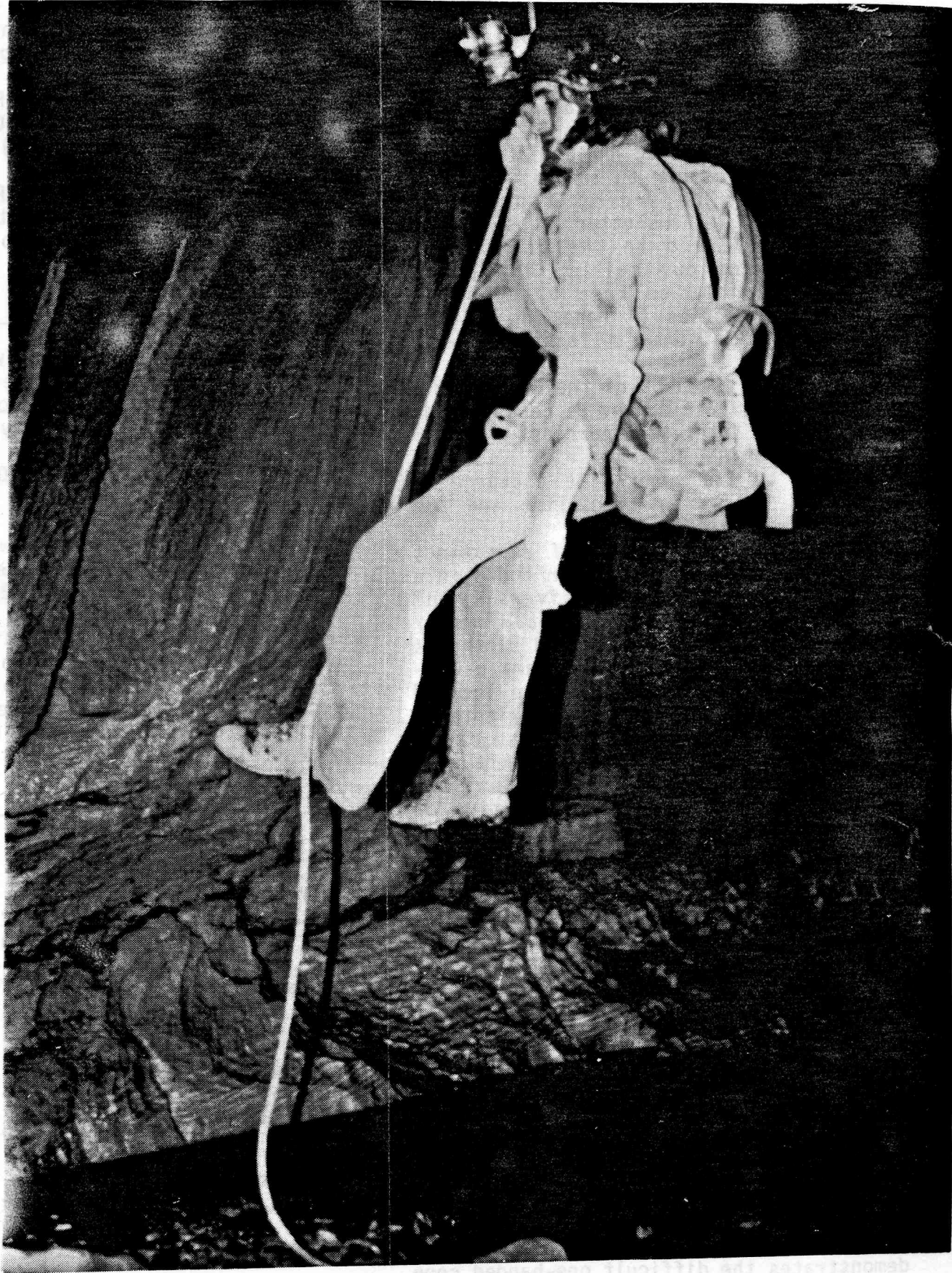


BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
SEPTEMBER 1979



From the Coming Full Circle Dept.: The Grotto will begin the new fiscal year by changing meeting places - to the Alabama Gas Corp. Building downtown. Many thanks to JIM MCDOWELL for arranging the recovery of our longtime meeting place. Meeting after the meeting remains at Guido's on Highland Avenue.

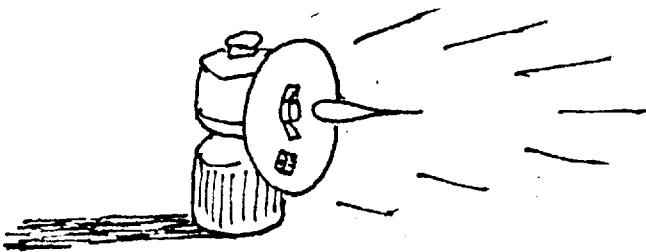
Elections are coming up and with them dues notices. Further on in this issue is a new policy regarding finances - specifically, a newsletter subscription policy. As we are in the process of re-computerizing our mailing labels, it will be possible to keep up with the different categories (i hope). We like to think our rag is worth at least the paper it's copied on.

We have two accounts of the Grotto trip to GUFFEY CAVE last month. We need to plan another...any interested parties?

Old News: BRYANT CAVE in is closed by its owner. The entrance is barricaded because of vandalism and bat kills, it was reported to us.

Old, OLD News: A skeleton of an extinct species of black bear has been found in a North Alabama pit. The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa wants it. Another skeleton, possibly of a 3-toed sloth has been found in a new North Alabama cave - since only one entrance has been located to date, this creature apparently entered the cave via an 1100'+ water crawl!

The ACS organizational meeting went very well, despite the small turnout. BILL VARNEDOE attended as a representative of the Huntsville Grotto, and LIN and DEBBIE GUY from Chattanooga joined several of the B'ham Grotto members in discussing the proposed constitution. A meeting to formally adopt the constitution has been scheduled for Sunday, November 18.



ON THE COVER: Steve Pitts in FERN CAVE demonstrates the difficult one-handed rope climbing technique.

DATES TO WATCH

October 1: GROTTO MEETING = ELECTIONS
7:30 pm Alabama Gas Co.
1918 1st Avenue North

October 13: 2nd Annual TAG Fall Cave-In
Sequoyah Caverns
(See announcement)

October 20 GROTTO TRIP: POODLE CAVE
Leave Tarrant Krystal
7:00 am Trip Leader:
Dave Howell

The Birmingham Grotto Newsletter is published approximately twelve times a year by the Birmingham Grotto of the National Speleological Society.

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Editors: Dave & Valerie Howell
1429 17th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205

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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Birmingham 35206 (833-3998)

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Birmingham 35205 (323-3143)

GUFFEY CAVE

Les Buryn	Kelly Buryn	*
Tom Chamblee	Dave Howell	*
Valerie Howell - Reporter		*
Ken Kifer	Nathan Kifer	*
Tim King	Letitia Korbly	*
Mike McEachern	Greg McGill	*
Larry Moore	Milo Washington	*

In the early hours of the morning, the rowdy crew cheerfully stormed the restaurant, wolfing down the fare, eager to be about the business of the day.

Sounds good. But for me at least, it was more a matter of reluctantly setting the alarm for 5AM Friday night (and promptly turning it off when it sounded and going back to sleep until 6), and stumbling into the Krystal only 5 minutes late, my stomach staging a minor demonstration at the thought of breakfast, my enthusiasm low at the prospect of spending such a fine day collecting garbage.

I don't think I was alone - but the mood improved as our number increased, and we were as jolly as could be expected for such an early hour. After a side trip to pick up some burlap sacks to protect the plastic garbage bags we had all brought, we met at the cave.

Journeying to the Grand Central Room, which looked well travelled, we began the task of collecting the worst of the refuse. Included in the expected collection of beer bottles, spent carbide dumps and food wrappers were a large red decorator candle and a suitcase full of - garbage! Relics of an earlier effort, I guess.

After collecting 13 bags of trash and cable, the group divided - half to begin the exit with the trash, half to take a break and a quick tour of the nicer sections of the cave. I managed to experience a little of each. GUFFEY is a nice cave, with quite a few formations.

Dragging those heavy sacks out over breakdown and up inclines, I began to understand why the cleanup was so long in coming. By the time I arrived at the climbout, the problem of getting the sacks up the climb and across the traverse had been solved. A rope had been strung across the room and, when tied to the lowered middle of the rope, the sacks of garbage

were hauled first up, then over by two of our crew. From there the dragging continued to the entrance.

We dragged the sacks to Larry's truck, deposited them there, paused for a picture documenting the event, then quickly made for the clean clothes. Savoring the sweet air upwind of the truck, the group spent a few minutes conversing. It had turned out to be a pleasant day after all.

The garbage truck, after stopping at Reids to feed its passengers (and probably grossing out any people coming within 10 feet of it), was emptied at a roadside dumpster. The sacks and wire, we were told, would be set out in the weather at Larry's until the odor died down.

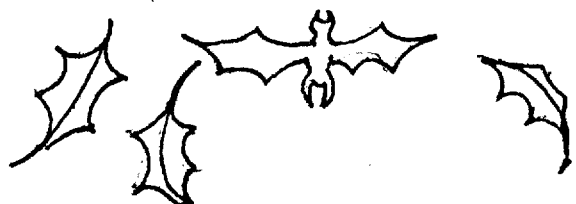
 JAY CLARK'S CLEAN-UP TRIP TO GUFFEY CAVE *
 *
 *
 Milo Washington - Reporter *

Greatly moved by Mr. Clark's grandiose eloquent admonishment of our group's legarthy while GUFFEY CAVE accumulated increasing amounts of litter, many hands shot into the air to rectify this travesty. Lost in his own rhetoric, Mr. Clark promised to sue anyone who volunteered but failed to show up for this worthwhile effort.

The following Good Cavers got out of bed at 5:30, missed the Alabama-Georgia Tech football game and removed 300 pounds of trash from GUFFEY CAVE:

Les Buryn	Nathan Kifer
Kelly Buryn	Tim King
Tom Chamblee	Letitia Korbly
Dave Howell	Mike McEachern
Valerie Howell	Greg McGill
Ken Kifer	Larry Moore
Milo Washington	

Since Jay Clark was busy with other frivolities on this day, I ask: "Did we do OK, Jay? Did we? Huh?"



ARTHROPODS OF GUFFEY CAVE

by Tim King

While on our clean up trip to GUFFEY CAVE, I collected a number of arthropods from various parts of the cave.

At the entrance of the cave, in the twilight zone, numerous arthropods were observed and some were collected. Some of the arthropods were true cave species and others had wandered into the cave environment.

The cave species observed and collected are as follows:

(1) Machaerites steevesi - This coleoptera belongs to the family Pselaphidae (short-winged mold beetle). This genus is restricted to the caves of Alabama. Only 9 species have been described from Alabama. Machaerites steevesi was described in 1959 by O. Park on 3 males collected by Harrison Steeves, Jr. The fourth specimen I collected was also a male. To my knowledge no female has ever been collected. This beetle is 1.5 mm in length. It is shining orange brown. Eyes are completely absent.

(2) Ptomaphagus (Adelops)sp. - This coleoptera belongs to the family Leptodiridae (small carrion beetle). The length of this beetle is about 2.5 mm. The color is reddish brown and it is wedge-shaped. It feeds on carrion and other organic waste. Eyes are absent. Two females and 1 male were collected beneath rocks. One male and one female were callows.

(3) Batrisodes sps. - Two species of this coleoptera were collected from beneath rocks in twilight zone of the cave. These specimens belong to the family Pselaphidae. Eyes are well developed. Length is about 2mm. Color is shining reddish brown. At this time I feel that these specimens are epigion species that wandered into the cave. Although these could be true cave species, I am still trying to key them out. There are many true cave species that belong to the genus Batrisodes found in Alabama caves. These 2 species of Batrisdodes might be undescribed.

(4) Hesperonemastoma (Ischyropsalidae)sp. This is a small spider. Only 5 species have been described from North America. One specimen has been described from ROCK HOUSE CAVE, Morgan County, Alabama, near Oleander. The three specimens collect from GUFFEY CAVE might be undescribed species.

(5) Phalangodes laciniosa - This is also a spider. It is common to the caves of Alabama. It is about 3mm in length and is orange brown in color. This genus is also found outside of caves in epigian habitats.

Many other arthropods were observed near the entrance of GUFFEY CAVE. Some of them are as follows. Millipedes, centipedes, trap-door spiders, mites, collembola, japygidae, diptera, and cave crickets.

At the back of GUFFEY CAVE, along the stream passage, several specimens of the genus Pseudanopthalmus sp. were collected. This genus belongs to the family Carabidae (Ground beetle). These beetles are about 4.5 mm in length, and shining brown. Eyes are absent. They move rapidly and hide beneath rocks and other debris. Their range is extensive. This genus is restricted to caves from Alabama to Kentucky. Quite a few species have been described from Alabama caves.

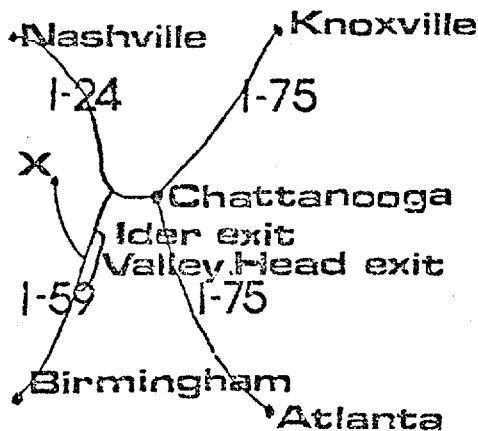
GUFFEY CAVE has quite a fauna. But this holds true for many other Alabama caves.

If this list of cave arthropods is of interest to some of the grotto members, I will make a list of specimens collected from other Alabama caves.

OCT. 12, 13, 14
second annual

T.A.G. FALL "CAVE IN"

at KOA SEQUOYAH CAVERNS
in VALLEY HEAD, ALA



(follow signs to; Sequoyah Caverns)



PRE-REGISTER (by Oct 8)

\$4.00 each - \$5.00 at gate - under 12 free

banquet - PRE-REGISTER ONLY - 3.75 (3.00 children)

send to DOGWOOD CITY GROTTO, c/o JOHN C HOWREN
2825 GLADE SPRINGS DR., ATLANTA, GA 30345

4 WD event · prizes · guided trips · speleo olympics · **CAVING!!** · bring slides
, etc.

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