my promise of ten issues. Due to a variety of reasons, I didn't get an August issue out. For those of you who were not sure, there was no August meeting. Karen, Katie and I did get to the convention where we not only picked some ideas but had a very good time.

This is the first issue to require more than one disk for building the Squeaks. October through May filled the first disk and June started a second. Oh my aching fingers.

COG is becoming computerized! I've been doing the Squeaks for almost a year now on my TRS80 Color Computer using a superb word processing program. Jim Blankenship has the SMAPS program for cave surveying, and I suggest that we look at a cave database. Please refer to the articles on these subjects. Also, I now have a MODEM and a super terminal program. For those of you who also have MODEMs, you can now send your trip reports to me via phone and save me the aching fingers!

Ed Potter's Journal continues this month. The complete story is just about finished but don't ask me what's going to happen to our two adventurers. You will just have to follow their adventures into the big cave by reading the Squeaks!

The folks in Sloan's Valley have been mighty good to us cavers over the years. Remember, Mr. Cassada built the block house for cavers to change clothes in? Phyllis' article tells us how we can partially help repay.

Enjoy reading this Squeaks and please remember, if you want a Squeaks to read it is your responsibility to help by writing up your trip reports.

COG OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Chairman: Paul Unger NSS# 13549	Vice Chairman: Jim Blankenship NSS# 23298
Trips: Rt. 1, Box 282	Membership 2777 Shelley Drive
West Alexandria, OH 45381	Trips Columbus, OH 43207
Phone# 513-839-4258	Phone# 614-497-0402
Secretary: Nancy Mahoney NSS# 22815	Assistant Secretary: Connie Hand
24 Estates Lane	39 North Street
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068	Columbus, OH 43202
Phone# 614-866-6767	Phone# 614-262-7837
Treasurer: Karen Walden	Trips: Chuck Daehnke
Squeaks Bill Walden	664 Wetmor Rd.
Editor: 223 Fallis Rd.	Columbus, OH 43214
Grotto Columbus, OH 43214	Phone# 614-263-7011
Address: Phone# 614-268-5865	

Bill Walden is also on the NSS membership committee. He is making membership referrals for the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky. Please forward names of any cavers not NSS or Grotto affiliated to Bill so that he may send them a letter and contact the grotto in that region.

M E E T I N G N O T I C E

The September meeting of the COG will be at the home of Jim Blankenship, our Vice Chairman

and membership Chairman. Jim's home is DRY. Please respect your host and hostess by not bringing beer or wine.

Meeting date -- September 14, 1984 at 8:00. Weather permitting Jim plans to have a cook out. Please plan to attend.

Place -- 2777 Shelley Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43207.

Phone # -- 614-497-0402

Please see map below next to letter from Alice

COG has been invited to join MIG for a joint COG/MIG Christmas December 8, 1984. Please see the letter from Alice Rolfes Curl in this issue. The last time COG had a joint Christmas party with MIG all had a great time. This should be discussed at our September meeting so I can send Alice an answer.

Also, please read and consider the letter from Bill Fritz on hosting a convention in Ohio. I think it is a good idea but also a lot of work. Is COG up to it???

LETTERS

Michigan Interlakes Grotto
PO Box 219
Union Lake, MI 48085

Alice Rolfes Curl
2805 Gladstone Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

August 4, 1984

Karen and Bill Walden
223 Fallis Road
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Dear Karen and Bill,

I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to visit with you and meet Katie again (she sure is pretty - those eyes). Other MIG members did also and suggested that we begin the "new tradition" of having joint Xmas/holiday parties by inviting the COG to join the MIG for ours on Saturday, December 8, 1984, in Charlevoix, MI. The time and location of the meeting have been scheduled for months. We are expecting to have daytime activities of downhill and cross country skiing and sledding as snow permits. Dinner and party will be at a rented facility and our hosts, Barb and Dave Patrie, will also open their home to provide sleeping space.

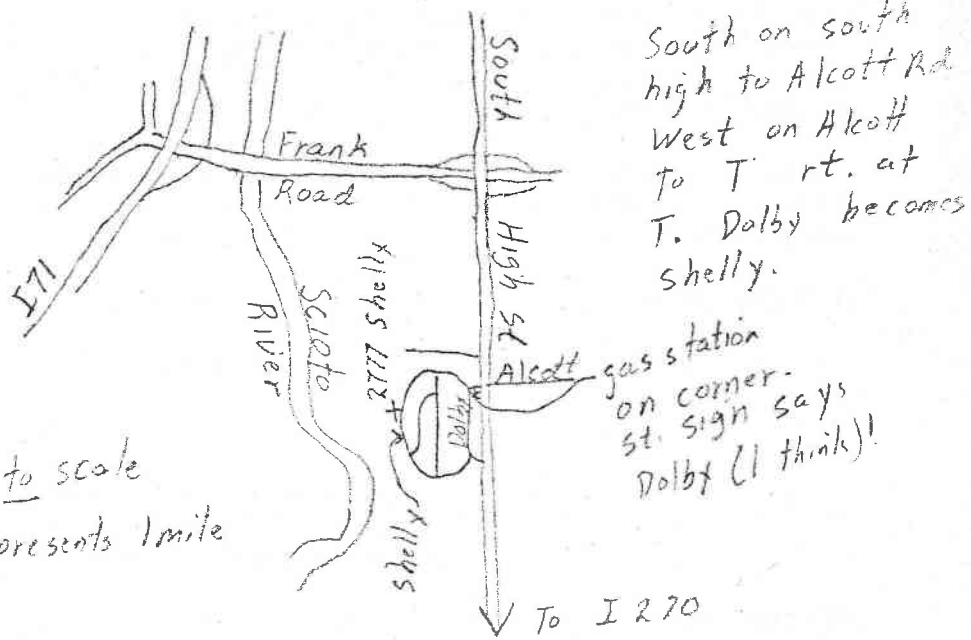
MIG has also extened an invitation to the North Country Region to hold their winter meeting with us then.

We hope that COG favorably considers our invitation and can look forward to your visit. We would appreciate knowing your decision as soon as it is made so that we can plan.

Vittoria continued to enjoy our vacation as we visited Cody, Yellowstone, the Teton, Dinosaur then home. She constantly surprises us with her adaptability thereby making us try more. However, she refused to enter Tongue River Cave!

Hope to hear from you soon.

Good Caving,



National Speleological Society, Inc.
Program and Activities Committee
William G. Fritz, Chairman
7585 Halsey Road
Milford, MI 48042

July 26, 1984

William D. Walden, Jr.
223 Fallis Rd.
Columbus, OH 43214

Dear Bill,

Pursuant to our conversation about a southern Ohio convention in Sheridan, I thought that I would send you a planning guide and some proposal forms. I suspect that the BOG will be ready to listen to proposals for 1988 in Frankfort at next year's convention, particularly if they have 1986 worked out by then.

I really think that the area down around Waverly or maybe a little to the south has a great deal of potential. As you know, you don't need a lot of big caves to host a convention.

If I can be of any help with anything, let me know.

Safe caving,

William G. Fritz

* WELCOME NEW MEMBER *

Welcome new member Ken Shepherd. Ken's address is 340 Sherwood Forest, Columbus, Ohio 43228. Please invite Ken to join you on caving trips.

SLOAN'S VALLEY CONTINUES THE STRUGGLE AGAINST LANDFILL AND BUREAUCRACY

by Phyllis Redshaw

On July 7, Dean and I attended the annual meeting of the Sloan's Valley Concerned Citizens at Cassada's Store. As many of you know, the residents of the Sloan's Valley area have waged a futile battle against having a landfill dump foisted upon them by the city of Somerset. This landfill was licensed over their strenuous objections, endless hearings, and court appeals. The landfill having been established, it then remained for the citizens to continue their struggle in hopes of seeing to it that the landfill was at least managed in a manner that would minimize the dangers of pollution of concontrolled dumping, but with the additional pollution of the mine residue which is not being properly controlled.

The manager of the landfill has recently been cited for several violations of regulations regarding proper covering of dumped material each day, large amounts of heavy metal residues have been analyzed in catch ponds which are intened to control run-off from the mine area but which are not all functional, and after-hours dumping has taken place when the dump was supposed to be closed from 4:30 PM until 8:00 AM. The SVCC group has been trying to exert pressure on regulating agencies to force them to enforce their own regulations, with some success. Even though citations for blatant violations have been issued, it seems the manager has yet to be penalized for any of them.

In recent months the group has had assistance from the Kentucky Fair Tax Coalition, an action group formed to assist mining communities with environmental problems, and we met Beverly May, KFTC representative who has been working with the Sloan's Valley group. This summer a student intern, Brenda Crawford, from Vanderbilt University has also been helping with water testing, and various people have been conducting hydrology studies in the area. The manager of the landfill threatened to prosecute the Vanderbilt student as a trespasser. Believe it or not, landfill operators are expected to submit their own testing results as a check on their compliance with regulations. Real unbiased results can be expected from this.

The problem of after-hours dumping raises the spectre of the dumping of dangerous chemicals unbeknownst to anyone, including the manager. This person's only reaction to being informed of after-hours dumping was that he wished he knew of it so he could collect his money for it.

If any of you have read the Reader's Digest lately, you read of the Mafia's involvement in lucrative danerous waste dumping in unauthorized areas - this landfill is just the sort of poorly supervised facility that such criminals look for.

The group feels that their efforts are meeting with some success in trying to keep the landfill "clean", but have had an uphill struggle to financially support their efforts in legal costs, experts' fees, etc., and have just about "bake-saled themselves to death," with fund-raisers. As cavers who enjoy the Sloan's Valley area, it behooves us to try to help the local citizens protect their area. Donations to the Soan's Valley Concerned Citizens would be most welcome (C/O Dorothy Cassada, Sloan's Valley, KY 42555). Letters in support of protecting the ground water and caves of Soan's Valley can be sent to:

Governor Martha Layne Collins
Capitol Building
Frankfort, KY 40601

Alex Barber, Director
Division of Waste Management
Natural Resources and Environmental
Protection Cabinet
13 Reilly Road
Frankfort, KY 40601

Senator Wendell Ford
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Charlotta Baldwin, Secretary
Natural resources and Environmental
Protection Cabinet
Capitol Plaza Tower
Frankfort, KY 40601

Congressman Hal Rogers
House of Reprmentatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Walter D. Huddleston
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

One of their requests was for a caver to accompany the Vanderbilt student to see the "underside" of Sloan's Valley. Bill Walden is working on arranging this.

Cressel Brown is still spearheading the citizen efforts, and we will hope to keep you informed of further developments as the Sloan's Valley group continues its protection efforts.

To outsiders watching this unfold, it appalls us to realize that the common citizens should have such a struggle to protect themselves from the machinations and/or neglect of their own government. We wish them luck

I'd also like to propose that the COS make a contribution as an organization to the SVCC.

Endangered Bat Getting Support

from AP

The Indiana bat is a balefule bit of a beast that passes its short life gobbling insects

and sleeping in caves. It is not among nature's favored creatures.

But so concerned is man for its welfare that highways, factories and even a nuclear power plant have been hung up on the drawing boards while biologists make sure they will not be bother the bat.

Rare creatures numbering only about 300,000, Indiana bats are on the federal government's list of protected species. An environmental impact statement showing that the bat will be left alone is necessary before anybody can use federal money on construction projects in its favored habitats.

The species is found over most of the eastern United States, but is concentrated in Kentucky and in southern Indiana, where it was discovered in 1924 at Wyandotte Cave.

Hal Bryan is one of three biologists with the Kentucky Department of Highways who spend a large part of their time making sure new roads steer clear of the bat's nesting grounds.

"I think our jobs are pretty important," he said. "There's no reason why we should threaten a species when it can usually be avoided with little trouble."

The bat is of interest because of its exceptional navigational abilities.

Roderick Suthers, a professor at Indiana University who has done research on various bats, said the Indiana has a wider range than most, finding its way between winter and summer homes hundreds of miles apart.

"It seems to have more navigational ability than other bats have demonstrated," Suthers said. "It would be interesting to have them around to study how that is done."

The bat, two inches long and five inches between wingtips, spends its winters hibernating in limestone caverns and abandoned mines. But not just any cave will do. Unlike the more common red and brown bats, the Indiana bat requires a narrow range of temperature and humidity.

"That's what's made them so vulnerable," Bryan said. "There could be a thousand caves in an area, and they may be able to use only one or two."

Two caves in Kentucky and an abandoned mine in Missouri are winter home to an estimated 90% of the bat's population, biologists say.

Like most bats, the female Indiana raises only one offspring per year, making multiplication a slow process.

T R I P R E P O R T S

RAILROAD TUNNEL ENTRANCE AND MINTON ENTRANCE

by Jim Blankenship

On August 4, 1984 Bill Walden, David Rentzel, and I met at Cressel Brown's home to plan a special trip into Railroad Tunnel Cave for the purpose of escorting Brenda Crawford, college student, into different parts of the cave to collect water samples. The samples would then be tested to see what effect the area landfill had on the water. (Please see articles by Phyllis Redshaw and Bill Walden--Ed.)

Bill confessed at the offset that it had been a dozen years since he had last been in this cave but after a few wrong turns, a short belly crawl, and a long hands and knees crawl (through six inch deep mud), we made it to the tight passage. This passage involved several hundred feet (guessing) of tight, serpentine, walking, crawling, chimneying, and climbing. Since this was Brenda first and David's first serious cave trip, they did not

feel they could do it. I made the suggestion to Bill that the two of us do it, since that was the only other alternative except to abort altogether and I felt we had come too far to do that. Bill agreed and off we went.

There were other minor complications not yet mentioned. Brenda's sample containers were pint mason jars! Needless to say I had to be extremely careful. Also, at the end of this miserable passage was Martin's squeeze, and I wasn't sure if I'd fit. I decided to handle one complication at a time. At one point I went down when I should have gone up and got into a real chest compressor that gave me a lot of trouble to get out of.

By this time Bill had made it to Obscenity Dome and yelled for me to come ahead. (It wasn't until I reached Obscenity Dome that I was sure of the route. At this point I remembered why I didn't remember. Who would want to remember such a passage? -- Ed.) It was slow going with one hand tied up carrying the glass jars inside a nylon day pack. After meeting him at the dome, I was starting to have my doubts. After another fifty feet where it was becoming impossibly tight we decided to turn back when Bill noticed that by staying higher in the passage we could walk it (well almost--ED.). In no time we made it to Martin's Squeeze and made it through with little difficulty.

The passage we crawled into is wide walking passage. What a relief to stand up straight! After a short rest we took our water samples from Pots and Pans Stream and left.

I would have liked to have walked the passage downstream to see the nice pits and waterfalls but we were pressed for time and needed to get back to the rest of the party. (It took Jim and two hours to travel the tight sinuous passage to the main drag of Railroad Tunnel and return. Needless to say, Brenda and David were getting quite cold, even in this warm cave. Oh yes, Jim did carry the pack with the glass mason jars packed in newspaper while I carried cave supplies for the two of us in an even larger pack.--ED)

About six hours after entering the cave we were climbing back out; water samples in good shape and ready to be sent to the lab.

(After a nasty little cave I suggested that I show Brenda a nice cave. We drove to the other end of the old railroad grading and hiked the trail to the Minton Hollow entrance. Brenda and David both agreed Minton was a much nicer cave. David would change his tune the next day however.--ED)

The restaurant at the Lakeview Motel is worth mentioning. We stopped here after the cave trip. For a little over five bucks you get a choice of barb-b-que spare ribs, chicken, meatloaf, and catfish...all you can eat! There was even an electronic organ and saxophone for our musical entertainment. The food was excellent!

Sunday Bill took us on an easy trip to Minton Hollow entrance. (My first trip in too.) I was impressed with the spaciousness of the passages. That was before we got past Dread Pool into the Big Passage! This place is huge! It was also my first glimpse of some blindfish.

(I took Jim and David two thirds of the length of the big passage. The Big Passage had flooded to the ceiling during the May flood and everything was slimy. David was having a difficult time with the mud; therefore, at this point I elected to return via the high crawlways. I had never before done this but knew these passages existed. We climbed up to the ceiling, crossed a flat breakdown slab and were into the high dry passage. David and Jim agreed that the higher level was easier.--ED)

It was getting late and we had a long ride home so we (I) reluctantly left. Being David's first big caving weekend he was rather exhausted. Bill and I discussed future connection trips into the cave and I am looking forward to doing it sometime.

SEVERAL TRIPS

by Bill Walden

July 5, 1984 Katie and I drove to Paul's cabin a day early to help Paul get ready for the COG get-together. Friday I went buggy riding with Steve Goeka, Paul, and Phil Erisman. Katie stayed at the cabin with Steve's wife, Gail. That evening I received a call from a neighbor with the message that my wife, Karen, had been taken to the emergency room at Riverside Hospital. So, next morning Katie and I drove home to check on Karen. She had had a bad reaction to some medication her personal physician had given. Karen stayed at the hospital for 10 days.

My apologies to the grotto for two trips in a row which I had to abort early.

Several weeks after the Grotto get-together, Phyllis Redshaw telephoned me at work to tell me that she had been to the Sloan's Valley Concerned Citizens meeting at Cassada's Store. Phyllis indicated that Brenda Crawford, the Vanderbilt student, wanted to obtain water samples in Railroad Tunnel section of the Sloan's Valley Cave. Now its been 12 years since I was last in Railroad Tunnel but I was reasonably sure I could find my way through. So, I called Cressel Brown and made the arrangements for the weekend of August 4, 1983. Please refer to Jim Blankenship's trip report for details of the cave trip.

Some things Jim didn't mention, the guano piles just off the entrance passage of Railroad tunnel have been kicked and trampled. These were near conical piles the last time I had seen them. I had been told by Dave Beiter in 1969 that these conical piles of guano were left by the Mexican Free Tailed Bats! Obviously, since those bats no longer are native to Kentucky, the piles were made a very long time ago. If Mr. Beiter was correct, then these piles were worth preserving. Also, I observed a tremendous quantity of trash in the lower areas of the cave. Lots of plastic bags and cans. Is the trash from the landfill? I have no way of knowing. Dumped in the pit entrance of railroad tunnel cave? Maybe. However, the road the cave is not very obvious. The road goes very close to the walk in entrance and I observed very little trash in the walk in entrance. If the observed trash is from the landfill, then there is a direct path for the waste to get into Lake Cumberland. (Lake Cumberland backs up into the Railroad Tunnel Cave.) It is the Lake which prevented us from taking the easier route from the Garbage Pit Entrance to Pots and Pans Stream where we took the water samples. (The lake must drop below 705 feet to make that trip.) I hope Brenda's samples provide some indication as to whether or not run off from the land fill is getting into the cave and hence Lake Cumberland.

The next weekend, August 10th, I drove to Kentucky with Chuck Daehnky and Karen. This weekend we hoped to find a back way into Wind Cave of Wayne County. Greg Erisman had found a huge sink with natural bridge across it next to the stream in Hall Hollow, a side hollow of Dry Valley. (Not the same Dry Valley as Doublehead.) The sink which has several entrances is just a short distance from the pit I discovered several years ago with Dean Redshaw, Greg Erisman, and Phil Erisman.

Greg had just purchased a "new" 1972 Toyota Land Cruiser and his dad, Ron, had just purchased a 1964 Scout. I drove my Scout down. What a switch. Nothing but four wheel drive vehicles at Paul's cabin.

Saturday morning we headed out in the Erismans' "new" vehicles. The trip over was uneventful save for several john stops. One of which was quickly aborted when I pointed out to Pat Erisman that the spot which he had picked to do his business was in fact directly under the porch of a cabin on the hill above and that he was being watched! Pat uncomfortably climbed back into the Toyota. I suggested that we stop at a church a short distance ahead where he could use the out house.

The vehicles were parked in the dry streambed of Dry Valley and we walked the short distance to Hall Hollow where Greg led the way unerringly to the sink. The sink is perhaps 100 feet deep, much lower than the bed of the stream and it has a beautiful natural bridge across it. Air was blowing out of the entrance. We prepared ourselves and entered.

A short distance into the cave and at a 20 foot drop, I was stopped by the tightness. My chest is to big. Greg and Pat went on ahead only to find another drop of about 40 feet.

this they rigged and dropped only to find another drop. I left the cave to bring in another rope. Meanwhile, they found they could free climb this third drop. When I returned with the rope, Greg and Pat were long gone! There was no doubt in my mind, Chuck's mind, or Mike Erisman's that Greg and Pat were happily running through monster passage.

Not being able to follow we exited to check other holes in the area. Ron had found one on the stream bank which we dug open. Again my chest prevented me from entering so Mike Erisman entered. Mike got perhaps 250 feet into the crawlway but was stopped by flowstone. Beyond the flowstone is WALKING PASSAGE! Oh well! So it goes.

Meanwhile Greg and Pat came out of the sink entrance to inform us that they were stopped by massive breakdown. Could this be the same breakdown that stops us in the main passage of Wind Cave? If so it would make sense. Hall Hollow cuts across and may have produced the breakdown. We looked in vain for other possibilities but found none. Paul Unger suggested that a return trip in the autumn, a back packing trip, might be fruitfull. Worth considering.

After leaving Dry Valley Ron took the group to a huge sandstone cave he says is even larger than the one at the head of dry valley. It is huge-complete with multiple passages and high ceiling. Really neat!

Sunday Greg and Pat went into Breating sink cave to map the connection route to another entrance. Chuck and I looked at the lower passages. I had intended to survey but discovered that I had neglected to bring my survey tapa. Chuck was delighted! (Chuck hates to survey.) So we looked around. The lake is going to have to drop another 30 feet before we can survey the lower levels.

We exited early, chatted with the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Caplan then departed for a buffet luncheon at the Lakeview Inn. Yum-yum, Catfish, chicken, ham, country style vegetables, salad bar, desert, all we could hold! You know, years ago it was a COG tradition to stop at the Lakeview for their \$1.95 all you can eat family style dinner. The price is a bit higher now, \$5.49, and its self serve, but its still all you can eat and you don't have to clean up the dishes! Why not consider returning to this old tradition? Besides, on Saturday evening they have entertainment! What better way than to come out of a cave all tried and, well, more than a little grubby and then sit down to a feast while being soothed by music?

With full bellies we drove back to Columbus, somewhat disappointed that we didn't break into the back section of Wind Cave.

BOB-TAILED TRIP REPORT

by Phyllis Redshaw

Having done no caving to speak of for the last three years or so, Dean and I took our nephew Danny down to Kentucky for the supposed COG meeting at Paul Unger's place. Saturday afternoon we went over and visited Rufus Hyden and his mother. I always love to see that peaceful little valley. We took a brief hike and Dean and Danny went down the entrance to Hyden's Cave. The water had been up and it was wet and muddy, so they didn't go far. Rufus showed us pictures of the water that had filled the low spots in their valley and had come almost up into their back yard.

Saturday evening we went back to Cassada's store for the meeting (SLOAN'S VALLEY CONTINUES THE STRUGGLE AGAINST LANDFILL AND BUREAUCY), and got back to Paul's in time to eat, following which Danny and I were taken for a rather wild ride in the dune buggies through the dark woods. While it was a good ride, I must say that it looks like a lot of landscape gets torn up unnecessarily by such vehicles. Danny, of course, now wants to build his own dune buggy.

Sunday morning, the three of us went over to Minton Hollow to look around. While we were getting ready to go in, a truck drove up with three men who asked if there were caves

around there. We pointed down the trail and they set off with a couple of flashlights and a short length of frayed rope. They didn't look like cavers to me, and I spent all of our trip into Minton wondering if they were just waiting for us to get out of the way so they could rob our car. We did encounter them inside the cave; they were pattering around not far inside. We left before they did, since we had to start for home rather soon.

This didn't turn out to be much of a caving weekend, since we went late and came home early, but at least it's a start, and we hope to take Danny caving some more soon.

Dr. Tuttle at the 1984 Convention

by Karen Walden

Dr. Tuttle gave a slide presentation and talk about his specialty, bats. First, some background. Dr. Tuttle is an NSS member and an avid conservationist. He started caving for the excitement and novelty of it and later became interested in bats and conservation. It was a gradual learning process and with time his academic standing and level of activism increased. His articles and photographs have appeared in both the Smithsonian and National Geographic.

Some misinformation was quickly swept away. The likelihood of contracting rabies from bats is slim and even sick bats are not aggressive. Fruit bats do eat fruit but are not harmful to the fruit industry because they prefer fruit that is already too ripe for shipping. Furthermore various bats are economically valuable as insect eaters (anything that helps wipeout mosquitoes gets a A+ in my book), pollinators and seed distributors.

Bats come in many more varieties than I was aware of. Some weigh less than a dime while others are large enough to provide a good meal for the natives in Paupaua, New Guini. The brown bat of Kentucky has a face much like a mouse while others look more like a fox or grotesque monsters and still another looks remarkably like a chubby cheeked chipmunk. These were all shown in excellent slides which drew many ooo's and aaah's.

Somewhat after the conclusion of Dr. Tuttle's talk you had the feeling that no community was quite complete without its own bat population and wouldn't you like to make a contribution as you go out the door?

THE 1984 NSS CONVENTION

by Bill Walden

The 1984 NSS convention was held at Sheridan, Wyoming. The Walden family left Ohio for the "wild" west a week early to spend some vacation time in the mountains of Colorado.

In route to the convention we stopped in St. Louis to visit the Arch park. The Mississippi was in flood and partially covered the road in front of the park. The high water did not deter a huge crowd that day and we had to wait over two hours for our turn to go to the top of the arch. During our wait we toured the museum which is dedicated to the pioneers and explorers who started their trek west from St. Louis, and saw a film documenting the building of the arch. Fascinating!

From St. Louis we continued west. In Kansas we stopped to inspect the mushroom rocks along the Smoke River. Katie had a ball climbing those rocks and for that matter so did her dad!

Once into Colorado we camped in the mountains west of Colorado Springs. From there we toured a gold mine in Cripple Creek (sort-of-like exploring a cave), climbed rock formations in the Garden of the Gods (sign at the highest rocks said technical rock climbing only. This caver climbed to the top of the highest where he met some rock climbers who asked "How did you get here?"). From there we drove the Rampart Range Road to Denver. What a spectacular drive. Right along the crest of the Rampart Range. Camped about 30 miles from Denver. Had a thunderstorm at diner time. After going to bed I found I couldn't sleep. So, I got up to go for a walk. Wow! Glad I did. The air was crystal clear.

The lightening from the now far to the east storm was providing a spectacular colored light show in the distance while spread below our camp site were the lights of Denver.

Next day we drove to the top of Mount Evans west of Denver. There we found herds of mountain goats. Katie was thrilled. The view was spectacular too.

Next through the Rocky Mountains National Park. The RMNP is a back packers paradise and I hope I can return to do that. (How about it Paul or Chuck or James or *** ?)

Onward into Wyoming where we ended up at Medicine Bow. Medicine Bow? What's there? Not much, but we had a good time. If you ever go there don't miss the saloon! I repeat don't miss the saloon, it is right out of the 1890's. Beer is only \$1. Anyhow, Medicine Bow's residents were celebrating their annual "Bow-days". The celebration was complete with a hanging of a bank robber, rabbit races, mud wrestling (Take note Murphy, no professionals here), melodrama, beer, periodic gun fights and random arrests by the law. The rabbit races were wild. People were betting as much as a hundred to \$150 dollars on the wild Jack rabbits which were placed in a box and then released. The first rabbit out of the circle won and so did his "owner". All rabbits were allowed to escape. Thirty percent of the money bet went to the town. On seeing the rabbits Katie asked, "Those aren't really rabbits, are they?"

From Medicine Bow we drove up to Hell's Half Acre. Sort of a miniature Grand Canyon.

From there we went up through Thermopolis then across the Big Horn Mountains to Sheridan and to the convention site.

We certainly saw a lot of spectacular scenery on our way to the convention but were none-the-less glad to be at the NSS convention and see a lot of familiar faces. First of those familiar faces were ex-COGER Rick Day and our friend from Miami Valley Grotto, Doc Dougherty.

The campground access was my only real complaint. Vehicles were not permitted down the hill to the campground and our camp had to be carted down. Not much fun when you're tired. Other than that inconvenience, the convention was well organized. The campground was directly across the street from the college. It was nice to get up in the morning and have but a short walk to the showers. The Porta-Johns were the best ever in the campground.

Monday we took it easy. We spent the day loafing and talking to our neighbors and making new friends. That night we enjoyed a terrific Howdy Party with great country music and lots of beer and good food. How do they do it? So cheap! Karen and I danced our legs off that night. The music was presented by the Powder River Boys a local country and western band. Smooth.

Tuesday I attended the Computer Applications Session, (Please see the short articles by me on the SMAPS program and a database for cave inventory management.) and the Cave Survey and Cartography Session. That evening Karen and I attended a local history program on the Bozeman trail. The program was informally presented by a local who has walked a good part of the trail. His slides were excellent as was his presentation.

Wednesday I attended Evelyn Bradshaw's workshop on internal organizations. The internal organizations are the grottos for those of you who don't know. Anyhow we discussed some of the problems which have haunted the COG and other grottos in recent times. It seems we have been doing things right for the past year. We need to continue this newsletter. (Hint please write up your trip reports and submit your stories and articles.) We need to contact area cavers and interest them in the NSS and COG. Jim Blankenship as membership chairman has done a good job doing that. We need to organize beginners trips and involve new people in surveying.

That afternoon I got involved in the infamous speleolympics. Not as an entrant, but as a helper and a judge. On arriving on the scene, I discovered that with only 30 minutes to the start, the organizers were not only not ready but the course had not even been planned. Well, as a helper on many previous speleolympics, I went to work to influence the

organizers and offer my assistance. It was gruesome. Entrants had to do the usual run through tires, then through 12 feet of 15 inch diameter pipe which slanted upward on a 15 degree angle, through a tire part way up a tree, across a plank between two trees, through the swamp course, then through more tires and back to the start. I judged the plank walk. Participants had to walk the plank without touching the branch overhead, if they did, it cost 15 seconds. I stood on top of an old truck which was mostly submerged. Needless to say many participants who had walked the plank tried to splash me with swamp mud. That was the best part, for if they triad they sank to their waist in the muck! I think all had fun. My daughter, Katie, entered and came in third for the nine and under age group. She knew better than to splash me!

That evening Dr. Tuttle gave a talk on bats. Please see Karen Walden's article on Dr. Tuttle's talk.

After the bat program there was a party in the campground with all the beer we could drink. The party included informal slide programs in the community tent.

Thursday I decided to go caving. Karen didn't want to go so I went to the Tongue River Cave alone figuring that there would be hordes of cavers there. The drive to the cave was more spectacular than the cave. Tongue River cave is the most trashed up cave I have ever seen. Worse, Bill Torode's camera was swiped and buried in the sand inside the cave by some local children. We caught them and turned them over to the local law.

That evening was the Photo Salon which was well presented.

Friday morning I returned to the Tongue River Gorge and cave to take pictures. I took a lot of pictures of the river gorge a couple in the cave.

That afternoon we packed everything up the hill to the car. The temperature was 103. Again the complaint of poor access to the campground. That evening was the banquet at the Holliday Inn. The diner was served and was the best I have had at an NSS banquet. Jan Conn was the featured speaker. Jan talked of the exploration of Jewel Cave. (Please read *The Jewel Cave Adventure* by Herb and Jan Conn. The book is available from the NSS bookstore. When they wrote their book fifty miles had been mapped. Today Jewel Cave has over seventy five miles of mapped passageways. This mapping is the singular effort of the Conns.)

After the banquet and program we started home.

S M A P S

by Bill Walden

During the 1984 convention at Sheridan, Wyoming, I attended the Computer Section meeting at which Doug Dotson presented his survey manipulation, analysis and plotting system (SMAPS). It is an impressive cave mapping program. I quote from the introduction to Doug's manual:

The Survey Manipulation Analysis and Plotting System (SMAPS) is an integrated package of computer programs to perform all phase of cave survey data analysis. The design philosophy behind SMAPS is to provide a powerful state-of-the-art system which can be implemented on a large number of computer systems ranging from mid-range microcomputers to large mainframes. Also, SMAPS provides a simple human interface to allow even "non-computer" users to quickly and efficiently use the system.

Impressed with Doug's program I ordered a copy for the grotto for use on Jim Blankenship's Kay Pro II computer. The SMAPS program came on 6 disks and with a 30 page manual. I took the liberty of making up three extra manuals one of which I sent to Paul Unger for his review. The one of the two remaining copies is for the grotto library and may be checked out by anyone in the grotto.

This program will not require us to change our surveying methods at all. In fact the

formats required by SMAPS is the one we have been using for many years.

Hopefully Jim and I will be ready to demonstrate SMAPS by the September meeting at Jim's house.

DATABASE FOR CAVE INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

by Bill Walden

Dave Derowitch presented an excellent session at the convention on a database that he has been working on for cave inventory. Though his system and ideas seemed very good, it occurred to me that the commercial database program I have is well suited for a cave inventory management database without modification. It also occurred to me that the COG has surveyed and explored many hundreds of caves in Kentucky and Ohio yet has poor records. Worse, it will be difficult to pull information on a specific cave or location,

I would like to propose that we begin to maintain a comprehensive database on the caves that we explore and those that we map. Caves can easily be categorized as to availability of information to other grottos, NSS, or outside groups or individuals.

Please give some thought to maintaining a cave inventory database so that we can discuss it at the meeting.

TWENTY ONE YEARS AGO IN THE SQUEAKS - RABID

On June 30, Jerry Boynton, Pate Fromm, and Joe Voigt took Hedy Miller, an OSU student from Boston, on her first trip to Carter County, Kentucky.

On the way into the 'Park' to leave a note, they spotted some friends from West Virginia along Cave Branch below X cave. It developed that there was an apparently rabid fox on the opposite bank of the stream and that they were waiting aid, which had been sent for, to arrive and kill it. The fox lay still for some time but it finally struggled to its feet and tried to walk away, but it immediately fell face downward and collapsed. The Park Superintendent and a Park employee finally arrived with a pistol and destroyed the animal.

The note was then left on the front parking lot bulletin board and the COG party then traveled to Carter City. The Oligo-Nuck System was visited following the usual strenuous hill climb. At the breakdown at the inner end of Sloan's Misery a suspicious looking hole in the floor of the passage was noticed and at once speleo-moles started to dig! At long last it was opened large enough to permit "safe" entry and Hedy found a room 6 by 10 feet where the water, from the dome room tuted the floor of the passage. However the canyon was still plugged solid on either end.

The trip over the top of the hill was then made to the Counterfieter's entrance. After looking the cave over briefly, they then returned to the Park, showered, and left for Columbus by way of the Shawnee! By Joe Voigt, COG Squeaks editor in 1963.



CAVE FICTION

Ed Potter's Journal

by Bill Walden

Recap

In chapters one and two Ed Potter sucked Alfie McBride in joining Ed explore a cave into which Ed had dug. As we left our two heroes, Ed and Alfie had just broken into big cave and Alfie had to change carbide.

CHAPTER III BIG CAVE!

Alfie completed changing his carbide, struck his lamp, and looked around. The new longer flame didn't help much. The darkness was overwhelming.

"Let's rest a moment more than we'll climb down."

"Ok, your slazy crawls wore me out! I've got to get rid of some of this mud. Yuck!"

Alfie tried to wipe some of the sticky gae off but to little avail. He gave up. The two started walking along a ledge. Alfie was beginning to adjust to the dimmer light and could now see that they were only about twenty feet above the floor of a very large room. The ledge continued on about seventy feet where a breakdown pile sloped upward to cover the ledge. The room was a passage. The two sat down on a block and gazed about. Their eyes became more accustomed to the blackness. The passage was about 120 feet in width and perhaps 60 or 80 feet high. The floor was strewn with the rubble of breakdown and it sloped toward the opposite wall. On the other side one could make out several possible leads. In fact one very promising lead was roughly opposite the one from which they had just come. The ceiling was smooth with an occasional channel which Ed and Alfie thought might indicate some possible side leads.

"Well" remarked Ed "This is my walking passage. I followed it to the right even though it seemed smaller. Thought it would end. Wanted to check it out first. We'll have to go to the left before leaving."

"I think I'd like to have a bite to eat before going on, Ed."

Ed hesitated a moment before relaxing. Then he replied "good idea. We may be walking for a long time. Last time I walked at least 3000 feet. This time I hope to push it to the end. And, take some compass readings as we go. Didn't bother to take many on the way in because we really haven't come far from the entrance and because conditions ... you know!"

"I think this thing is headed through the hill rather than along it. But it's hard to tell what will happen. You know what the great hall of Little John is like? Seems straight as an arrow, yet it follows the ridge which makes a 135 degree turn. This may well do the same. Would like to see it go through the hill. All kinds of possibilities. No streams over there either. Could have some nice trunk passages if we could

get into them. This place is all possibilities - no limitations now."

"No limitations?" echoed Alfie. "Fun to dream isn't it? Think it will pass Flint Ridge?"

Ed laughed. "They have many scores of passages like this one. Fun to dream though."

Ed and Alfie opened their packs. Alfie took out a can of corned beef hash, a can of sterno, and a can of fruit. Ed took out a can of beer and a plastic bottle of nuts. While Alfie heated his hash over the canned heat, Ed sipped his beer and munched on peanuts. Alfie took out a baby bottle full of wine, sipped a little then returned it to the pack. Then Alfie enjoyed his meal of warm hash and fruit. Much refreshed, they put everything away and started out down the passage.

The breakdown pile rose nearly to the ceiling. At the top Alfie was amazed to see that the passage not only continued but increased in size. On and on they walked and climbed. Breakdown was strewn everywhere yet the ceiling was smooth. Ed took compass reading at the tops of the breakdown piles and estimated the distance to the top of the next pile. Much to his pleasure the sketch indicated a huge passage which passed under the ridge. His excitement increased greatly with this knowledge. Ed knew he had a major discovery and he had to push on today to learn its extent and possibilities. Alfie was keeping mental notes of the many side passages as they went along. He was glad to be with an excellent caver like Ed because of the many look-alike side passages. Suddenly Ed announced, "This is where I stopped the last time."

"You stopped here?" Alfie inquired in amazement.

"Well, I had left John behind and it was getting late."

"Let's push on."

The passage didn't change much. In fact it became rather boring. They had come to a place where the floor was hardened clay. They slowed their pace.

"Time to change again," said Ed. And then an utterance which shook Alfie: "Daan, my leg."

Ed was down on his side. Alfie couldn't tell what had happened. He rushed over to Ed. "What happened?"

"Hurt my leg," replied Ed. "tripped and smashed my knee. Let me try to walk on it." Ed got up and painfully limped around on the smooth floor. "I think it'll be alright." Ed continued to limp badly as he walked around in circles. Slowly his limping lessened.

"Daanedest place to get hurt, isn't it?" Ed remarked, being scornful of himself for falling on a smooth floor. "Nothing to bump into. Daan weird! Guess I'd better change carbide."

"And have a bite to eat, too," added Alfie. "Perhaps that was

a warning," Alfie said half jokingly.

"Hell, no warning. I should have kept my guard up. Too easy here. I was dreaming as we walked along."

Ed and Alfie changed carbide and heated their cans of food. Ed ate slowly and deliberately as if stalling for time.

"Well, shall we push on?" Ed said as he stuffed things back into his pack.

"Right as well. This is the most fantastic, yet easy passage I've ever been in."

The passage turned gently to the right ahead of them. It continued just as impressive, only the floor seemed to be going uphill slightly. It turned gently back to the left. Now the smooth floor had an obvious uphill trend.

"This reminds me of that passage in Bone Cave which suddenly ended at a wall. No place to go except through a small hole which not even you had the endurance to push," Alfie reminded Ed. "I need a little more inspiration to push that damn thing. No air movement, no water, I didn't like it. Didn't feel right. Hope this doesn't do the same thing. Seems like the ceiling is getting lower now. Lots of popcorn on the walls now," added Alfie. "Yeah, just like Bone Cave." Alfie walked ahead of Ed, then stopped and said, "Looks like the end, Ed. Same as Bone Cave."

"Damn! Can't end. Look for ceiling channels."

"Beat you to it. Look up there."

Sure enough Alfie had spotted a large ceiling channel. On the left was a "V" shaped indentation in the wall. Ed had spotted that after Alfie noticed the channel.

"Think we can climb up here, Alf? There's lots of popcorn. Won't slip."

"It's awfully steep. Think we might be over-extending ourselves?"

"You can climb it, Alfie. It's easy."

"That's not what I meant, Ed."

"I said it's easy. See I'm halfway up now."

"I can't see any passage up there, Ed. The ceiling channel is over there."

"I'm almost up, Alf. Hey, there's walking passage up here."

"You're kidding?"

"Nope. Goodbye."

Ed disappeared and Alfie cautiously began to climb. It seemed difficult to him. There were no good hand or foot holds as

the popcorn would break away when he pushed with his foot or pulled with his hands. The only thing which worked was body friction. Climbs like this terrified Alfie. Slowly he climbed, daring not to look down. Near the top the indentation was deeper and he felt more secure. He turned and faced into the "V". Now he climbed easily into the walking passage.

Ed was not exactly correct when he called it a walking passage, for one had to stoop and do the ape walk. The ape walk passage went up sharply and it turned gradually to the right, a full 180 degrees. It had to pass over the big passage below. Carefully he walked ahead. Alfie had read somewhere of cave explorers breaking through such a thin floor as he imagined this one to be. Once he was certain he had crossed over the big passage he hurried on to catch Ed.

On the left was a side passage. Alfie looked down it and saw Ed coming toward him.

"You should see this, Alfie. This is the passage which formed the ceiling channel we saw from below."

"I'd like to see it."

Sure enough the passage led to an overlook above the big passage.

"Now, I'd hate to come rushing alone in this lead."

"Yeah, there's no warning. Looks like the passage would just continue."

"It does, only the floor doesn't!" assed Ed.

Both enjoyed the view for a moment. Ed massaged his sore knee. Then they eagerly went back to the ape walk passage.

"What's the bearing of this passage, Ed?"

"Let me see," Ed said as he opened the Silva compass. "About 95 degrees. Which means we are following the ridge. Probably some distance in toward the valley."

Ed rushed on ahead very much excited. He knew this had to be the biggest discovery he had ever made. Suddenly he stopped.

"Alfie, a pit. There's a major stream down there."

"I'll be there in a second, Ed."

"I think we can climb it O.K."

"Ed, there are only two of us. We are perhaps overextended now. May much too much."

"Hell, Alfie, we're here. I'm going down."

"I think I'll wait here. Be careful."

"I'll look around and see if it's worthwhile."

"O.K."

Ed carefully climbed down. The pit was only about fifteen feet deep, but from above it looked twice that deep.

"Alfie, passage goes both ways. Walking as far as I can see. Don't have to get your feet wet. Come on down. It's an easy climb."

"All right. I'm coming."

"Let's follow downstream. The bearing is 105 degrees. Still following the ridge."

"This is the first running water I've seen in this cave, Ed. Rather exciting."

They followed the stream. It fell over many small rapids and didn't vary much more than twenty degrees from Ed's first compass reading taken in the stream passage.

"Hear that, Ed? Sounds like falls ahead."

"Sounds like it's got a lot more water than this stream."

"Sure does."

The sound of the roaring water was to them as the sight of a water spout to the nineteenth century whalers. It made the adrenalin of the two explorers flow. Both almost ran. Sure enough the passage opened. It was rather like coming out of a well lighted hallway into a moonless night.

"Good Lord! I can't see a thing. What have we found? Must be a huge and deep pit," exclaimed Alfie.

"God-awful deep! I can't see the bottom. Think I see a way to climb down though."

"Well! That's steep, Ed. You had better wait for a belay. We can get Alex to come with us tomorrow. I'm not doing this without a belay. We're overextended. What if one of us should get hurt. The other would have to find his way out alone and go for help."

Ed paid no heed. This was too much for him. Not only was it his biggest discovery, but the biggest discovery of anyone in the grotto. He now realized that he was in the supercave he had dreamed of finding. One which would rival the Greenbriar Caverns, but down those gung-ho fellows who mapped Sloan's Valley, or even rival the monster of all caves, the Mammoth-Flint Ridge System. Parts of this cave resembled the biggest sections of other caves he had visited with the people from Lexington or Columbus. The little stream they had followed cascaded off into the darkness but a great roar from the rock suggested a big stream or river falling from a great height. From deep in the darkness came a surging sound like waves hitting the beach after a storm. Ed had already started down into the pit.

"I'll be O.K. There are plenty of good solid foot and hand

holds. Plenty safe all right. Can't fall."

"Must be a long way down, Ed."

"As long as I have good hand and footholds I'm not worried. What could happen?"

"I'll wait."

"O.K."

Ed's voice was becoming too difficult to understand above the roar and pounding from below. Alfie was really excited too, but he thought of Mildred and realized he must wait it out at the top. He hated these waits for Ed because Ed could disappear for an hour or more while on a solo jaunt.

"Oh my God!" thought Alfie, "it's been over two hours since we changed carbide and we've been burning long flasks. Ed could get into trouble."

He looked down the cliff to see how his partner was doing. Ed was about forty feet down. With help from Ed's lamp below and because his eyes had adapted to the lower light level, Alfie could see that the bottom was only fifteen or twenty feet below Ed, who was standing on a ledge. Suddenly, probably because a drop of water hit the tip of the lamp, Ed's lamp went out. Alfie could just imagine Ed cussing out the lamp. Alfie watched the bright flashes from the flint as Ed tried to relight his carbide lamp. Then strangely nothing at all. Only continuing darkness.

"Ed! Ed!" Alfie called out into the depths. There was no response. He realized that his voice was lost in the sound of crashing water power. He continued to watch the blackness.

"Probably decided to change carbide. Why hasn't he taken out his flashlight?" thought Alfie. "I'd better change myself," Alfie thought with the sensation burning into him that he was going to have to go down into the darkness of the pit himself.

Alfie took out his spare carbide lamp which was ready to go except for adding water which he did. He lit it from the first lamp. Methodically he changed the carbide in the original lamp, checked it carefully, then put it into the pack. He removed all unnecessary items from his pack. He took a sip of wine from a six-ounce baby bottle of wine. He left only carbide, water, flashlight, and carbide lamp in his pack. Still no response from Ed. Alfie could see nothing below other than the faint dancing of reflected light from the surging water at the bottom. He checked the laces on his boots, then decided to take the flashlight out of the pack. He fastened the flashlight to his belt and checked it again. It worked. Carefully Alfie began to pick his way down. Ed was right about the hand and foot holds. One couldn't possibly fall. Alfie, though he was always respectful of height, felt secure. Only a gnawing sensation in his stomach bothered him physically. The wall was full of small rounded potholes each of which was just about right as a hand and foot holds. Alfie kept his head down to prevent water from splashing onto his

lamp tip. It didn't take him long to reach the ledge upon which Ed had stood. Alfie realized immediately what had happened. The ledge was chert, a flint-like rock which though hard is also prone to fracture. Alfie looked around. There on his left was a missing piece.

"Oh God," thought Alfie.

He carefully climbed down past the chert ledge. The bottom was now only fifteen feet below. There almost directly below lay the crumpled-looking body of Ed Potter. Alfie stared in disbelief for a moment before continuing. The climb had been an easy one and now he wished he had accompanied Ed.

"No, Ed should not have done this," rationalized Alfie.

He stood beside Ed. Ed had stuck his head on a protruding rock and was bleeding slightly. Alfie checked Ed's breathing and heartbeat. These seemed O.K. He began to check Ed over. One of Ed's legs was bent at an odd angle.

"Broken!" feared Alfie.

Carefully he pulled on the leg to straighten it. Once done he propped Ed's head up on a rock, cushioning it with Ed's pack.

He stood up and looked around. Ed's hat and lamp were only a few feet away. Inside the helmet was a handkerchief in a plastic sack which Ed always kept for some minor emergency. Alfie moistened the handkerchief with some water from Ed's canteen. With this he gently wiped Ed's forehead.

"Nothing I can do now until he comes to," thought Alfie.

He sat beside Ed for a while. Then he got up and looked around. The water came from somewhere near the ceiling. He couldn't tell where or from what height because of the darkness. The irregularity of the falls caused large waves in the pool below where he was standing. He could not see any route for the water to leave the pool. He walked around the perimeter of the room. No leads could be found.

"Why, there isn't anything here a man can follow," said Alfie aloud. "Ed got hurt and there's nothing here, no leads, nothing. Daan, Daan, Daan!"

He returned to Ed's side. Ed was beginning to stir. Alfie became a bit anxious. He was beginning to comprehend the trouble in which they were both involved. He would have to find his way out alone. Certainly the route back to the big passage would be easy and straightforward. But could he recognize the entrance passage?

Ed opened his eyes. They didn't seem to focus on anything at first. Slowly they focussed on Alfie. Then, rotating in their sockets, they pointed toward the gap in the ledge which Alfie too looked toward.

"Ed?"

"Daan!" replied Ed, with strain. "I should have known better."

"Ed, You broke your leg."

"That's the understatement of the day. Hurts like Hell! Pain shoots through all of me. Other leg hurts too. Knee feels like a balloon. You'd better get out of here. Get some morphine or something and a splint as soon as possible."

"First I'll go back and get my food and wine for you, Ed. I left it at the top. Better light your lamp."

"Will you do it?"

"No, you do it yourself. It may take your mind off the pain."

"You're right. I'll try."

Alfie turned on his flashlight for a safety lamp for the climb because he had to look up to find his handholds. If his carbide lamp were to go out he could not be stranded in darkness. The climb back up was strenuous but not challenging. At the top he grabbed the wine, beans, and sterno. Then he climbed back down toward Ed.

"Here's the wine, Ed. Brought a can of beans, too."

"Good, the rescue party will be able to sniff their way toward me. Hey, did you look around down here?"

"Yes."

"What does it do?"

"Nothing!"

"Rotten time to joke!"

"I'm not. There is a big pool at one end and straight walls everywhere except where we climbed down. It's evidently just a big doaspit with no leads at the bottom which man can negotiate."

"Daan, Daan, Daan! I hurt like hell. And I did it for nothing more than a God Daan doaspit?"

"I'm afraid you did, Ed."

"Daan, I'll probably be the laughing stock of the grotto now. Worse yet my name will undoubtedly be in the NSS accident report."

"Christ, Ed, you're in one hell of a spot and you worry about your God daan image!"

"You're right. I've got to keep my mind off the pain, though."

"How's your head?"

"What head?"

"Your head, dummy!"

"What's wrong with it?"

"You've got a nasty bump."

"I hadn't noticed."

"With that leg or rather those legs I guess not. I can't stay here, Ed. Are you comfortable?"

"No."

"Well, what can I do for you?"

"I guess I'm about as comfortable as possible with one broken leg and a smashed knee and head."

"Bye, Ed."

"Careful getting out. It's straightforward as I remember. Damn, be careful. Don't rush."

"You know me. Take care, Ed."

CHAPTER IV ALFIE'S SOLO JOURNEY

Alfie began the climb out of the pit. He knew Ed had two bottles of carbide, a can of beer, a partial bottle of wine, a can of beans, and a can of fruit. Ed should be all right for a while.

At the top he put the extra material back into his pack. In case of trouble he left the flashlight fastened to his belt. He looked back toward Ed who managed to wave and somehow to grin. At least it looked like a grin. Alfie rested a few moments then realized he was hungry. Yet, he had given all his food to Ed.

Slowly Alfie got up. He turned from Ed and started walking upstream. As caving trips go, this had been an easy trip. The only difficult thing had been the entrance passage with its tight crawlway and the horrible chimney. The thought of the entrance passage worried Alfie. The problem of getting Ed through the winding canyon, up the crevice, and through the crawlways weighed heavily upon his mind. Most of the cave had been so easy that a litter could be used most of the way. But, how on earth could Ed be taken through the entrance passage?

Alfie recognized the spot where he and Ed had climbed down into the stream passage. He had a brief urge to continue upstream. The climb up into the higher and dry passage was easy. He remembered to take the left branch thus avoiding the overlook to the big passage. The climb down the popcorn covered wall looked terrifying. He started down the "V" shaped groove. It was easy at first. One couldn't fall. The cave popcorn tore at his clothing and held him fast as he lay

against it. Alfie stayed as close as he could to the walls in the climb. It was a very scary climb for one afraid of height. Once down he started back along the big passage.

Over the smooth part where Ed had fallen and hurt his knee, Alfie jogged along quickly. Once he arrived at the area where the floor was strewn with fallen rock he slowed his pace picking his way through carefully. Once into the heavy breakdown he decided to change carbide.

He sat down on a boulder, switched lamps, and changed the carbide in the first lamp.

The mental notes he made coming into the cave now became clear to him. He adjusted the lamp so that he had a long flame. Good light would help him work through the massive breakdown rocks. However, Alfie's good mental image of the entrance passage was one of vast blackness ahead and a ledge leading toward breakdown on the right. He certainly had no clear image of the entrance passage as he would approach it. They had crossed several breakdown piles on the way in and each had one or more side leads in the vicinity.

The piles of collapsed rock seemed like mountains to the lone Alfie. He wanted to rest but his thoughts of Ed kept him going. Ed was in great pain and Alfie knew that pain to a lonely person is difficult to endure.

"That's it!" Alfie shouted aloud. He had found the passage. It was on the right wall. He made his way along the ledge. "Same miserable mud," he muttered. Into the canyon he went. Walking at first then he lowered to a crouch walk and finally to a crawl. It was just as he remembered. Reassured he just about swam through the pools of watery mud. On and on he went. "Hell, I don't remember it being this low. Oh, yeah, I'm nearing that damn place which about broke me into thirds. Belly crawl? In this muck...I don't remember a belly crawl. No it was a hands and knees crawl. Better check ahead a little though, looked travelled back there. Virgin floor here I think." Alfie pushed on until his ear was in the mud then he started to back out. Alfie thought "I must have passed the body buster crawl." Turning around was not possible so he continued to back out the passage. Once back where he could crawl he began searching for a side lead. There were none to be found all the way back to the canyon. "I'm sure this is it," he thought. So back up the passage he went looking for the most improbable leads. After all he was used to caving with Ed when one always checks the most unlikely looking places. One often finds something too, at least when he's with Ed Potter. Alfie found nothing.

Exhausted Alfie slowly made his way back down the crawl and sinuous canyon to the big passage. "Better rest. Wish I had some food. Shouldn't have left it with Ed. Better change carbide again too." He knew he could be in trouble so he took his time changing carbide and decided to keep his flame low to preserve carbide.

Next month - Will Alfie find his way out?? Watch for the continuation in the October Squeaks.