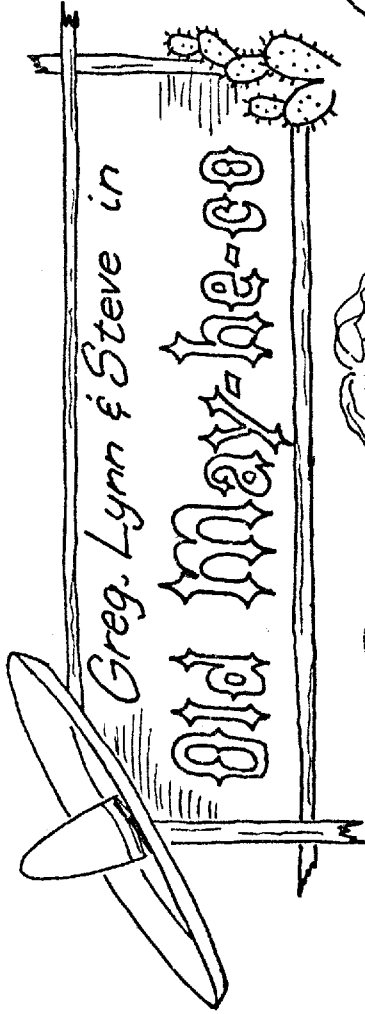
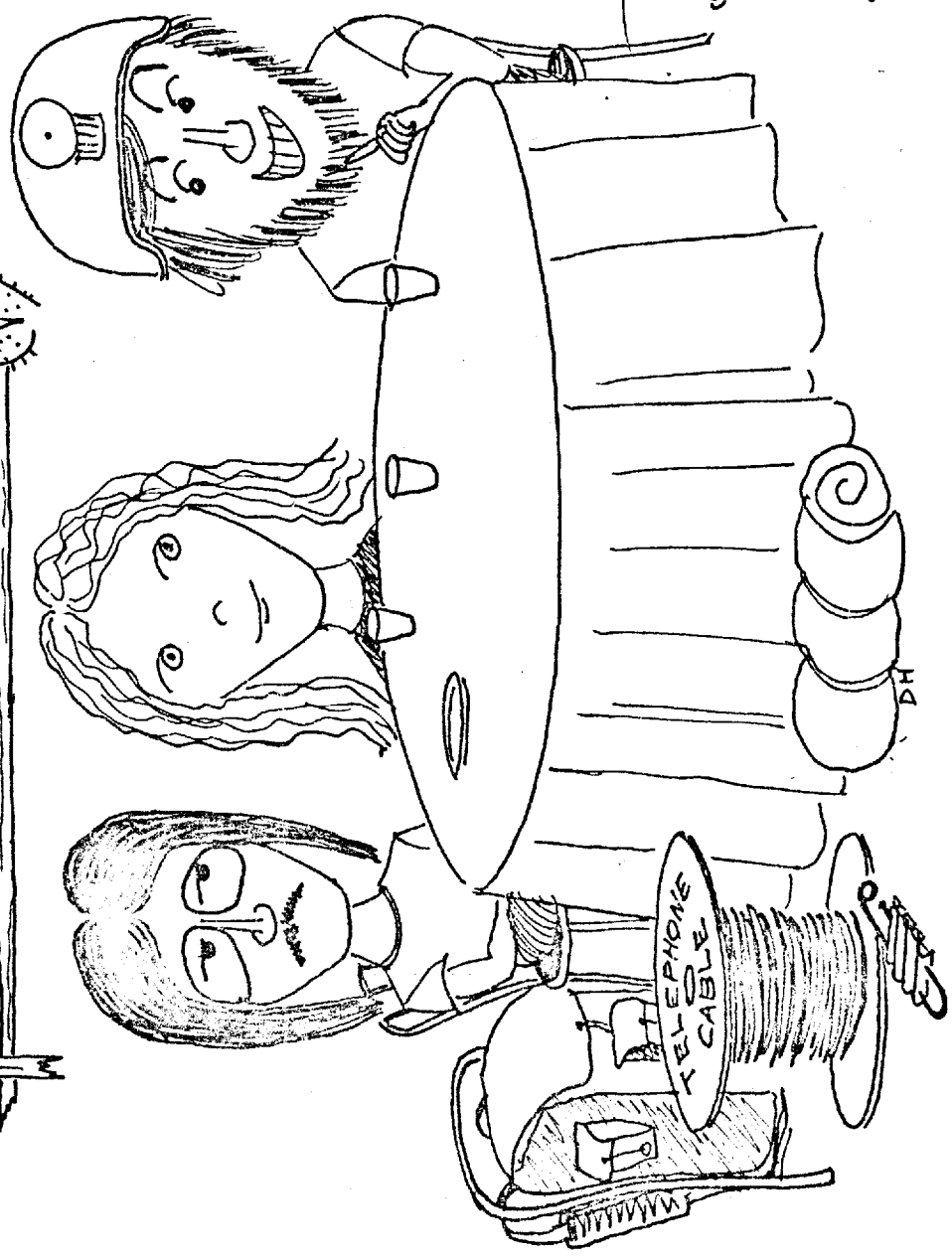
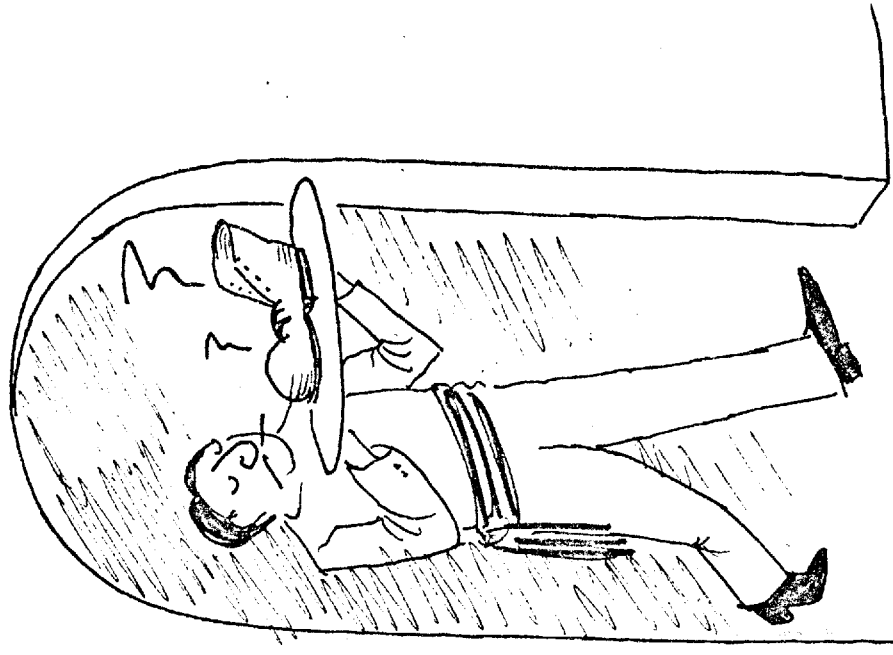


BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FEBRUARY 1978



Greg. Lynn & Steve in

Old May-be-co



"SEE? I TOLD YOU IT
WASN'T SO HARD TO ORDER
A MEAL IN SPANISH!"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Dave and Valerie:

As you and other members of the Grotto know, I have a terminal case of "motheritis," meaning that I worry a lot. I felt when I resigned as Newsletter Editor that I was letting everyone down, etc., and actually had this ego problem that maybe ya'll would do without me (kidding). I'm very pleased to say that you have both earned the "Purple Rock Award" of the Grotto by publishing the Grotto Newsletter. It's hard to imagine, but you are doing almost as well as I did. All kidding aside, you are doing a wonderful job and it makes me very proud to know that the Birmingham Grotto is still putting out the best publication in the South, in fact, even better than when I was its Editor. Grotto members be proud and contribute to your Newsletter. Dave and Valerie, keep up the good work.

- Kathy Spencer

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Meeting of January 9, 1978: Joe called the meeting to order. There was no treasurer's report. Discussion on a grotto patch was postponed until next meeting. It was announced that the owner's permission is required for entry to Dark Hollow. The many trip reports included Sinking Cove, Tenn., BAT CAVE in the Dutch Antilles, Mexico, GRAVES, OLD BLOWING, and GATE CITY. The program consisted of slides by John and Steve Attaway and Dave Howell.

- John R. Moore

Anyone looking for adventure in Mississippi: we've received info on a lead to a possible cave about 60 miles south of Jackson, near McGee, Miss. Entrance appears to be a man-made tunnel - Indian or Civil War origin? - that has been followed for about 200 feet. The land owner is a Mr. H.L. Broadhead, who is about 70 years old. For further details write:

Mr. Dudley Clark
P.O. Box 118
Butler, Ala. 36904

Happy Hunting!

DATES TO WATCH

- Grotto Trip Date Changed! -

Feb. 4 : GROTTO TRIP - RAINBOW CAVE
(Sat.) Trip Leader - Dave Howell
Meet 6:30 am Krystal in Tarrant,
or 9:00 am at Liberty Restaurant
in Scottsboro. (Call 323-3143
if any questions.)

Feb. 25: SERA Winter Business Meeting
Holiday Inn, Dalton, Ga.

NEXT GROTTO MEETING:

Monday, Feb. 6, 1978 7:30 pm
Red Mountain Museum Auditorium
2230 15th Avenue South

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Submit materials for publication directly to the Editors. Deadline for receiving materials is the 20th day of the month preceding the month of issue. Materials received after this date will be published in the following issue.

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 DOC'S DELIGHT CAVE *
 December 26, 1977 *
 *
 Les Buryrn - Reporter *
 *
 Gary Barnes and nephews, Jeff and Greg *
 Kris Buryrn Martha Hamner *
 Jose Castillo Mike Hamner *
 Tom Chamblee Larry Moore *
 Debbie Glaister Milo Washington *

On a very cold day following Christmas the above listed combination of experienced cavers, novices, women and children descended on DOC'S DELIGHT CAVE just outside Morgan City, Alabama. The cave is located immediately off Highway 231 just below the top of the bluff descending to the Tennessee River. The property belongs to the Kennamer family and permission should be obtained before entering the cave.

The entrance is easily found by descending the mountainside immediately below the hog pen, keeping approximately 100 ft. to the left of the stream. The entrance is in a sink, not part of the visible stream system. The entrance is very large and easily located.

While the cave has in excess of 4,000 ft. of known passage, our very large group was not able to proceed more than several hundred yards into the cave due to the difficulties encountered. The cave is extremely challenging and should not be attempted without a 50 ft. handline. There are several vertical climbs required, including one drop of approximately 40 ft. with many loose rocks deceptively projecting as apparent secure footholds. The initial part of the cave is essentially dry until the large drop is encountered. Within earshot of the entrance there is a difficult 10-to-12 ft. vertical climb followed immediately by an equal drop. Immediately after the large drop, stream passage begins at the foot of a 20-25 ft. waterfall. Initially there is a series of large rooms by which passage through the stream itself can be avoided. Shortly, however, the stream passage narrows and it becomes necessary to duckwalk and crawl in the stream for several hundred feet in order to gain access to the overflow area in the lower portions of the cave. This

area has several large rooms with one difficult drop next to the waterfall where a handline is recommended in order to return. From this point, extremely muddy conditions exist and it appears as if the cave has reached the level of the Tennessee River, although no lower entrances are known.

Several bats were observed but no other cave life was found except an abundance of crickets near the entrance and one small black salamander. Nice formations were seen throughout and, probably due to the difficulty of the passage, there was little sign of any vandalism beyond the immediate entrance area.

Due to the size of our group, progress was extremely slow on the return trip and it was getting dark by the time we exited. Several of the group were quite chilled, particularly the younger members. The hike back up the mountain in below freezing temperatures did not add to our comfort. Wet clothes were beginning to freeze by the time most of us could reach the car.

Despite our slow progress the cave is an extremely challenging one. It should be fully explored by a smaller group of experienced cavers willing to put in some hard work to see an excellent north Alabama cave.

 BIFFLE CAVE - Wayne Co., Tenn. *
 *
 Tom Chamblee - Reporter *

The setting for BIFFLE CAVE is in the sparsely settled ridge country of the Western Highland Rim. Unlike the central basin and eastern highland rim, where pastures extend high on the ridges, this region is mostly covered with clearfloor hardwood forests; pastures are mostly confined to the valley and cove floors. Common elevations on the valley floors are in the 580' - 650' range, while ridge tops range from 1050' - 1250' elevations (MSL). The ridges are composed of medium to massive bedded, hard crystalline limestones of the Wayne group and are capped by the lower Mississippian Ft. Payne chert.

The entrance to the cave is 30' wide by 12' high, out of which flows the cave's stream. As one travels upstream, he intersects a large transverse dome (50' high), at the top of which is another entrance in a sink up the hill from the lower mouth.

3
BIFFLE CAVE cont'd

Beyond this passage is a flat-roofed conduit 17' high by 35' wide until one reaches a large breakdown chamber 80' wide by 100' long by 25' high. As one pursues the right hand fork from here, he follows a large hall (35'-60' wide by 20'-30' high) to an area profusely adorned with limonite deposits embedded with calcite crystals. A little further on, you will pass an elliptical joint controlled tube intersecting the main hall at a right angle. This elliptical tube has a "saw cut" gorge through the middle of its floor. Further up the main hall, one encounters a massive breakdown, blocking further easy penetration. If one could penetrate this talus pile, I'm sure he would be able to see more large passage beyond and probably would join ICE CAVE further up Courthouse Hollow.

Retracing our steps to the first large breakdown chamber, we will now sojourn up the left hand fork of BIFFLE CAVE. This passage (average dimensions: 25'-35' wide by 15'-40' high) may be followed for 1000' beyond this room.

At a point approximately 500' from the first chamber is a large room in which some very unusual breakdown is located. This breakdown, composed of stacked, medium bedded Wayne limestone, is contorted similar in appearance to the folds of the Appalachian geosyncline. The cave stream has apparently undercut this breakdown, causing it to sag and produce this "folded" appearance. There are numerous good leads through talus at the end of this passage, making possible further penetration into large cave beyond.

This cave is very clean and unspoiled throughout, though I did manage to eradicate two names in the left hand fork -- Ray and Tank '54. The cave is extremely interesting and the surrounding region ideal for those who love wild, beautiful hiking country.

GRAY'S COVE *
Franklin Co., Tenn. - Jackson Co., Ala. *
December 28, 1977 *
Tom Chamblee - Reporter *

Taking the advantage of a few days off from work, I headed for Keith Springs

Mountain just south of Winchester, Tenn. Here, a country road ascends the steep escarpment of the Cumberland Plateau from the eastern highland rim (rim elevation 920', plateau elevation - 1920'). The road cut in the massive bedded Bangor limestone has intersected a large cave passage which may be part of an extensive development beyond. Upon reaching the crest of Keith Springs, I ascended a fire tower to be enthralled by the magnificent view of the pastoral rim floor and, in a southerly direction, the canyon at the head of the Estill Fork of the Paint Rock River. I thence headed south down a country road past Three Forks to its termination at Little Mountain Cemetary. At this point, I descended on foot from Cooper Top to the floor of a suspended sink valley, GRAY'S COVE, a tributary of the Hurricane Fork of the Paint Rock (elevation 670'; Cooper Top Elev. - 1800'; Gray's Cove - 920'). At the bottom, I followed a small version of the Colorado River to its subsidence beneath a cliff rimmed saddle at the south end of GRAY'S COVE. During drier periods, this input entrance is a large walking conduit, easily pursued. I noted that, during heavy rain and when the entrance becomes plugged with vegetal wash, water backs up to levels as much as 40' above the normal flow elevation. I thence crossed south over this saddle, passing through several choked ponors along the trend of the flow beneath. About 3/8 mile from the subsidence, I came upon a beautiful dry creek bed at the head of which is a cliff-rimmed entrance into this "roaring river." This used to be a main discharge point, an old "baselevel" before more uplift, re-subsidence and dissection occurred. (Just as are many of the sink coves whose floor elevations are related to the surface of the Highland Rim). Upon entering, I dropped approximately 25' to the same, swift, clear stream within. The sand shoals were frozen solid and there were numerous large ice spelcothems in this section of the passage. Having only one pair of boots and socks, I removed them, placed them in a dry zone and proceeded downstream in barefoot condition. Shortly I encountered an 8' high cataract on the stream's course. The flow was so mighty that the water was upsurging in a fountain-like fashion. This was truly an awesome spectacle. Retreating upstream from this point, I encountered some high,

 XANADU CAVE - Fentress Co., Tenn. *
 November 26-27, 1977 *
 *
 Dave Howell - Reporter *
 *
 Will Chamberlin Jerry Kaiser *
 Lin Guy Jeff Sims *
 Valerie Howell Richard Schreiber *

XANADU is a relatively new cave in the Obey River Gorge north of Jamestown, Tenn. It was found by Ray Lewis, who also found nearby ZARATHUSTRA'S CAVE; ZOROASTER'S CAVE was found on the same ridgewalk, but it was later determined that it was a lower entrance to XANADU. At present the cave is still being explored and mapped by various Tennessee cavers. Over the Thanksgiving weekend, Valerie and I accepted Lin Guy's invitation to come up and help map.

The cave entrance lies at one side of a beautiful inflowing waterfall. On the opposite side of the falls is a large, interesting-looking entrance to what has been named ALPH CAVE. It is thought that ALPH and XANADU might connect, but thus far no connection has been made. After a few yards of rather narrow passage in XANADU, the cave opens up into a borehole passage with a level floor -- "running passage", if you will. About 1000 feet into this passage we paused to leave some gear at the spot chosen as a base camp, at which we would stay Saturday night. We then continued deeper into XANADU.

After only a few hundred feet we reached what might be XANADU's most distinctive feature: a series of 15 sand dunes which must be crossed to reach a major part of the cave. These dunes are mostly packed sand with a few rocks; while some are quite mild, many reach 60-80 feet in height and slope at a 45 degree angle or more. These conditions make climbing them a very exhausting undertaking. In addition, Hill #7 (each hill is numbered prominently on top) has a 12-15 foot climb which must be negotiated; it is an exposed climb with few good (i.e. non-crumbling) holds. The origin of these dunes is a mystery; they are definitely not breakdown (the ceiling is flat sandstone extending in the same plane over all 15 dunes), neither do they seem to have been deposited by water action.

After traversing the dunes, we began mapping and exploring a virgin side passage deep in the cave. This was found to con-

tinue through several tight squeezes and crawls into a series of virgin room typically 30-40 feet high. Subsequently, it was discovered that this area tied into known passage near the ZOROASTER entrance (which was flooded at the time). Reluctantly we made our way back across the 15 sand dunes to the base camp after a total of 10 hours in the cave.

Lin, Jerry and Jeff began preparing an evening meal at base camp; Will, Valerie and I decided to return to Will's truck (parked halfway down the very rough jeep road into the Gorge, about 1 1/4 miles from the cave entrance) to camp there, as we'd left most of our overnight gear in the truck. Our night passed quite pleasantly in spite of temperatures in the 20's.

When we awoke Sunday morning we found an inch of snow on the ground, and snow still falling heavily. We hastily broke camp, then Will and I started down the hill to the cave to fetch Lin. On the way down, we were joined by Richard Schreiber, coming fully equipped to rig a pit that had been found in a side passage on a previous trip. After a quick conference at the base camp, Jerry and Jeff left for Knoxville, Will and Richard went to rig the pit, and Lin and I joined Valerie in the truck to wait.

Around 10:00 the snow changed to freezing rain; the jeep road was quickly becoming a mass of icy slush. At 5:45 Richard appeared, saying that Will was about 10 minutes behind him; we told him that we might not be able to drive Will's truck up the jeep road, and asked him to wait for us at the top (where he'd parked his van). He expressed indecision due to appointments that evening in Knoxville. A few minutes later Will came dragging up the hill, obviously exhausted.

When we tried to drive the truck out, we succeeded in moving it about 20 feet before it became stuck so badly that it would move neither forward nor backward.

Chagrined, we collected a few articles of gear to carry out with us and began the arduous trek up the hill in the subfreezing darkness, prepared to hitchhike back to Chattanooga. However, we received a more than welcome surprise when we reached the top of the hill: Richard was there, waiting for us in his wonderful heated van! (He had shouted to us that he'd wait, but we hadn't heard him).

(Cont'd. next page)

We arrived in Chattanooga at 11:30 that night; Valerie and I arrived back in Birmingham around 3:00 Monday morning (we might have made it a bit sooner, except that we returned via Dunlap, Tenn. so that I could photograph a rare old car I'd seen there Saturday morning. It was a 1937 Pierce Arrow rumble seat convertible.).

Will's truck sat there where we left it all week; the following Saturday morning the day of the Cumberland Caverns Christmas Party, we returned with other cavers and FWD's to retrieve it. This was accomplished without further trouble.

Moral of story: Never attempt on Sunday anything you can't bail yourself out of the same day!

***** During the
THUNDERING SPRING CAVE * SERA Ridge-
Franklin Co., Tenn. * walk last
Dec. 18, 1977, Jan. 1, 1978 * November at
David Howell - Reporter * Sherwood,
* Tennessee,
* one of the
Foxy Ferguson * ridgewalks
Lin Guy * that Valerie
Valerie Howell * and I parti-
Marion O. Smith * pated in was
***** to the

Sinking Cove area (on the topo quad of the same name). Our walk that day took us along a hillside as far as a major streambed shown on the map; as we ended the walk, we observed good-looking karst beyond this streambed, and resolved to return to continue walking the area. The opportunity to return came on December 18; Lin, Will Chamberlin and John Reid wanted to return to the same area to investigate STINKHOLE, a pit that had been found the day of the SERA Ridgewalk. Valerie and I took the chance to walk a bit further on to the place where we had previously stopped.

Our luck was good. Almost immediately we found a place where the stream flowed into a 20-foot pit. This was not enterable due to the large volume of water flowing in, so we noted its position and continued walking. We proceeded down the streambed to see if we could find the place where the water came out again, as this stream does flow lower on the hill (we had crossed it on our way there but did not follow it up the hill). Just a few hundred feet away from the pit, we observed a vertical entrance with a very strong sound of rushing water in it,

audible a hundred feet away. We climbed down about 20 feet into a large entrance room with water flowing out of a side passage to cascade deeper into the cave; we noted that the water's volume and rate of flow were about the same as the volume and rate of the water going into the pit up the streambed. We penetrated about 100 feet in, to a large room, then, for lack of time, we exited the cave and rejoined the STINKHOLE crew. We named the system THUNDERING SPRING for the constant water noise that occurs there; in case the upper entrance should prove to be a different cave than the lower entrance, we named the upper one OGRE'S VOICE.

On the first day of the year we returned, equipped this time to explore and map what we found. We began by splitting; Foxy, Valerie and I investigated an upper level dry lead off the large room while Lin and Marion looked into a lower lead, where most of the water in the cave was going. The upper level led to another, smaller room, at one side of which was a pit. Because of an offset in the drop we couldn't see the bottom, but it appeared to be 40-50 feet deep. Lin and Marion found that the cave's stream flows into breakdown in the bottom of the large room and follows several different paths, all of which are very wet. After rejoining each other we entered the hole in the wall of the entrance room out of which flows the stream. This passage was followed as a chimney over water for about 50 feet to a point where a duck-under at a deep pool would be necessary. With 6-8 inches of air space there, it would mean getting totally wet. We postponed further exploration and mapping until warmer weather.

We did find another entrance a bit further still down the streambed from the THUNDERING SPRING entrance; this has water coming from it, which we felt was probably the THUNDERING SPRING water. If this is indeed the case, there is a good chance of an in-cave pit in THUNDERING SPRING, considering the ratio of drop to horizontal distance between the entrances.

The following day we returned to the same area to continue ridgewalking; we located six entrances, and investigated all enough to determine that they qualified as caves. The best of these proved to be a broken 109 foot drop which we named GESTAPO DROPPA.

vadose cut domes and was finally stopped by a very deep pool in the stream's course. The passage is arched, with high joint-controlled canyon above and contains many black chert nodules throughout. Being late, I did not have the chance to walk down the valley to locate the discharge of the creek but no doubt, this is a very large, long stream cavern.

I started up the mountainside to walk out on Cooper Top above. The hardwood forests are tall, straight and the mountainsides are very clear of underbrush. This is truly a lovely wilderness area and is worthy of visitation by those who love to ramble rugged mountain country.

PART V
On plotting cave locations...
by John R. Moore

For those of you who do not like adding fractions of an inch, I offer this alternative. Look at Table II:

<u>Horizontal</u>		<u>Vertical</u>
A,E,I,M	0	A,B,C,D
B,F,J,N	1	E,F,G,H
C,G,K,O	2	I,J,K,L
D,H,L,P	3	M,N,O,P

Table II

Instead of adding numbers, simply write the number in its proper (first, second or third) place. A location coded HPH becomes (H)333, (V) 131, where (H) and (V) stand for horizontal and vertical, respectively. Using this method, the first digit tells how many full inches to move along the ruler; the second digit tells the number of quarter-inches; and the third digit denotes sixteenths of an inch. Note that the numbers indicate distances from the same lines as were previously used.

To find the ACS code for a point on the map, proceed as in Part III (December 1977 BGN), except that you record whole inches, quarter-inches, and sixteenths of an inch. For example, instead of recording (H)27 (V) 21 as totals, write down (H) 123 (V) 111. Referring to Table II the horizontal letters are BFJN, CGKO, and DHLP. The vertical number indicates the letters EFGH, EFGH, and EFGH. Comparing

them as before, the location's code becomes FGH.

If you have any questions about the methods I've described in these articles, see me at the meeting. There being no other general instructions or guidelines I can give you, this is the last article in the series. Look for another series of articles from me beginning in the May '78 newsletter. After two-and-one-half years of goofing off, hit-and-miss work and revisions, I have written a computer program to plot cave surveys. It differs from Greg McGill's in that output is designed and printed so that it can be put into an 8½ x 11 binder. See me if you'd like more info before May.

ed. note: Plans are underway to consolidate John's series on cave plotting manually...no idea when it might be completed, but let the editors know if you'd like a copy.



REPORT ON RUFFNER MOUNTAIN
by Kathy Spencer

Since the Grotto contributed its support monetarily and verbally for the Ruffner Mountain project, I will try to keep you all posted on current happenings. As you know, Gate City Cave lies in this proposed nature park, and if we are able to obtain the property, we would like to use the cave as a natural study area for children and adults. It might mean some work enlarging the entrance (I know I ain't going back until it's enlarged!). We hope to open our first nature trail on some 24 acres of City property on the mountain this spring for use of school-children in a pilot program: We might even set up a portable classroom with a naturalist, pending acquiring a permanent building site. The geology of Ruffner Mountain is fantastic and if you haven't seen the area yet you should. If anyone wishes to volunteer time, effort or money, please let me know by calling 833-4773 or writing.

EDITORIAL: TAG Cave Surveys

by David Howell

If you as a caver engage in ridgewalking, mapping, or even if you simply enjoy and seek to explore virgin caves and pits, if you haven't already, sooner or later you are bound to have dealings with any or all of the state cave surveys in our immediate area: the Alabama Cave Survey, the Georgia Speleological Survey, and the Tennessee Cave Survey. And if you are a caver who deals with any or all of these organizations on anything resembling a regular basis, you will almost certainly agree that each has its own good and bad points. With over 1800 caves on the Survey in Alabama, 2700 in Tennessee, and 300 in Georgia, and with each total growing, it is essential that these Surveys continue to strive to improve the quality of their methods of gathering, processing and storing information, as well as the quality of the information itself. A tremendous step forward was made when it was agreed that the three Surveys (as well as those of Florida and Mississippi) use the same data format; not only does this facilitate data input, but it also makes it easier for TAG cavers to obtain information about any cave in any of the three TAG states. But, though this standardization of format was a boon, further improvement is called for in each of the three Surveys.

The Alabama Cave Survey has as one of its best features a singular system of cave location based on the grid of ranges and townships which appears superimposed on all Alabama topographic maps. Despite the problems caused by irregularly-shaped sections, this system remains relatively accurate and easy to use, once one understands its principle (that of concentric squares descending in area). Also, the Alabama Survey is the only one of the three which publishes both its maps and data in one volume, thus facilitating use of the Survey. While at some future time this may cease to be feasible due to the increasing size of the files, for present requirements it excels. The Alabama Cave Survey, however, suffers from certain ills: for one, the question of ownership of the Survey is unclear. In fact, it is unclear whether the ACS is the property of the NSS, the joint property of the various Grottos in Alabama, the personal property of the individual who is its custodian, or whether it is a separate internal entity of the NSS. It is said that an ACS charter exists which presumably would define the exact nature regarding ownership, but the existence of this charter remains a rumor. Furthermore, it has been the habit of the ACS custodian to redraw certain of the cave maps submitted to the Survey, presumably for the purpose of standardization of cartographic format. This has led to a considerable amount of ill will and withholding of information among contributors who feel that the resultant loss of drafting quality will reflect upon them as the draftsmen rather than on the one who redrew the maps. While standardization of format is desirable for both practical and aesthetic reasons, there is undeniably a loss of quality in the map itself resulting from this custom, and consequently a loss of information, to say nothing of an increased chance of drafting error. Often it is important to see the cave drawn the way the actual mapper saw it; redrawing of the map by a third party results in the loss of subtleties imparted to the map by its original draftsman.

The Georgia Speleological Survey is the youngest and smallest of the three TAG Surveys, only carrying 302 caves. Some feel that it is the least organized of the Surveys, but if this be so, its very youth and diminutive size work in its favor: if major alterations are to be made or if information is lost, repairs are not as difficult as they would be with a survey with one or two thousand caves. At present, the GSS does seem to be afflicted with a lack of organization. There is currently no well-defined individual or group whose job it is to receive and correlate maps and data. The GSS' information files were originally stored on computer tape; these tapes have been lost or misplaced, perhaps irrevocably. A few copies of the printout, current a few years ago, are all that remains. Also, there is presently no system for periodic printouts to be available to area cavers; to get information from the GSS is as hard as pulling teeth.

The Tennessee Cave Survey is the most highly organized of the three. Operating on a membership basis, it has its own bylaws, elected officers, regular meetings, and is formally an internal organization of the NSS. Accordingly, the publication of TCS

maps and data (which is available only to TCS members) is religiously regular, and thus more easily kept current and up-to-date. Until lately there was some complaint among cavers about alleged TCS "secret cave files", but the existence or institution of any secret files was recently prohibited by resolution of the TCS. This Survey is obviously most concerned with details of its internal operation and dissemination of data, as well as with currency and accuracy of its maps and information. Because of its well-defined organization, necessary changes come more easily. The TCS, however, uses latitude and longitude to note cave locations, and this system is most awkward. Because of its difficulty, there are many discrepancies between cave locations and entrance elevations, or map quadrants, or even topo quadrangles. It has been suggested that, even considering natural expansion and contraction of the paper on which topo quadrangles are printed, a better system would be one locating each cave in millimeters down from the top edge of the map (or up from the bottom) and millimeters over from the left (or right) edge. At any rate, whatever system is used, it seems incomprehensible that a system less conducive to errors could not be employed.

As was previously pointed out, each of the three TAG Surveys has its good and bad points. Outlined above are the most obvious such points. What is the solution to the ills named here? Perhaps the best of all possible worlds would be a single master file of cave maps and data for the entire Southeast Region. Thus far, however, such a master file has not been feasible because there has been no one with enough time to correlate all the input that would flow in, neither has there been any individual or any group willing to pay the salary of a full-time custodian for such a file. (The care of a SERA Cave Survey WOULD be a full-time job; it's said that the care of the Tennessee Survey alone almost requires a 40-hour week!)

Putting aside, then, the idea of a SERA Cave Survey, what is to be done? The responsibility for action to improve the TAG Surveys lies with each individual Survey, and/or with the serious cavers in each state. (This is not to say that a Tennessee caver should not take an active interest in the Alabama and Georgia Surveys, or that a Georgia caver should not be concerned with the ACS and the TCS, and so on. The nonexistence of a Master Survey does not imply that information on any cave in any state should not be available to serious and responsible cavers, wherever they may reside.) Each state's Survey, whatever its ownership or organization, owes it to all serious cavers to provide the most complete and accurate information possible, as freely as possible within the limits of reason as regards practices of cave conservation and publication of cave locations. Each Survey must therefore take responsibility for its own improvement and "housecleaning"; custodians, whether they be individuals or committee, must remain open to comments, suggestions, criticisms. They must be ready to change, if change is deemed necessary.

BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
1429 17th Avenue South
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DAVID CAUDLE (AND EDNA)
714 MILLCREEK RD.
BARRICK, ALA, 35173

Alaska 1978
Capt. JAMES COOK
13c USA

