

Cascade Caver

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

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Upcoming Events

Jul 19 — Grotto meeting.

Jul 20 — Rock climbing and SRT clinic - Larabee State Park, on Chuckanut Dr. - Jerry Thompson, 653-7390.

July 27-Aug 10 — Northwest Cave Research Institute project in the Pryor Mountains of Montana. 7500-8500 ft elevation. Camping, ridge walking, and a little caving. Part of the second week will be working for the NPS in Bighorn Caverns, Wyoming. Contact John Buchanan, project coordinator, at (509) 259-7493 or in Seattle contact Ben Tompkins at 546-8025.

July 27-28 — Trout Lake Caving and Mountain Bike Weekend. Chuck Crandell says there are lots of good mountain bike trails in the area. Contact Chuck at 772-3271.

Aug 5-11 — 6th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology, Hilo, Hawaii. Contact W. R. Halliday, 6530 Cornwall Court; Nashville, TN 37205.

Aug 10 — Index Ice Caves - Karl Steinke - A fun hike with beautiful views.

Aug 18 — Windy Creek Cave - Jerry Thompson - Investigating the new Discovery room.

Aug 30-Sep 2 — Papoose Cave - Jim Harp - Labor day near Riggins Idaho - great formations.

Sep 14 — Cave Ridge - Mark Wilson - Rappelling into Newton Cave.

Sep 28 — Chilliwack Valley - Dick Garnick

Oct 5 — Dynamited Cave - Alan Coakley - Goal is the seldom visited New Big Room.

Nov 23-30 — Lava beds National Monument - Rod Crawford - Field research project.

1992 — NCA Regional in Idaho.

1992 — NSS Convention, Salem, Indiana, Aug. 3-7.

Upcoming Events

Ramsey Cave Trip

by Larry McTigue

Saturday, April 20, 1991

Participants: Larry McTigue, Mike Wagner, Phil Erickson, Tycho Knudson, Tom Kilroy, Sandy Major.

We all showed up at Mike's houseboat on Lake Union with sunglasses so I knew it was going to be a good trip. Ha! We took our time getting to the cave because I wanted to check the road to Windy Creek Cave and Three Mile Creek Cave. Every one seemed to be enjoying the warm sunshine so I don't think they were bothered too much by the detours.

About a quarter mile up the logging road to Windy Creek we found some guys cutting firewood and completely blocking the road with their truck and trees they had felled across the road. I went up and talked to one of them about the road beyond. He said there was a large slide across the road about one mile further up.

Scott Paper no longer owns the land. He said that Scott sold out to another company called Crown Pacific, which he was now working for as he had been for Scott previously. It was a \$250 million sale and he thinks that the Japanese own the new company. Georgia Pacific still owns land several miles up the road. He said that they would be the first loggers to want to get back in there this year to cut trees but he didn't know when that would be or how long it would take them to clear the slide. The road has always

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been posted "No trespassing/Keep Out" but never really enforced. Now that the ownership has changed hands we may find that we no longer have easy access to the cave.

Next, we drove over to Concrete and up the road toward Ramsey Cave with a short detour up the main road going north to Three Mile Creek Cave. I wanted to check the gate recently placed across the main road as reported by Dick Garnick, Mike, and Phil. The road is supposedly washed out up at Thunder Creek. The gate itself is just a chain link stretched across the road and attached with padlocks to two metal pipe posts on either side of the road. It's still there so I guess they haven't repaired the road yet.

Finally, we arrived at Ramsey and I noted that the sinkhole entrance to the cave has slumped down a bit more as mentioned by Mike and Phil when they replaced the register earlier this year. The heavy rains this year have caused an even more spectacular change on the sinkhole down the road from Ramsey. It has sunk several feet deeper! Later in the day I found a larger sinkhole in a short lapies trench in the woods up the hill and about a quarter mile east of Ramsey. It also showed major slumping from the heavy rains.

Tycho got excited about the potential of virgin cave beneath his feet so while the rest of us went into Ramsey, he attacked the collapsed sink with pick and shovel. We left him to his madness and dropped one by one down the vertical entrance to the cave. This was Tom and Sandy's first trip to the cave so Mike and Phil showed them the Sand Room while I continued down to Salamander Alley. I poked my head into the dome-pit to check the waterfall and depth of the pool in the bottom of the dome-pit. The water level was quite low. Only about 5 feet deep. I have seen it completely dry and also at flood stage and 20 feet deep. The time I was there when it was flooding we could hear the roar of the waterfall from the bottom of the entrance drop. Jeff Forbes was with me the time we found it completely dry. The dome-pit is 25 feet high and we climbed down 20 feet from a ledge near the ceiling. In a small pool of water on the sandy bottom of the pit we found a Pacific Giant Salamander.

I turned from the karst window of the dome-pit and headed back up the main passage to dig the sand out of a side passage. Sandy, Phil, and Mike showed up about this time. Sandy noticed a medium-sized frog sitting in a corner of Salamander Alley and Mike saw a salamander come out of the Frog Room. Both were in close proximity to where I was digging but I hadn't noticed them. The salamander ran between my legs when Mike shouted for me to stop digging so I wouldn't injure it with my digging tool. Mike

identified the frog as a Red-Legged Frog and the salamander as possibly a Jefferson's Salamander.

While we were in the cave, Tycho got tired of digging in the sinkhole and decided to go exploring on his own for a more easily excavated cave entrance. We're still trying to decide if what he found falls into that category, but everyone got really excited by his initial report of a large sink with a small stream disappearing into it up the hill and to the east of Ramsey. We all grabbed digging tools and headed up the hill to take a look. Phil, Tom, and Tycho all took turns trying to remove a large rock blocking the way on. Tycho mentioned another stream he heard 60 feet further east and deeper into the woods. So again, I left them to their madness and went on a wild goose chase instead. Some 600 feet later I happen to find a large surface stream but it didn't look like it went underground anywhere along its course. I did find the large slumped sinkhole mentioned earlier so there does appear to be limestone underneath the area to the west of the large stream. Giving up my efforts in this direction, I returned to the merry excavators only to find their enthusiasm deteriorating, except for Tycho who had gone back to the vehicles to fetch more tools.

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Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00 pm on the third Friday of each month at the University of Washington, Room 6, in the basement of Johnson Hall. Business meetings are held in odd-numbered months immediately following the regular grotto meeting for the month.

We decided to pack up and leave this dig for another day and were almost back to the vehicles when we met him coming up the hill. He looked disappointed but he is already making plans for a return trip.

One final note — Tycho spotted what looked like a small tick in the sinkhole to Ramsey, plus I brought one back from the trip he and I took up the Chilliwack Valley. They are now known to carry Lyme Disease in every state in the U.S. so cavers beware.

The Truth About Cave Slime Mold

Reprinted from *Grocery Gossip*, May 1991

They were brought here in faster-than-light space craft from a far away planet. The slime mold species had flourished there for eons and had become sentient over time, much to the delight of the planet's community of species. But the planet's rapidly changing environment caused by a dwindling sun threatened the slime molds' very existence thus prompting the unheard of mass relocation of the slime mold to a conducive planetary environment in order to ensure their survival as an evolving species.

When the ships arrived here, they found a world in balance. (Man was still living in trees and eating bananas.) After exhaustive analysis of Earth's ecosystems, a particular geological formation, known to modern man as the lava tube, was chosen as the new home of the slime mold. Their friends bid them good luck and farewell and returned home.

First contact

The slime mold inhabitants of a particular lava tube, that will come to be known someday as "New Cave" in Washington state, immediately recognize the creature that has entered their dark home as a new and important species. It is primitive man! By this point, the slime mold has evolved into a telepathic species and attempts to communicate but the ape-man before them is too preoccupied trying to get some revolting slime off its hand. The brute gives the slime covered ceiling a disgusted look and stomps back out into the daylight oblivious to the arrow he's dropped and the attempt to communicate.

Present day

Their approach to the cave entrance is heralded by a strange sound, one never heard before by the cave's inhabitants. Laughter! The collective slime mold memory is consulted and they recognize these visitors as the same species that visited their

ancestors many years ago, but much younger. Telepathically, they reach out to these young minds and are met with chaos. The undisciplined thought patterns are noise to these advanced minds. There seems to be no communicating with these visitors until one of the visitors extends a finger into the slime and begins to inscribe a pattern. Soon the other visitors join in and for hours they cover the walls with cryptic messages. Billions of slime mold cells perish but their death is not a loss if it means establishing a link.

The cave is quiet once again except for the sound of drips. The task of analyzing the messages and reproducing lost slime mold cells has begun. After time, a consensus is reached, a decision is made and preparation for the next encounter begins.

A new race

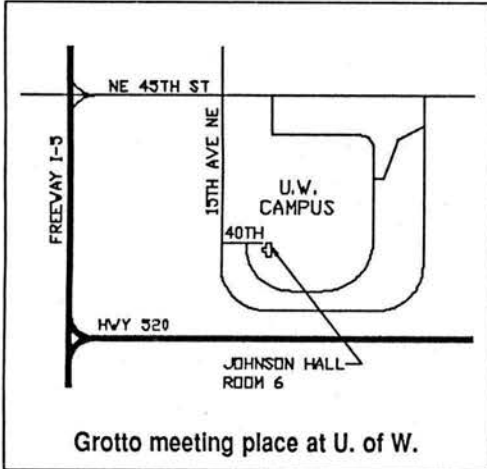
Two things are immediately apparent about the new visitors that have just entered the cave. Every one of them has one or more light generating organs protruding from a hard, hairless head and their thought patterns are of a much higher quality; purposeful, quiet and intent. These humans are united by a sense of wonder and reverence as they proceed deeper into the lava tube. "At last!", the slime mold exclaims mentally. "Someone we can communicate with!" The order is given and millions of slime mold cells move according to the prearranged plan thus creating a message in the slime directly above the head of a nearby caver. It consists of patterns based upon those made by the previous cave visitors. The caver does not observe the message at first so the slime mold reaches out telepathically and after a mighty effort, compels this human to look up which he does. Disappointment dawns on the slime molds' collective consciousness as the caver reads the newly formed message of "Bobby loves Alice!" and mutters to himself, "Damn kids!"

Grotto Notes

June Grotto Meeting

Thirty-two people or so turned out for the June meeting, chaired by Jim Harp. Business and trip reports were quickly dispatched (or I fell asleep at the pencil) and then Dick Garnick showed a great series of slides of the Pendulum Karst area in the Chilliwack Valley, just across the border in Canada. -BLT

Cascade Caver



JULY MEETING

May 19, 7pm

See you there!

Room 6 of Johnson Hall, University of Washington.

Cascade Caver

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12/91

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