

NATIONAL SOCIETY
of Speleologists
NEWSLETTER
BIRMINGHAM GROTTO

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1987

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The BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER is published twelve times per year by the Birmingham Grotto of the NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. Other organizations may reprint our material when credit is given to this publication.

Subscription and membership fees are prorated from October. Annual dues are \$4.00 which includes the newsletter. The subscription rate of \$4.00 is available to persons outside of the Birmingham area.

The Grotto meets on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Parke Memorial Branch Library located at 1814 11th. Avenue South (corner of 11th. Ave. South and 19th. St. South). Park at the rear of the building. The meeting after the meeting is at Burly Ear's, 2109 7th. Ave. South, at about 9 pm.

Exchange newsletters and other Grotto mail should be sent to:

Birmingham Grotto
PO Box 55102
Birmingham, AL 35255-0102

The 1985-86 Grotto Officers are:

President	Jet Thomas	933-6162
Vice-President	Everett Bagby	780-6478
Secretary	Shari Lydy	395-3268
Treasurer	Andy Zerba	933-2111

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Shari Lydy. GRAPHICS: Dave & Valerie Howell. ARTICLES: Milo Washington and Jet Thomas.

***Effective June 1, Dave and Valerie Howell are the Newsletter editors.
Everyone please help them out with articles and trip reports.***

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 31 - Kennamer Cave. Meet at Hardee's in Tarrant City at 8:00 am.
Call Gary Barnes or Milo Washington for more details.

June 20-21 - Summer S.E.R.A. Mountain Shadow KOA. Trenton, GA.

July 11 - Anvil Cave Rallye. Entry forms and info available at Grotto meeting. Cost: \$7.50 in advance or \$9.50 at door. This is a fund-raising event for the proposed Alabama Cave Law.

August 29-30. Basic Cave Rescue Orientation Course. Huntsville, AL.
See Shari for registration form and more info or call Don Francis
(205/539-9010). Cost: \$20.

Letter From The Jes Elliot Four

To The Birmingham Grotto:

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to each of you. The flowers, phone calls and visits really did mean alot to all of us. Thank you Birmingham Grotto!

To those of you who were with us at the scene of the accident we owe a special thanks. Thank you for remaining cool and aiding us in all ways possible. Thank you for getting our caving gear, clothes and other "stuff" out of the car before it was towed. Marcia, thank you for all of the time you spent washing our blood soaked clothes.

Thank you all from Richard and Larry for the Alabama Cave Survey. We are enjoying it and are already planning future trips.

You are all a great bunch of people and we are proud to be associated with you. Thank you!!

Sincerely,

Minutes of the Birmingham Grotto meeting of May 4, 1987.

15 members were present. Guests were Bill Stringfellow and Kenneth Huffines from Atlanta.

Vice-President Everett Bagby called the meeting to order at 7:46 pm. The minutes of the last meeting were read and Treasurer Andy Zerbe reported \$1814.00 in the Grotto account.

Old Business

Ruffner Mountain Nature Center is still interested in having the Grotto collaborate on gating Gate City Cave. However, Jay Clark has not yet investigated the legal liability intricacies involving such a joint effort, so discussion was tabled.

New Business

John French of the Huntsville Grotto is drafting cave protection legislation for Alabama. A high impact PR pamphlet featuring color pictures and relevant text concerning cave protection and the proposed law would be circulated to legislators. Publication will probably require \$1000 so donations of \$25-50 are being solicited from area grottos. Further discussion was tabled until members have a chance to look at a draft of the proposed legislation.

Trip Reports

Mike McEachern reported that the mapping of Trussville Cave went very well and had good Grotto participation. A map of the cave will be published in the Newsletter. Shari mentioned that 12 people went on the Guffey Cave trip. The cave owner was very congenial and friendly this trip, contrary to past access problems. Milo went ridgewalking with Tim King. He reported that in Blowing Cave, there are several unchecked leads not on the map.

Program

Bill Stringfellow presented a slide program on the 1989 NSS Convention to be held in Sewanee, Tennessee. The beauty of this part of the Cumberland Plateau is breathtaking. The facilities of the University of the South were shown as to where sessions would be held, location of the camping area, dorms, cafeteria, and available recreation on campus. Beer is served in a Rathskellar and caving is immediately available near campus, not to mention the surrounding area of prime TAG caves. Bill asked for any comments on the slide show before it is circulated to the general NSS membership. He also asked for VOLUNTEERS. This convention is being hailed as a TAG Convention so all area grottos will hopefully get involved. People are needed to work on all committees - there are even some chair positions still open (see this issue for committees). The next organizational meeting will be held on Sunday June 21 at 10:00 am CDT at the Summer SERA, Mountain Shadows KOA Campground. Don't miss this meeting if you are interested in offering your services. Local grottos are also being solicited to lead pre- and post-convention trips in the caving areas. More comments on this later.

Upcoming Trips

Kenamer Cave - May 31. Meet at Hardee's in Tarrant City at 8 am. Call Gary Barnes for details.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm. Everyone migrated to Burley Earl's for the meeting after the meeting.

Shocking discovery from deep underground . . .

Scientists investigating an unexplored cave in Turkey have unearthed a crystalline coffin dating back to the Ice Age — containing the mummified corpse of an alien being from another world!

The human-like creature, which stood only four feet tall in life, has pebbly, leaf-green skin and filmy, transparent wings like an insect.

Despite its bizarre appearance, Dr. Fatih Turanbay said the being had walked upright on two feet and has the hands and the sex organs of a male more human than animal.

"This could be the most significant scientific discovery in the history of mankind," proclaimed the

leader of the team that found the coffin.

"All the evidence we now have clearly establishes that the corpse is that of an alien being from another world far beyond the visible stars.

"And, we have definitely fixed the period of its burial as the Ice Age by the rock stratum in the depths of the cave where the coffin was found."

Turanbay said the coffin is made of a shimmering, crystalline material not found on earth and not unlike that found in rock samples brought back from the moon by American astronauts.

"The crystal coffin is incredibly strong," said Turanbay, a noted professor of archaeology in Istanbul.

"In fact, it is easily the strongest material I have ever heard of. We slammed it with a sledgehammer and didn't even scratch it."

But far more extraordinary are the results of tests on the insect-like alien. They reveal that the

Cave explorers find alien mummy!**Ice Age coffin yields incredible evidence of other-world visitors**

creature is actually older than Earth.

"We have used every sophisticated age-dating process available anywhere in the world, and the numbers we got are identical with those obtained from cave samples taken miles beneath the surface of Earth.

"The age is beyond comprehension. Somewhere out there in deep space there is a planet undoubtedly very much like our own where human-like creatures live for millions upon millions of years. It's amazing!"

Turanbay reported the alien's

hands and feet — including fingernails and toenails — are distinctly human, as are its nose, lips and ears.

"Only its eyes are different from ours," he said.

"They are three times larger, are totally colorless and like those of a reptile.

"But there is one thing that definitely does bother me," Turanbay added in his report.

"With a creature such as this, I'm not at all certain it really is dead. And that is very frightening."

— MICKY McGUIRE

April 12 - Trussville Cave

Mike McEachern, Nancy Boice, Lee Stubbs, Greg and Lynn McGill, Andy Zerbe, Jet Thomas, Ware Roberson, and Ron Sparks.

April 18 - Guffey Cave

Les Buryn, Jet Thomas, Shari Lydy, Ware Roberson, Steve Johnson, Mike Gross, another friend, Danny Cobb, Donna Knoke, Myrna Jordan, and Ralph.

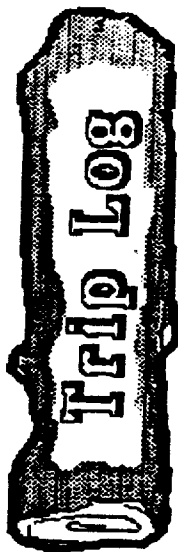
April 26 - Jerry Fal-Well, Tom Bean Pit

Everett Bagby, Shari Lydy, and friend.

Looked all over the mountainside for Granny Well. Apparently we were too high. Everett did surprise a copperhead near Copper Snapper Pit so we decided to pass on dropping that hole. These caves are owned by Tom Bean who plans to restrict access by September, so see them now if you want to see them at all.

May 3 - Coronation Drop, Birthday Pit.

Everett Bagby, Shari Lydy, and friend.



Below is a draft of the proposed Alabama cave protection legislation. In the past, Alabama legislators have ignored the need for cave protection apparently because cavers maintained a low profile in pushing for such laws. John French, who is Huntsville Grotto's Conservation Chairman, is taking a new approach to get their attention. A pamphlet with various features of the draft law will be supplemented with color pictures of Alabama caves to emphasize the issues of vandalism, liability, water pollution, cave life protection, and recreational use. Your input on this legislation can help to ensure its success. Contact John at 10101 Westleigh Dr., Huntsville, AL 35803 (205/881-0419) with your ideas and support. The nominal entry fee for the Anvil Cave Rallye will support the Alabama Cave Conservation Fund.

Version of 3 December 1985

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Providing further for the conservation of the natural resources of the State; designating the caves and caverns of the State and the flora, fauna, mineral deposits and formations therein as worthy of preservation, protection and development for scenic, scientific, recreational, business and commercial purposes; protecting the rights of property owners and the general public in caves; to designate certain acts relative to caves and their contents as criminal offences and to prescribe penalties therefor.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Definitions

The following words and phrases when used in this Act shall for the purpose of this Act have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in this section, except in those instances where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

A. Cave--Any natural subterranean cavity that is either fifty feet in length or depth, or any combination of length and depth or that contains obligatory cavernicolous fauna (animals obliged to live underground). The word "cave" includes but is not limited to cavern, pit, pothole, well (natural), sinkhole, and/or grotto.

B. Speleothem--A natural secondary mineral deposit or formation in a cave. This includes but is not limited to deposits called stalactites, stalagmites, helictites, anthodites, gypsum flowers, needles, or angels hair, soda straws, draperies, bacon, cave pearls, popcorn, rimstone dams, columns, palettes, flowstone, etc. Speleothems are commonly composed of calcite, aragonite, epsomite, gypsum, celestite, and other similar minerals.

C. Commercial Cave--Any cave or portion of a cave that is improved with trails and lighting utilized by the owner or lessee for the purpose of exhibition to the public as a profit or nonprofit enterprise.

D. Wild Cave--Any cave or portion of a cave that is not a

Section 2. Liability

A. Neither the owner(s), wheather an individual, group of individuals, corporation, State, County or City, of a wild cave or of adjacent property nor their authorized agent(s), officer(s), employee(s) or designated representative(s) acting within the scope of their authority shall be liable for injuries sustained by any person visiting the cave or attempting to gain access to the cave for any purpose.

B. While engaged in cave related activities any person(s) or organization, or formal or informal group of persons in the company of other persons wheather he or they be leading, accompanying, or in the area with the other person(s), shall not be held liable for injuries or the results of actions by these other persons, unless these other person(s) acted as a result of an act or order issued by the first person(s) intended to inflict injury.

C. Each person in a group engaged in cave related activities is individually responsible for evaluating the safety of group equipment, such as ropes, rigging, anchor devices, climbing gear, etc. The club, organization, group, leader, organizer, or person owning or emplacing such gear or equipment shall not be held liable for failure of any such equipment or gear or its emplacement, except, if the rigging or equipment is altered after the person injured has had an opportunity to inspect it.

D. The provisions of paragraphs A., above, shall not hold if pay or compensation is given or received for the entry of the cave and the provisions of paragraph C., above, shall not hold if pay or compensation is given or received for use of the equipment.

Section 3. Vandalism

It shall be unlawful and constitute a misdemeanor for any person, organization, firm or corporation, including any officer, agent or employee of any town or municipality to:

A. Maliciously break, break off, crack, carve upon, write, burn, damage, or otherwise mar or mark on, remove, or in any other manner destroy, disturb, deface, mar or harm the walls or any speleothem in any cave, except for recognized scientific purposes.

B. Discard litter or refuse to any degree in any cave.

C. Break, force, tamper with, remove, or otherwise disturb a lock, gate, door, or other structure or obstruction designed to control or prevent access to any cave, unless such act is specifically ordered by the owner.

D. Offer for sale any speleothem except at operating recreational caves selling material from their own cave

F. Remove, kill, harm or disturb any plant or animal life found within any wild cave, except for recognized scientific purposes.

G. The provisions A through F of this Section are waived for a recognized rescue unit operating in response to an emergency or believed emergency.

Section 4. Water Pollution

It shall be unlawful and constitute a misdemeanor for any person, organization, firm, corporation, including any officer, employee or agent of any town or municipality to risk the pollution of the underground water resources of the state by storing, dumping, disposing, or otherwise placing in caves, sinkholes or natural wells: chemicals, refuse, dead animals, garbage or other materials which are potentially injurious or hazardous to the quality of the aquifer, water and/or water table.

Section 5. Provisions

A. Violations of the misdemeanor provisions of this Act shall incur the following penalties:

1. First offence: A Class C Misdemeanor.
2. Second offence: A Class B Misdemeanor.
3. Subsequent offences: A Class A Misdemeanor.

B. All laws or parts of laws which conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

C. The provisions of this Act are severable. If any part of the Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the part which remains.

Section 6. Implementation

This Act shall become effective immediately upon approval by the Governor, or upon its otherwise becoming a law.

NEWS REPORT

Submitted by Nancy Boice

A recent letter from the Huautla Project reports on the most recent caving expedition to Huautla, Mexico. On Thursday March 26, 1987, the cave Nita Nanta was connected to the Sotano de San Augustin by a 10 meter long, two meter deep sump. The sump was dived by TAG's own Jim Smith. The Huautla Cave System is now reported to be the second deepest cave in the world. However, we heard that after all calculations were made, it ranks a mere third.

VOICES FROM UNDERGROUND

TUMBLING ROCK and NEVERSINK

Cave Date: April 26, 1987.

Personnel: Mike McKee, Mike McEachern, and Nancy Boice.

The warm spring weather enticed our friend Mike McKee up for some weekend caving. Mike, an old-time caver from Austin, Texas has a heavy teching load at Auburn and thus has little time for caving, so he has seen few of Alabama's finest. We went to Tumbling Rock to show him an example of a typical Alabama cave. Our trip was pleasant and very routine. We trekked to the back of the cave and up to see the grand Pillar of Fire. On the way out, we climbed through the hole and up into the King's Shower. To me, this is really the highlight of the cave. Past the King's Shower, we ran into two groups of cavers. One group of four was from Dogwood City Grotto. They remarked that another crew was up at Neversink on a clean up trip. Then we ran into a huge group (15) of novice cavers from the University of Georgia. They were having a great time (oh to be so young again!).

We exited the cave in time to go over to Neversink. We arrived at the pit and found approximately 50 people from Dogwood City. Apparently someone had spray-painted the limestone wall across from the rig point, but by the time we arrived, they had cleaned it all off. It is only noticeable at close range. They did a good cleaning job (Thank you DCG!). While there, they had a vertical training session with many ropes and much gear. We saw Buddy Lane (go Buddy go) there. He will be heading to Huautla shortly to do some expedition caving.

TRUSSVILLE CAVE

by Nancy Boice

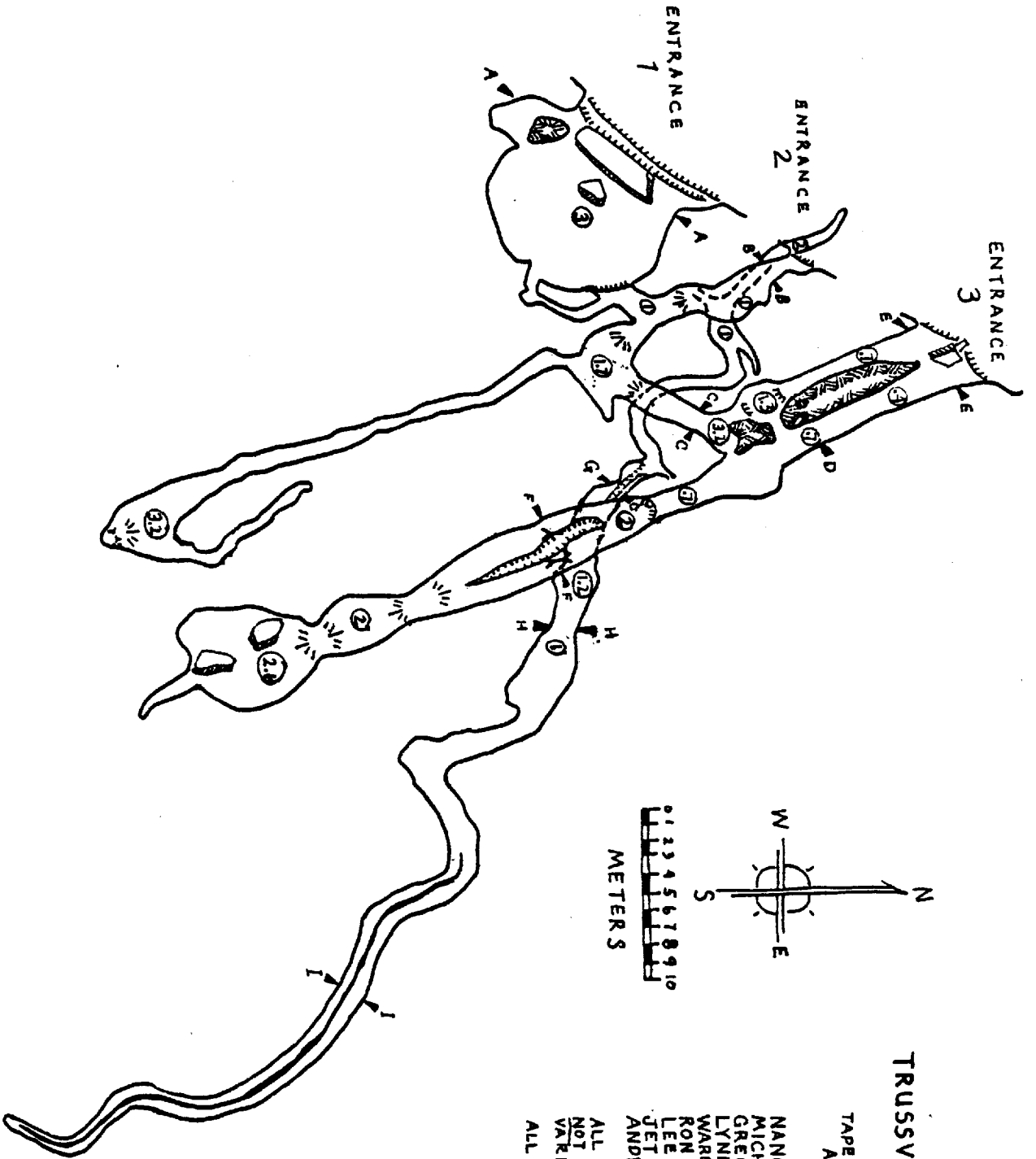
Cave Date: April 12, 1987

Personnel: Nancy Boice, Mike McEachern, Greg and Lynn McGill, Ware Roberson, Ron Sparks, Lee Stubbs, Jet Thomas, and Andy Zerbe.

We met at Shoney's and wolfed down a huge breakfast in anticipation of our plan. The plan: to map Trussville Cave. The trip was planned by Greg to teach new people how to map caves. The cave had never really been mapped; only a crude sketch had ever been made.

Outside the cave, Greg and Mike gave a brief demonstration of how to map with a Sunto and tape. The team was established and they began. After only a couple of stations, the survey smoothed out and proceeded at a fast pace. The cave is small but somewhat of a maze which makes mapping difficult. With such a large group, there was plenty of help. Several people explored and pushed every lead to the bitter end. Midway through the trip, people exchanged jobs to practice every part of mapping.

It was a beautiful day, so Lynn and I sat out by the quarry while the mappers finished up. By about 4:00 pm the cave was mapped. Thirty-nine stations were set. The cave measures 748 feet long which makes it a very respectable local cave. Lee Stubbs drafted the map. The trip was well worth the effort, as everyone learned how to map and had a good time. And another local cave is finally mapped. That makes Greg McGill and the ACS very happy.



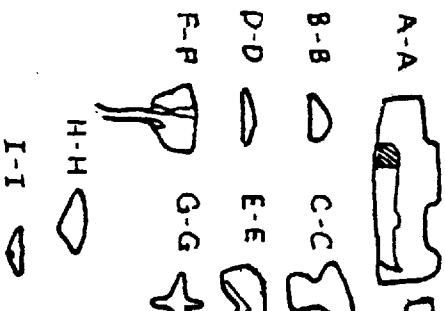
TRUSSVILLE CAVE - AL 403

TAPE AND COMPASS SURVEY
APRIL 12, 1987 by...

- NANCY BOICE
- MICHAEL Mc EACHERN
- GREG Mc GILL
- LYNN Mc GILL
- WARE ROBERSON
- RON SPARKS
- LEE STUBBS
- JET THOMAS
- ANDY ZERBE

ALL BEARINGS MAGNETIC
NOT CORRECTED FOR
VARIATION
ALL DISTANCES IN METERS

(C)



AND HERE'S RODNEY....

RODNEY IS RICH ... continued

Part 2 Milo Washington

The bus ride to Mobile was long and although I don't know what the word 'languorous' means, it was probably that too. But the long trip allowed me more than ample time to read the World Book Encyclopedia's article on the country of Bananaz.

Bananaz, I learned, consisted of 580 square miles of malarial jungle spread like a horse shoe around Porto de Soto, named after the automobile, not the explorer. The majority of the country's inhabitants lived in Porto de Soto and worked on the banana plantations nearby. The rest of the population lived in small Indian villages that dotted the relief map like raisins in a steaming hot spinach pie. The karst region, I knew by experience, would be in the most inaccessible part.

My mission was to locate a secret cave where the counter-contra revolutionaries had been storing arms and ammunition to use in an assault on the Gomez government. This coup was to take place on 'McEachern Day', a national holiday honoring the national hero Coronel Manguel McEachern, a socialist of Scot-Indian descent who led the successful coup against the German-English dictator Heinz Howell in 1968.

Coronel McEachern's first act as president was to nationalise the banana plantations. By this bold stroke of the pen he succeeded in raising the annual per capita income from ninety dollars to ninety-three dollars per year. Unfortunately the next year's crop was bad and the per capita income dropped to fifty-two dollars and fifty cents, a record low.

But the theme of the McEachern government was not economic but cultural. Like many half breeds he renounced his european blood and mandated a return to the ways of the pre-columbian indian. President McEachern, although radical, wasn't stupid. First he sought to purge the Indian culture of all witchcraft and superstition. Unfortunately, witchcraft and superstition comprised 90% of the indian culture, the other 10% consisting of knot-tying, a mnemonic system of communication sorta like writing. In 1970 he burned all books and one Jesuit priest. Afterward all government records were kept on multi-colored knotted strings.

With the duplicity peculiar to his kind he persuaded the Holiday Inn Corporation into building a high-rise resort hotel on the only suitable strip of beach in Bananaz. This he quickly nationalised and after releasing former Dictator Heinz Howell from prison he appointed him Chief innkeeper. Howell, who had a fondness for old cars, renamed the hotel "Hotel de Edsel" and built a ten-foot-high barbed wire fence around it to keep the natives from annoying the cash-laden tourists. Much of the hotel's meager profits for the next eight years are said to have gone toward the restoration of a 1938 Packard automobile that also served as the hotel's limousine.

In the spring of 1979 when Gomez and his army of bureaucrats stormed the presidential palace they found that McEachern had left the country two years earlier, taking with him four hundred and eighty dollars of government funds. Today Coronel McEachern, disguised as a WASP, works as a computer programmer in Birmingham, AL where he and his american wife are said to spend their evenings in their basement, knotting his memoirs on multi-colored strings.

10

My reading was interrupted as the Trailways bus jerked to a halt in the Mobile station. Before disembarking I put on a red beret and stuck in my mouth a long cigarette holder tipped with a perfumed cigarette and became 'Rodnee Rougemon, French Security Officer'. After a short walk to the State docks I located the rusting freighter flying the flag of the Republic of Bananaz. The Capitain, who looked a lot like Andy Zerbe, was standing by the gangplank. I walked over and whispered the code phrase in his ear. "Monsieur," I said, "ze fly firt has excap ze bottle bleu."

Apparently Capitain Andy didn't speak french because I was rudely incorporated into the work gang unloading 60 pound bunches of green bananas.

Years later, after the last stalk of bananas was unloaded, Capitain Andy pointed to a mountain of long wooden crates and laughed crazily. His laughter was infectious. We laughed and joked as we loaded the heavy crates into the ship's hold.

But despite the fun and merriment of being a part of the work gang my professional curiosity was aroused. What was in these heavy crates? When no one was looking I read the little rectangular cloth tags that dangled from each crate.

This crate contains
BANANAS. Only BANANAS
and nothing but BANANAS.
Do not remove this tag
under penalty of law.
* AF of L & CIA *

Hmmm? I thought. That's strange. But commerce obeys its own rules so when the last crate was loaded I grabbed a mop and began swabbing the deck, remembering a cliché of professional defectives: NO DOORS ARE LOCKED TO A MAN WITH A MOP.

After 10 days at sea the old ship sparkled and gleamed in the Caribbean sun, but I hadn't found anything suspicious onboard. With a calm sea the ship's crew settled into a quiet melancholy punctuated occasionally by Capitain Andy who for no apparent reason would sing a few lyrics from an old song popular in the fifties:

"Yes! we have no bananas,

We have no bananas, today" he would sing and then break into incomprehensible laughter that echoed through the ship with unsettling portent.

The crew members gathered in the lunch hall and breathed a collective sigh of relief when the ship finally docked safely in Porto de Soto ten days later. But for me the most dangerous part of the journey lay ahead.

Part 3 to follow shortly.

NAR Log

by Tom Vines. Vines is editorial director for NASAR and Chairman of the Technical Rescue Division.

RESPONSE! MARCH/APRIL 1987

"Impossible" Rescue Successfully Performed

It was not too long ago that rescue out of the depths of Ellison's cave was thought to be impossible. Located in Pigeon Mountain, in northern Georgia, it is one of the deepest caves in North America and has the deepest freefall pit (586 feet) in the U.S. It also has a number of other vertical drops, including the second deepest pit in the country.

In the past, there have been rescues of lost, hypothermic or slightly injured persons, but no major incidents. In January, however, a rescue involving a significant injury was made. This rescue was not only pulled off expeditiously, but involved all the major types of rope rescue techniques as well.

On Sunday, January 4th, 27-year-old Bill Putnam and a companion had entered Ellison's and negotiated their way down into the lower part of the cave. As the two were downclimbing, the rock on which Putnam was standing suddenly gave way and slipped several feet, pinning his foot against a wall. Putnam's momentum carried him forward, and he suffered open fractures of the tibia and fibula — the bones were broken in several places.

The two initiated first aid by controlling bleeding with Putnam's pant leg, splinting

the leg with an extra long brake bar rack secured with survey tape. The accident occurred at about 1530 hours. Putnam's partner then negotiated the long climb out

of the cave, hiked down the mountain, and drove to the sheriff's office in Lafayette. The chief of the Walker County Cave Rescue Squad was paged and there was a callout to groups from Chattanooga, Atlanta and Nashville that operate under the umbrella of the Walker County Cave Rescue Squad. Support services would be provided by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. A bash team made voice contact with the subject at about 2130 hours.

Putnam and his partner had for the most part chimneyed into the lower part of the cave. But using the same route for rescue evacuation would have meant difficult stretcher handling through unstable rock, with some tricky traverses, resulting in a time consuming evacuation. So the rescuers instead opted to go out the 586-foot "Fantastic Pit."

The first rescuer to reach the subject assessed his medical condition and replaced the makeshift splint with a more conventional one. He then lowered Putnam the 50 feet into TAG Hall using a fixed brake system.

There, other rescuers conducted further medical evaluation and prepared to pack-age him in a SKED litter. They were interrupted by sudden rockfall, but pro-

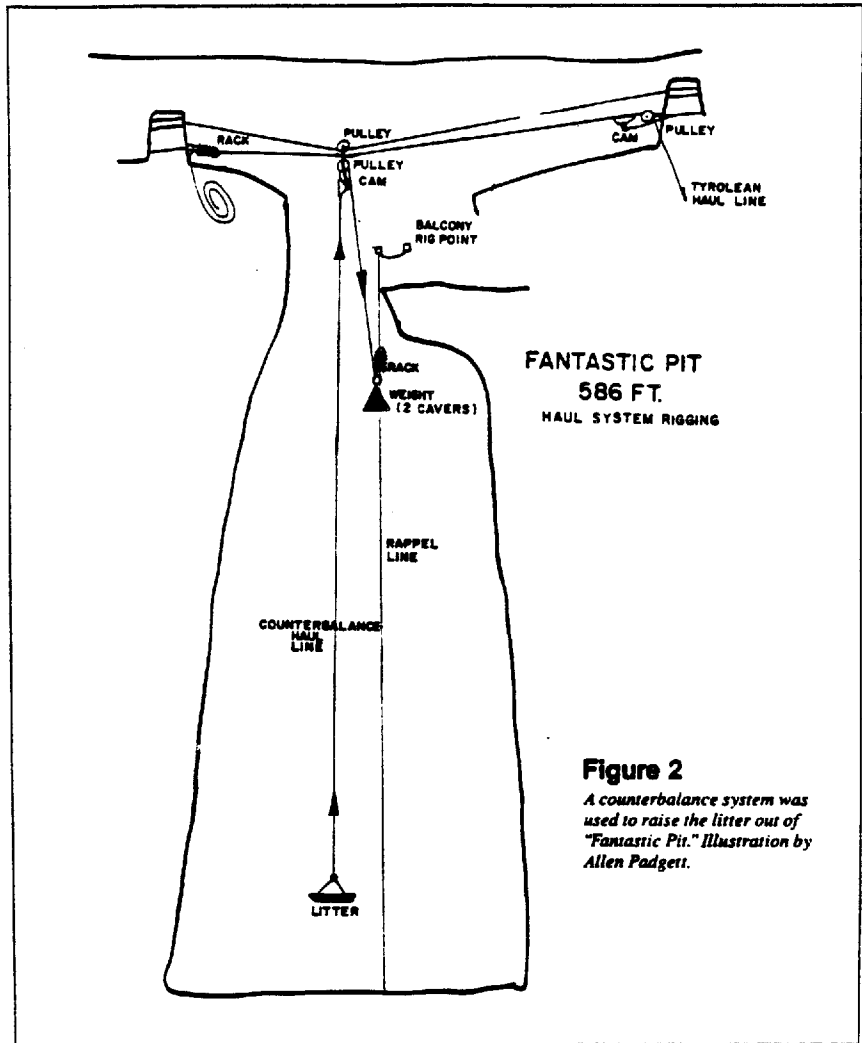


Figure 2

A counterbalance system was used to raise the litter out of "Fantastic Pit." Illustration by Allen Padgett.

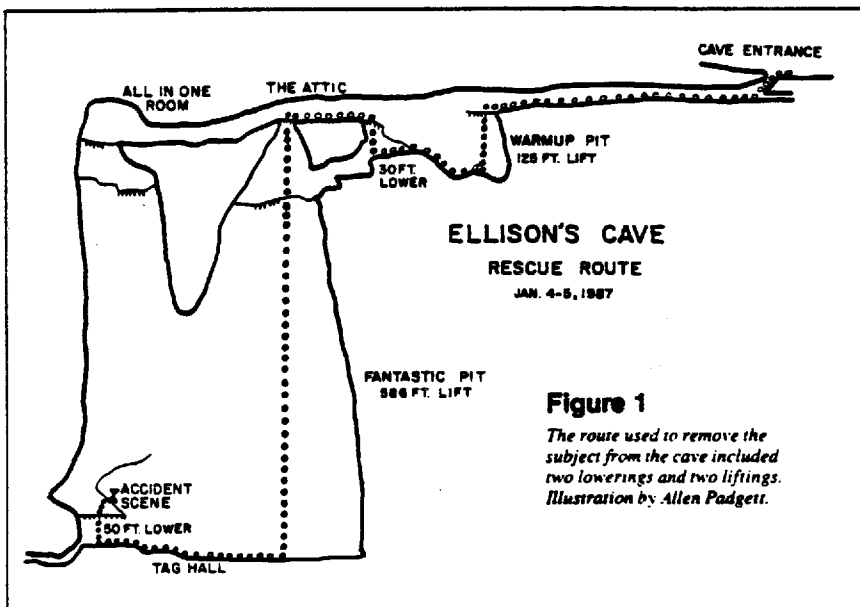


Figure 1

The route used to remove the subject from the cave included two lowerings and two liftings. Illustration by Allen Padgett.

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NASAR Log

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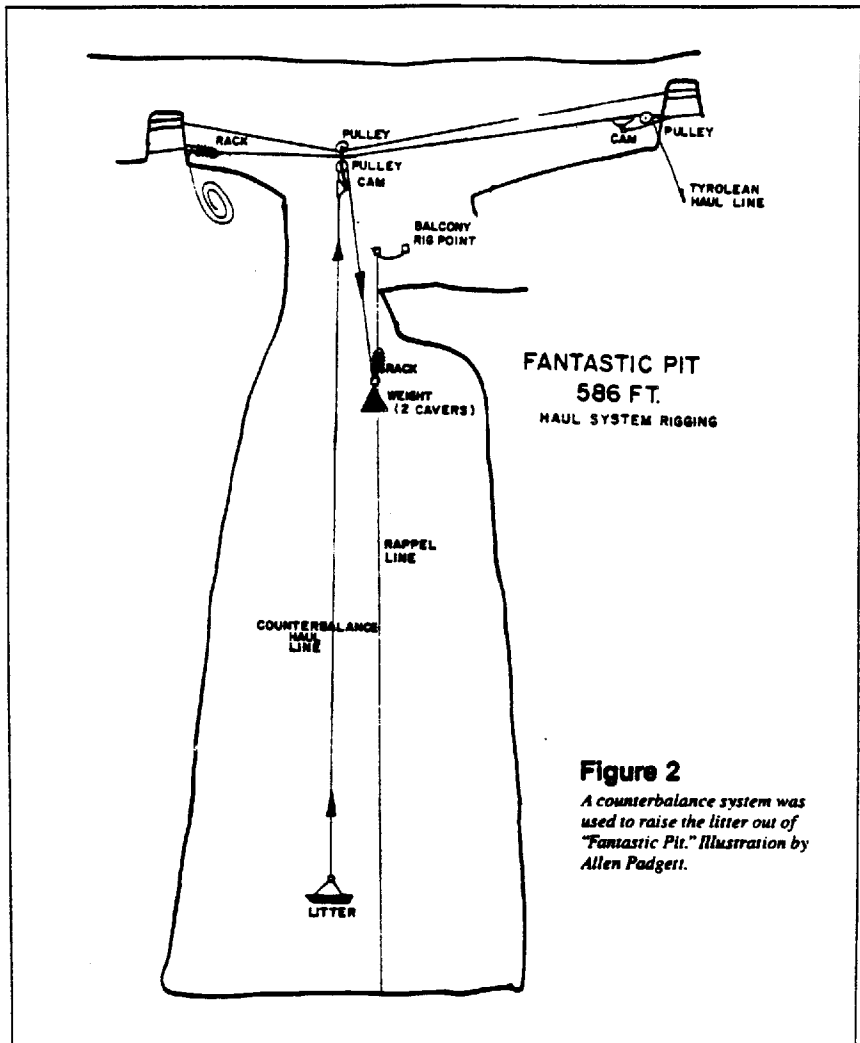


Figure 2
A counterbalance system was used to raise the litter out of "Fantastic Pit." Illustration by Allen Padgett.

the leg with an extra long brake bar rack secured with survey tape. The accident occurred at about 1530 hours. Putnam's partner then negotiated the long climb out

of the cave, hiked down the mountain, and drove to the sheriff's office in Lafayette. The chief of the Walker County Cave Rescue Squad was paged and there was a callout to groups from Chattanooga, Atlanta and Nashville that operate under the umbrella of the Walker County Cave Rescue Squad. Support services would be provided by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. A bash team made voice contact with the subject at about 2130 hours.

Putnam and his partner had for the most part chimneyed into the lower part of the cave. But using the same route for rescue evacuation would have meant difficult stretcher handling through unstable rock, with some tricky traverses, resulting in a time consuming evacuation. So the rescuers instead opted to go out the 586-foot "Fantastic Pit."

The first rescuer to reach the subject assessed his medical condition and replaced the makeshift splint with a more conventional one. He then lowered Putnam the 50 feet into TAG Hall using a fixed brake system.

There, other rescuers conducted further medical evaluation and prepared to package him in a SKED litter. They were interrupted by sudden rockfall, but pro-

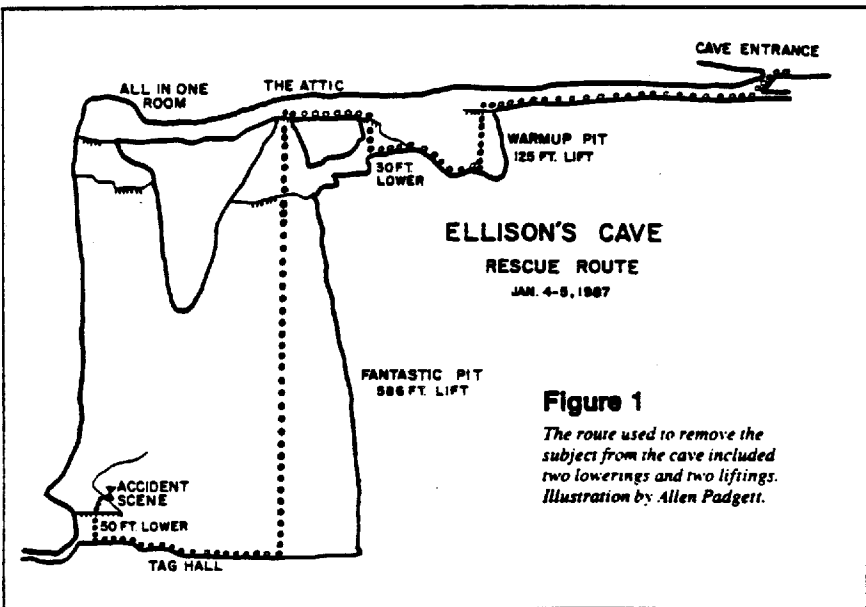


Figure 1
The route used to remove the subject from the cave included two lowerings and two liftings. Illustration by Allen Padgett.

tected themselves and the subject by using the SKED as a shield. (One of the EMTs suffered a hand injury from a rock.)

Next they carried him in the litter across TAG Hall to the bottom of Fantastic Pit, where the litter was rigged into a counterbalance system (see Figure 1). The counterbalance system consisted essentially of the litter and subject on one end of the counterbalance rope with the other end, attached to two rescuers, acting as the weight. They controlled their descent by rappelling on a separate fixed line using a brake bar rack.

The only hitch in this system developed when a pull handle on the litter became snagged near the top. One of the rescuers quickly rigged another rope and rappelled down to free the litter.

From the "Attic" passage the litter was lowered down into the "Warm Up Pit" using a traveling brake lowering system. From there, the subject and the litter were hauled using a 4:1 ("Piggyback") system.

At this point, the SKED was placed into a stokes litter for carry out through the entrance passage over the cave. The entrance point of the cave was so tight, however, that the SKED had to be removed from the stokes to get the subject through.

Several rescuers commented on the "positive mental attitude" exhibited by Putnam during the entire ordeal, adding that this undoubtedly assisted in the operation. This was perhaps manifested by the subject's spunk toward the end of the operation. According to Putnam's account, after being taken from the dark cave, he was temporarily blinded by a reporter with a video camera and lights. Putnam, by his own account, made "several rude remarks in response." After being driven down the mountain to a waiting ambulance, he was confronted by another reporter "to whom he was deliberately rude." As he was being loaded into the ambulance he waved to the rescuers and called out, "Somebody bring me a beer!"

A total of 54 people performed rescue activities in the cave, with surface support provided by 27 others.

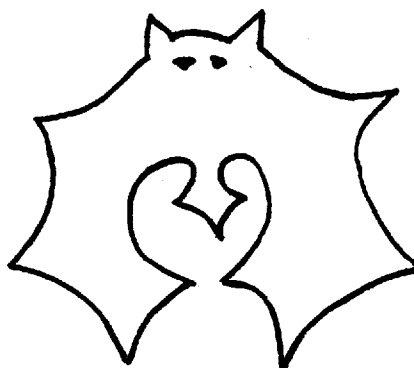
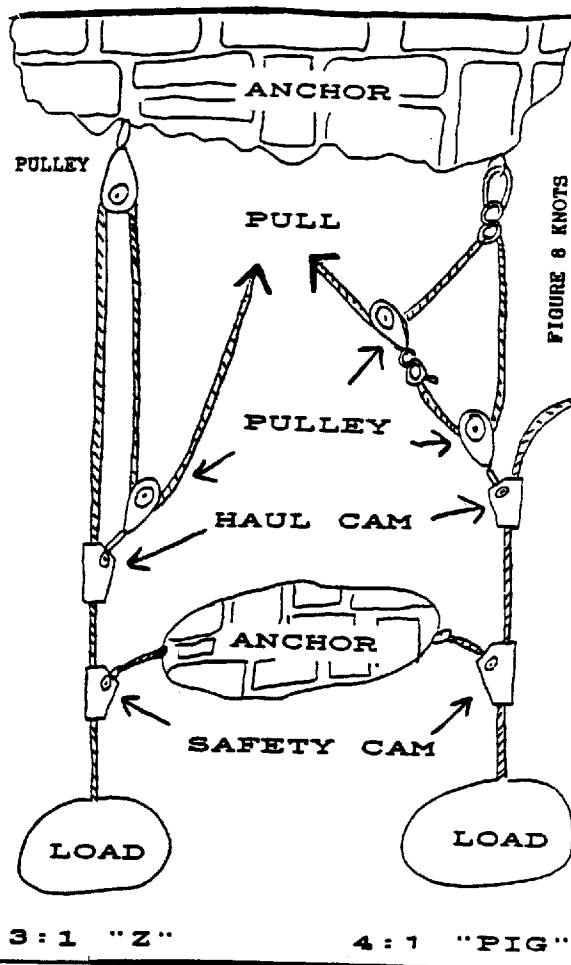
Iowa Cave Tragedy

The outcome was not so happy in a Iowa cave incident during early March. According to Don Paquette of the National Cave Rescue Commission, seven people had descended into Millers Cave (near Postville, Iowa) via a 100-foot entrance drop. While they were in the cave, a rainstorm hit. The result was that the normal trickle of water flowing into the pit turned into a major waterfall as the rain melted the snowcover already present.

Apparently the people panicked and began to ascend the ropes toward the

entrance. Three of them made it out and called for help. When authorities arrived at the scene they found that the noise of the waterfall prevented them from communicating with any of those at the bottom. They reported that when those on the top tried to pull up on the ropes' the lines were "tight". They later found out why the lines were tight — two of the cavers were hanging on the ropes dead of hypothermia, and the others were found alive where they

HAULING SYSTEMS



This Week in SCIENCE

Hearing in echolocators

PATHWAYS in the brain by which sounds are processed have been studied in mustache bats (*Pteron-*

space, find and intercept prey, and avoid obstacles. They emit pulses of sound, scan their environment for returning sound waves, and respond with movements of pinnae (the external, cartilaginous ear flaps), head, and body. Injected tracer substances highlighted neuronal pathways for processing sounds as the tracers were transported along firing axons. The frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex was involved in the response to acoustic stimulation: signals entered it from regions of the thalamus (having entered the thalamus from the medulla); signals traveled out from the cortex to the superior colliculus, a region from which motor signals directing head and pinnae movements occur. Kobler *et al.* speculate that sensory-motor connections in the frontal cortex may develop in accordance with and reflect the sensory needs of the animal: those animals that rely heavily on hearing, therefore, would have well-developed links between auditory input and motor output regions; those relying

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