

A photograph of a child climbing a large tree. The child is wearing a white helmet, a dark jacket, and blue pants. They are secured with ropes and gear, including a yellow helmet with a cartoon fish on it. The tree has thick branches and dense green foliage. The text 'CASCADE' is written in large, black, serif letters across the top, with 'Climber' written in a smaller, black, serif font below it.

CASCADE  
Climber

December,  
2012

Volume 51,  
Issue 3



# Cascade Caver

**Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society**

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--Kat DiFoxfire Wilson

### GROTTO MEMBERSHIP / SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$20 per year (includes electronics copies of publications) or \$28 (includes printed copies of publication). Membership for each additional family member is \$5.00 per year. Non-member subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$15.00 per year. All fees due Oct. 1 of each year (pro-rated for new members to next October).

### GROTTO ADDRESS:

Cascade Grotto, P.O. Box 66623, Seattle, WA 98166.

This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

Please keep in mind it is usually checked about once monthly.

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# Cascade Grotto at June "Orientation to Cave Rescue" at Oregon Caves National Monument



A patient, packaged for transport, is glad his injuries were simulated. Photo by James Mooreshire.

## By James Mooreshire

On June 6th and 7th 2012, the National Cave Rescue Commission offered an Orientation to Cave Rescue training event (O.C.R.) which was hosted by Oregon Caves National Monument near Cave Junction, Oregon. Cascade Grotto members Aaron Stavens and Hester Mallonee, along with Douglas County Mountain Rescue specialist Cory Sipher, assisted NCRC Northwestern Region coordinator John Panches in the instruction. [The author attended as a student.] Many thanks not only to the instructors but also to the National Park Service and chief ranger Tammy Henderson who arranged for a two-day event (twice as long as some past O.C.R.s) and opened the training to non-staff attendance.

National Park Service staff, community park volunteers, local search and rescue team members, and cavers alike benefited from the opportunity to learn both in a classroom setting and on multiple in-cave simulated scenarios. Simulations involved applying the skills learned in the classroom, and focused first on the main tour trail route and then the off-trail tour route.

Along the main tour simulation, patient packaging and moving was relatively unhindered as the paved route and stairways had been built to accommodate a rigid stretcher. With nearly 40,000 tour visitors a year, it is the most likely stretch for an accident or medical emergency.

The off-trail tour involves climbing up and down, squeezing through tight crawling passages, and navigating around large pieces of breakdown. Our simulated off-trail tour patient had to be treated for their simulated injuries, was located in a very awkward tight pinch, and had to be safely navigated through the aforementioned obstacles in a SKED model collapsible stretcher. All in attendance were challenged, and everyone learned quite a lot. Overall, it was a very successful event!

A video of part of the on-trail simulation is on YouTube: "NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue - Basic litter handling practice - Oregon Caves 6/5/12."



Rescue crews move an immobilized "patient" through the cave. Photo by James Mooreshire.

# Mt. St. Helens

# Ridge Walking in Eagle Cap Wilderness

By Jerry Thompson

## First Views

A little over a year ago, as I wondered what was the inspiration for the naming of Marble Point on the ridge between the Lostine River and Frances Lake in northeast Oregon, I walked up the Frances Lake Trail in the Eagle Cap Wilderness for a little over four hours, hoping to answer this riddle. I topped out at a little over 8600 feet and was rewarded with views of a large exposure of Martin Bridge Marble.

At a switchback shortly before the high point, my hiking/climbing partner, Kim Dickey and I were close enough to Marble Point to see a mountain goat waltzing on the near-vertical cliffs on the northern extent of that ridge. After soaking up the views and wolfing down trail lunches, with no overnight gear we retreated to the Lostine River Valley and my car vowing to return and spend more time getting a closer look at the extensive exposure.

The Eagle Cap Wilderness in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest is an area characterized by more than 50 alpine lakes, as well as bare granite peaks and ridges, U-shaped glacial valleys and open meadows that attract elk, deer, bighorn sheep, coyote, black bear, and cougar. Thick timber is found in the lower valleys and scattered alpine timber on the upper slopes. Elevations range from 3,000-5000 feet in the lower valleys to 9,845 feet at the summit of Sacajawea Peak with 30 other summits exceeding 8,000 feet. The Francis Lake Trailhead is located about 14 miles south of Lostine off of State Highway 82.



Eagle Cap Wilderness. Photo by Jerry Thompson

Back at my apartment, on my computer, the Martin Bridge exposures in the area were very apparent on Google Earth <<http://g.co/maps/a8mpv>>. However, the rugged nature of the terrain and local relief are not adequately shown. I remembered the seven mile hike and the 3500 feet of elevation gain, but seemed to forget that an additional two or two and a half miles would be added to barely reach the exposures of marble in the headwaters of Lake Creek above Frances Lake.

## Grotto Trip Scheduling

While visiting with Robert Mitchell en route to Roger Cole's Funeral last March, I resolved to schedule a grotto field trip back to this area for this season. I fancied this might be a several day event that might fairly completely explore the marble exposures above Frances Lake. As I continued to explore the area on Google Earth the target area came to seem far less rugged



of August 15 so that I could plan on who might be attending and be sure the group size would be compliant with wilderness regulations. Things were really quiet and there were no responses to my emails and no further interest shown.

### **Approach Details**

On Sunday, August 26th, I drove with my mountaineering friend, Kim Dickey to the Iron Dyke Campground on the Lostine River, very near the Frances Lake/Bowman Trailhead Parking Lot. The next day, with

and easier to move around on than on REAL EARTH.

A few days later, I posted a Yahoo Group “feeler” that said “This coming season, I would like to spend several days cave hunting in an exposure of the Martin Bridge Formation in the Wallow Mountains/Eagle Cap Wilderness. This is the geologic unit that contains the Hells Canyon Caves and Papoose Cave. I want to list this as a grotto activity and will have some pictures of the area and some more specific information at this Friday’s grotto meeting. I would like to gauge interest and get an idea of when to schedule the trip.” I received three or four tepid responses to my “feeler.” I prepared a short presentation for the April 20, 2012 grotto meeting.

In the early summer, I scheduled the trip for August 26-30 and listed that in the *Cascade Caver* a month or so before the event. I emailed the folks who had responded to the “feeler.” As the event dates approached, I sent a cut-off date

packs loaded for several days of camping, we spent a little less than seven hours reaching the same high spot where we had taken in the views a year ago. An additional hour and fifty minutes put us at a meager but well sheltered high camp near the steam above the upper end of the lake.

### **The Day of Exploration and Beyond**

On August 28, we spent several hours exploring the bluffs and benches up valley and below the ridge extending south of Marble Point. The rock was seemed to more heavily metamorphosed with larger crystals showing that I remember having seen in other similar exposures in the Wallowa Mountains. We hiked up and across the exposure to its western extent. We found no easy access to the crest of the ridge extending south from Marble Point. The eastern flank of this ridge is nearly vertical for its entire length. Other than one small resurgence alcove, there were no obvious karst features found in the area we traversed. We noticed nothing in nearby basins that enticed us to search further. We



packed up the next day and headed back to Washington.

### **Conclusions**

Section 16 T3NR44E was examined fairly thoroughly east of the crest of the ridge extending south of Marble Point. It would be nice to explore the crest of this ridge but access appears to involve pretty serious scrambling and possibly roped rock climbing.

Sections 29&30 T3NR44E contain significant exposures of marble and probably should receive further attention. However, exploration there will involve more time and greater commitment. Here again, it would appear that

serious scrambling or rock climbing may be involved.

The base camp at the south end of the rugged path on the western side of Frances Lake is an old horse camp. It contains one small but well protected tent site. Other nearby tent site areas are sloping. This campground is, however, very conveniently located for exploring the headwaters of Lake Creek above Frances Lake. There is a large flat, open, and less protected area at the north end of the lake that would be comfortable for a larger group in fair weather. There was a constant, substantial breeze from up-valley on and near the lake most of the time.

# Tyrolean Jousting at the McCormicks

By Robert Mitchell

What do ropes, trees and bright pink and yellow foam plastic swords and shields have in common? Well, when combined with a group of crazy cavers, it amounts to bouts of Tyrolean Jousts.

Each July 4th, Aaron Stavens and Tom Evans set up a Tyrolean traverse at the party held by Michael and Nikki McCormack.

A Tyrolean traverse is a method of crossing through free space between two high points on a rope without a hanging cart or cart equivalent, often used by cavers, rock climbers, mountaineers, and in technical tree climbing, water crossings and as ziplines.

Traveling across a Tyrolean traverse varies from purely using one's hands and legs to the use of prusiks, one-way pulleys, or ascenders.

In most modern situations the traverser is secured to the line through some combination of climbing harness,



Aaron Stavens models the Tyrolean jousting weapons. Photo by Robert Mitchell.



The crowd watches a participant who is halfway across. Photo by Robert Mitchell



webbing, carabiner, and/or pulleys.

The course at the McCormacks is always enjoyed by the kids (and a few adults, too) well into dusk and almost to the start of the fireworks show.

This year Stavens and Evans set up opposing lines and set up a jousting course using pool floats and foam noodles as weapons.

After the initial run, people on the ground would use the tow lines to set up several re-matches before participants were taken off rope.



Above: Weapons of minor destruction.

Left: An armed (and perhaps dangerous?) participant gets ready to take a turn at Tyrolean jousting.

Photos by Robert Mitchell.

Above and below. Two opponents ascend separate ladders on separate sides and prepare to joust. Photos by Robert Mitchell



Photos by Robert Mitchell.



Previous Page:  
Top left: "Pink versus..."  
Top right: "...Yellow"  
Bottom left: "Contact"  
Bottom right: "Almost there."

Current Page:  
Left: Opponents are towed back to start for a re-match.

Bottom: The Tyrolean Jousting Course.

All photos by Robert Mitchell.



# Carlsbad Caverns Lint Camp

By **Jim Harp and Jerry Thompson**

## Carlsbad Caverns--A Brief History

Carlsbad Caverns is found within the Guadalupe Mountains, a 23-million-year-old limestone mountain range recognized as the best-preserved Permian-aged fossil reef in the world. It is located in south-eastern New Mexico, about 25 miles north of Texas. The cave was first entered by local rancher Jim White around 1898 who over the next several decades extensively explored and mapped the cave.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century Carlsbad Cave was mined for its guano resources, a commodity valued as fertilizer. In 1924 it was proclaimed Carlsbad National Monument by then-President Calvin Coolidge. In 1930 it achieved National Park status followed by becoming a World Heritage Site in 1995. Carlsbad Caverns is about 1000 feet deep and at last count contained more than 30 miles of surveyed passages.



Lint and lint collecting tools. Photo by Jim Harp.

## Lint Camps

In the mid-1980s, lint and other small introduced debris were found to be accumulating along the tourist trail. Pat Jablonsky and other interested cavers, including NPS Cave Specialist John Roth, began studying the lint accumulations found along the visitor trails.



Pat Jablonsky.  
Photo by Jim Harp.

Formal scientific research was conducted by Pat, Bill Yett, and Sandy Kramer who analyzed the composition of the lint as well as its origins, distribution and movement within the cave. It was found that in addition to discoloring the formations, the lint drew moisture and produced organic acids that caused significant deterioration.

Formal, organized lint removal camps began in 1988. With the exceptions of 1999 and 2006 the lint camps have operated every year since 1988 with as many as twenty-five participants from all over the United States collecting up to fifty pounds of lint during each of the week-long camps. Currently the volunteer participants spend a

minimum of twenty hours working in the cave during the week-long camp. Monday, Tuesday and Friday are four-hour days. Thursday is an eight-hour day. No work is planned for Wednesday which is set aside for field trips to



world. Lint from about a third of the visitor trail was collected this year with thirty-one and a half pounds of lint removed in the course of the week. While working the Big Room Jerry Thompson was pleased to have found a previously undocumented Mexican free-tailed bat skull possibly tens of thousands of years old.

**Afternoon activities** this year included a hike up Mckittrick Canyon where evidence shows early inhabitants occupied the area over 12,000 years ago and more recently by the Mescalero Apaches who were driven off their land by US Cavalry. Mckittrick Canyon is located approximately 40 miles southwest of Carlsbad and is contiguous with the Guadalupe Escarpment managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

Rattlesnake Springs which is a rare and unique desert wetland was also visited.

Over the years its waters have been used by prehistoric people, explorers, soldiers, travelers, settlers and currently is the source of water for the Carlsbad National Park complex.

nearby points of interest.

In September, 2012, Cascade Grotto members Jim Harp and Jerry Thompson along with eleven other volunteers from Colorado, Maryland, Oregon and Pennsylvania arrived at the research huts to do battle with the lint. Though this was only the second lint camp for Jim and Jerry, some of the veterans have been participants at the camp for many years. Only a few of the lint pickers are retired with most using their personal vacation time to work at the lint removal project.

This year, all of the collecting was done in the Big Room also known as the Hall of the Giants. Carlsbad's Big Room is almost 4,000 feet long, 625 feet wide, and 255 feet high at the highest point. It is the third largest single cave chamber in North America and the seventh largest in the

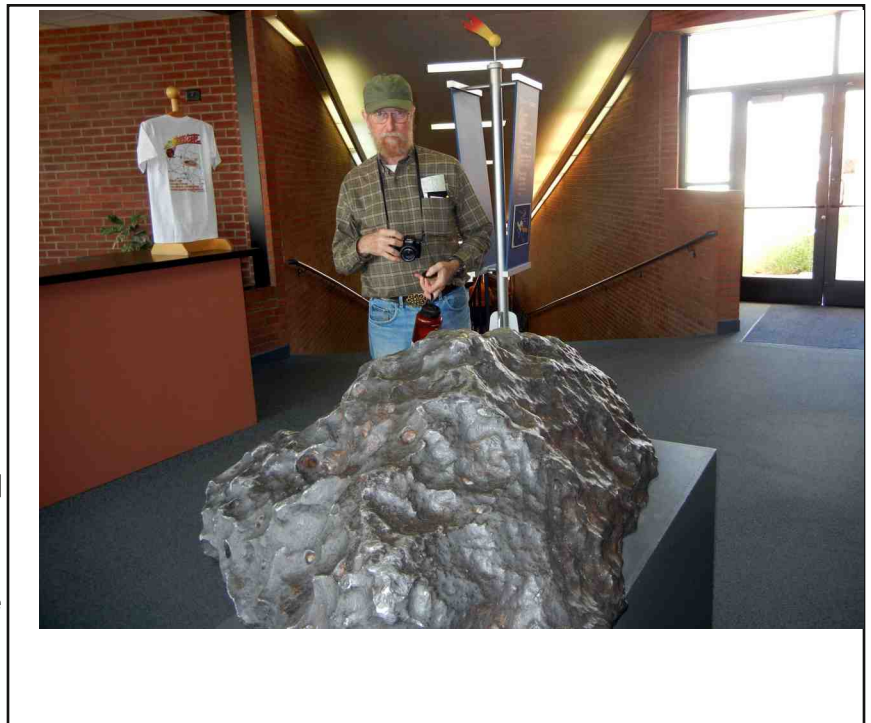
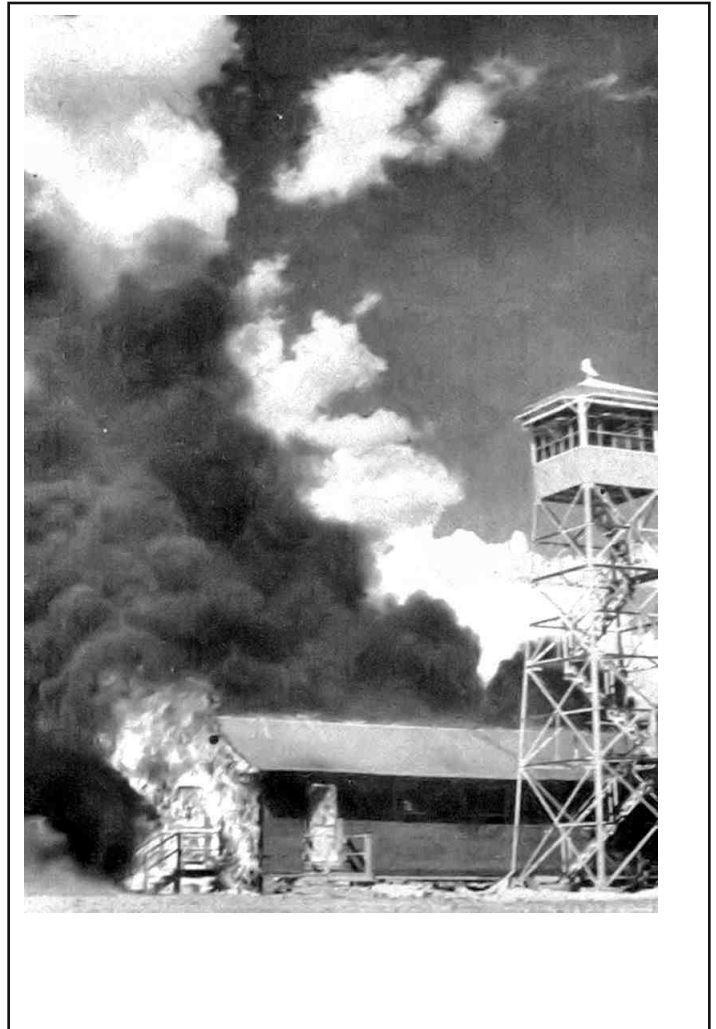


Retired park ranger, Tom Bemis led the group into various areas of interest on our day off. The first of these was to a former World War II US Army Air Force practice bombing range used to train bombardiers including the late, great Tennessee Ernie Ford. There is a display at the Carlsbad airport dedicated to the bombardier training program that is worth visiting.

The group then visited the former Carlsbad Army Airfield used for World War II Project X-ray. Project X-ray was set up to have bats released over Japan carrying small packs of napalm to the largely wood and paper constructed buildings of the Japanese cities that were the weapons' intended targets. When an Army Air Force general from Washington, D.C. was brought out to view the project, the armed bats were released. This resulted in the bats setting fire to the airfield buildings and destroying not only the the air field, but the Bat Bomb Project as well.

Later Bemis led the group on a trip into Parks Ranch Cave which is reported to have over 20 entrances (or exits) and 14 miles of passages. While Carlsbad Caverns was formed primarily in limestone, Parks Ranch Cave system was formed in gypsum situated within the gypsum plain to the south of Carlsbad. Being forewarned that parts of this horizontal cave would contain one to two feet of water some of our group brought along shorts and sandals as their caving uniform. Visitors to this cave should be aware it is subject to flash flooding.

Harp and Thompson also went on a "spelunker's" tour of the lower Carlsbad cave area located at the bottom of Bottomless Pit. Yes you are reading this correctly: Bottomless Pit does have a bottom which can be viewed from a point in the Big Room 140 feet above the bottomless floor. The visitor's





access point used by four groups only involves a 60-foot down climb using a hand line and ladders. The reward for the visitors' efforts is arriving at an area containing interesting speleothems including gypsum formations and cave pearls. This tour can be easily handled by most adult individuals having no serious physical limitations.

**After the end of each work day,** the lint pickers all enjoyed some great dinners cooked by the lint picking hostess, Pat Jablonski. Evenings were spent at such activities as stargazing with a veteran participant's telescope and

viewing the ever-popular evening bat flights from the natural entrance. Some time was spent late one night chasing a raccoon from the research hut shared by the male participants. On another night a lazy rattlesnake was found snoozing



upon the threshold of the ladies research hut bunkhouse. (Eeek!)

**In conclusion** the authors came away from their lint removal experience with the knowledge that



Carlsbad Caverns is probably the largest and most highly decorated tourist cave on our planet. The trails and lighting systems have all been placed in a very professional manner so as to facilitate viewing by the general public in a safe and friendly environment. The dedication and hard work of Pat Jablonski and the volunteers who come each year are a reason Carlsbad will continue to be the best cave ever.









# Article 5

By





By



# Upcoming Meetings, Cave Trips and Events

## MONTHLY CASCADE GROTTO MEETINGS

Third Fridays of the month at 7 p.m.

See page 31 for driving directions and details.

July 20	Shoreline Community Ctr.
Aug. 17	Milton Tavern
Sept. 21*	Shoreline Community Ctr.
Oct. 19	Milton Tavern
Nov. 16	Shoreline Community Ctr.
December	Holiday Party, date and location TBA

\* Includes program, see below.

## LOCAL & REGIONAL EVENTS

**July 21-22, 2012**

**Spider, Gremlin, Flow, Manhole Caves--WA**

near Mount Saint Helens. Date tentative. More details later.

*Trip Leader:* Kim Luper, Oregon Grotto

*Contact:* [www.oregongrotto.com](http://www.oregongrotto.com)





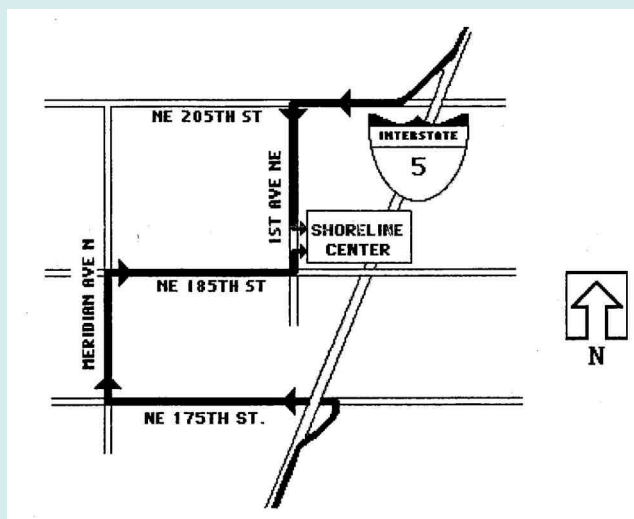
# Cascade Grotto Monthly Meetings

The Cascade Grotto meets at 7 p.m. on the third Friday of each month (except December) alternating between the Shoreline Community Center north of Seattle, WA and the Milton Tavern south of Federal Way. Meetings consist of grotto business, followed by trip reports and scheduling of future cave trips. Some meetings also contain a program. After meetings in Shoreline, we usually drive to Spiro's Pizza for food, drinks and socializing. At the Milton Tavern, we can consume food and drinks during or after the meeting and stay at the Tavern for socializing afterwards. Meetings are open to all members of the public except that the Milton Tavern does not permit kids in the building after 4 p.m.

## DIRECTIONS:

The **Shoreline Community Center** is located at 18560, 1st Ave NE in Shoreline. It's a large quiet conference room with easy access, free parking and full AV capability. See also <http://www.shorelinecenter.com>.

*Directions from Seattle:* Take Interstate 5 north to Exit 176 (175th St. N), and turn left at the light at the bottom of the off ramp. At the next traffic light (Meridian Ave. N) turn right. Turn right at 185th St. N (the next light). Turn left on 1st NE, which again is the next light. The Community Center is on the right. Don't get confused with the Senior Center, which is on the end of the building. Enter the building on the southwest corner and find the Hamlin Room.



The **Milton Tavern** is located at 7320 Pacific Highway East Milton, WA 98354, 253-922-3340. We meet in the upstairs meeting room. It's smaller and noisier than Shoreline, with no AV capabilities, but the tavern has great food and a wide selection of adult beverages. See <http://www.themiltontavern.com/> for menu. We encourage members and guest to support the tavern since they are supporting us by providing a free meeting room.

*Directions from Seattle or Federal Way:*

Take I-5 South. Take exit 142B. Merge onto S 348TH ST / WA-18 W. Cross over 16th Avenue S (Enchanted Pkwy). Get into left turn lane, onto Hwy 99. Go 2.9 miles (thru one traffic light). Turn left at the traffic light onto Porter Way, and make an immediate right into the parking lot.

*Directions from Tacoma or Olympia:*

Take I-5 North. Take exit 137 toward FIFE / WA-99 N / MILTON. Take the 54 Ave. E. North ramp toward FIFE / WA-99 N / MILTON. At the corner of 54th & Hwy-99 turn right, heading north. Go 1.3 miles (thru two traffic lights). At the traffic light at Porter Way, turn right, & make an immediate right into the parking lot.

## Quick Tip:

### How To Remember Where to Meet Which Month?

SHORELINE has an ODD number of letters.

MILTON (and TAVERN) has an EVEN number of letters.

Thus, in odd-numbered months we meet at Shoreline,  
in even-numbered months, we meet in Milton.

# Meeting Minutes--July - November, 2012

*Editors' Note:* Due to the length of the meeting minutes, and the cost of printing, official minutes are posted on the Cascade Grotto's Member's-Only YahooGroups electronic forum, and are not included in the printed version of the *Cascade Caver*. A few highlights of each meeting are listed below. Official minutes are also available by request.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**TRIP AND PROJECT REPORTS**

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## **MINUTES: FEBRUARY 17, 2012**

## **MINUTES: MARCH 16, 2012**

**REPORTS**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**REPORTS**

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**OLD BUSINESS**

**TRIP AND PROJECT REPORTS**

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## **Meeting Minutes: MAY 18, 2012**

## **Meeting Minutes--June 15, 2012**

**REPORTS**





