

# The Month's Guano

November 2000

Kansas City Area Grotto

Volume 14, Issue 11

## HOW to get Stoned

Ok So maybe the title of this article is a bit misleading, but Terry DeFraties and Mike McKinney did kidnap me while I was in my sleeping bag and threw me into that back of a van and left the Spring 2000 MVOR without so much as an explanation. And Terry did drop a rock on my hip while at the bottom of a 120' pit named Devils Hole, I think that was the name of the pit anyway. So you see they did stone me in the Biblical way.

Ok here is what really happened. About four weeks before my wedding was the spring MVOR. Michelle and I headed down early and met up with Jeff Andrews and Kim Andrews. We pitched camp and other showed up throughout the night. By around Midnight everyone was there. Mike McKinney, Kyle McKinney, Terry Defraties, Kathy Sumner, Tom Sumner, His friend, Regan Youngman, Berry Godsey, Jeff Page, Cynthia his friend, Gerry Gatenby, Robert (Smudge) Gatenby, Mike Fraley, Kasha Henson, and a few more I am not sure on.

When everyone went to bed Friday night I was told to get all my gear and put it in the tent. Which is against my normal procedures. I really was getting suspicious that someone was going to take my truck or something like that and hide it until Sunday when it was time to go home. But NOOOO!!!! That is not what happened at all.

Usually Terry wakes me in the morning after he gets up and starts the water for tea and coffee. This did not happen that Saturday morning, instead I was coxed into staying in the tent with Michelle for a little while longer because she wanted to sleep some more and wanted me to hold her. So I did. Then all of a sudden Mike and Terry came into the tent grabbed me and my sleeping bag and put me in the back of Gerry's Van. Not breakfast no tea no Pepsi no nothing not even clothes. I was worried that they would forget something when they started putting my gear into the van and they would not even let me out to check on anything.

After they had retrieved all my gear and clothes we headed out for an unknown destination. We drove for four hours into Arkansas. We stopped at the local Wal-mart in Harrison and when we returned to the vans, Mike's and Gerry's, Terry had locked the keys to the doors inside. Mike did not tell us not to lock the doors because the door key was not on the key chain. We called 'AAA' after trying to unlock the doors and after about an hour we were on our way again to destination unknown.

Now we were headed in the general direction of Jannus and Ennis but since Jeff Andrews my Future brother in-law was with us I figured Jannus was out of the question because he had not really work on his vertical gear much. Little did I know that Mike and Terry had been working with Jeff for several weeks to prepare him for this event. When we stopped I had no Idea where we were so I put on my gear grabbed my Vertical bag and followed Terry into the woods.

We arrive at our destination still unknown to me and rigged up and prepare for the decent and then go in. The trip in was very smooth and This was Jeff's first drop. Maybe we will see Jeff Andrew's Trip report soon (Hint Hint). After being in the hole for around an hour I go to check out a possible lead near the floor and Terry was waiting next to me to hear what I was saying and somehow, while fixing his headlamp knocked a 5-10 lb rock on my hip from about 3-4 feet above where I was laying. Well needless to say there was a loud Yell when it hit me and Mike said it sounded like a thud and he did not like the sound and then he heard me yell and everyone stopped and came over to see what had happened.

Well after a brief look by Mike, Nothing appeared to be broken so we continued on. We never did find the way into the main passage the Terry had seen on his last trip here. But that was ok because we were running out of time and needed to get back on the road. We climbed out and all rejoiced that Jeff was no longer a virgin, sorry ladies, and the cave name was Devil's Hole.

On the trip were Mike McKinney, Terry DeFraties, Gerry Gatenby, Jeff Andrews, Berry Godsey, Kyle McKinney, and Myself. I just wanted to say that I really am glad I have friends that care enough about me to take me into the woods, drop me down a hole, and try to stone me and then bring me back in one piece. Thanks Guys

Bryon Carmoney  
NSS 43042



# Guad Trip by Jerry Cindric

Yes, it is a long ass drive from KC to SE New Mexico. Terry DeFraities, Kathy Sumner, Tom Sumner and I loaded my van on Wednesday, October 18 and were on the road by 6:30 AM. We were to meet with a large contingent from Ozark Highlands Grotto for some cave adventure and restoration work in the Guads. Through Wichita, Oklahoma City, Amarillo, Lubbock and Hobbs we were in Carlsbad 13 1/2 hours later. The campsite was about another 1 1/2 hours away. I had actually been up the camp road two years previously on a trip to Deep Cave. Since we were the first to arrive, the directions were suspect and the camp area not well marked, we didn't get settled in until well after midnight. The road is very rough up to the camp area, then impassable past that except for 4-wheel drive vehicles. They even have an area in the road named, the Dragon's Teeth. On Thursday morning we slept late and when we woke still no one else was at camp. After breakfast we decided that if we were to cave this day we would need to find one ourselves. Since the area requires permits, we headed back out for more "windshield time". We first went to Carlsbad Cave and learned that the caves in our camp area were controlled by the Lincoln National Forest headquartered in the city of Carlsbad. It was now PM so we got to Carlsbad and got a permit for Hidden Cave, which was close to camp. Using the Step Log we walked right to the cave in about a half-hour. The entrance was a slot dropping about 60 feet into breakdown. This led to a large flat room with some huge formations. As with most caves in the area, the formations were dry. We went in several different directions from the main room. There has

obviously been a large amount of restoration work done in Hidden Cave. Through sensitive areas, paths have been flagged and formations/flowstone floors cleaned. We exited in the dark and walked back to camp.

Action was picking up at camp. We were actually in the right place. Recreational permits for Friday included Sentinel, Cottonwood, Gunsight and Hidden Caves. The Sentinel Cave permit was full so Terry, Kathy, Tom and I signed up for Gunsight along with several guys from OHG. It had a multi-page Step Log that noted that it was about a one-hour walk; it would be a miracle if we found the cave. We got a ride on a 4-wheeler past the Dragon's Teeth for the first two miles to the parking area. For those who have not been to the area, it ain't Missouri. The only □ &'real' trees occur on the canyon floors, which we didn't get near. Deep canyons, rocks, cactus, other tough plants, lizards and rocky ridges dominated the landscape. A path was hard to discern. Even though we lost a couple of steps while following the step log we went directly to the cave. There was no missing this monster. A huge gaping hole on a bluff face would remind us a little of the lower Tunnel Cave entrance but bigger. Inside the cave grew in size. The cave is essentially two huge rooms of nearly equal size. The vertical drop from cave ceiling to lowest point was several hundred feet. There was a small amount of dripping in the lowest elevations but again this cave was dry. One of the more interesting parts was a skylight. After a couple of hours we exited and headed back to camp. We met the group looking for Sentinel Cave. Only one per-

GUADS (Continued on page 8)

## November 2000 Vol. 14 Issue 11

The Month's Guano is published on the second Wednesday. Nine issues annually.

**Submit articles** to editor at least 10 days prior to publication date.

Guano subscription rate for nonmembers: \$ 6.00 annually.

**President:** Bryon Carmony, 913-788-3875

**Vice President:** Jeff Page

**Treasurer:** Jeff Page

**Secretary:** Kathy Sumner, 913-383-1986

**Editor:** Bryon Carmony 3512 N 63rd Terrace, Kansas City, KS 66104

**Asst. ED:** Kate Johnson, 1705 Safari Dr., St. Joseph, MO 64506

Bryon Carmony 3512 N 63rd Terrace, Kansas City, KS 66104

**E-Mail Address:** Bryon Carmony

Packratt@aol.com

Jeff Page

jeffpage@worldnet.att.net

Kansas City Area Grotto is affiliated with the National Speleological Society, The Missouri Speleological Survey, and a Founding Member of Missouri Caves & Karst Conservancy.

Meetings held every second Wednesday at 7 p.m. (**alternate site in May**), Magg Hall, behind Spencer Laboratories, Volker Blvd. & Cherry, Kansas City, Missouri. Annual Dues: \$ 10 for Full Members (3 caving trips with KCAG, nomination and vote of membership required.)

### **NCRC Callout number Emergency use only**

Central Region 502-564-7815. This number may be used for cave rescue emergencies in the states of, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, **Missouri**, Ohio and Wisconsin.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

- November 4, 2000 Turnback Cave annual restoration trip!  
(OHG Trip Contact speleonut@juno.com (Lawrence L Ireland))
- November 8, 2000 Business Meeting. Magg Hall UMKC Campus 7:00 pm  
Agenda  
7:00 pm Minutes from last meeting  
  
7:15 Old Business  
  
7:30 New Business  
  - Nomination of 2001 Officers  
7:45 Trip Reports and Upcoming trips  
  
8:00 Monthly Program. Jeff Page  
  
9:00 Meeting Adjourned
- November 11, 2000 Part 2 of Mapping Classes: Sketching  
Richard Cindric's Home
- November 17-19 Annual Ennis Cave Gathering  
(OHG Trip Contact speleonut@juno.com (Lawrence L Ireland))
- November 24-26 In-cave campout and exploration of Berome Moore (2nd longest in MO!). Kitchen, electricity and water at an underground campsite!  
\*Five-hour drive. (OHG Trip Contact speleonut@juno.com (Lawrence L Ireland))
- December 3, 2000 CCC Meeting. Contact Rick Hines For information
- December 9, 2000 Christmas Party 7:00 PM Rick Hines Home

**16525 Orchard Lane  
Stilwell, KS 66085**

**REMBER OHG HAS AGGREGED TO LETS US CAVE WITH THEM. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A TRIP YOU MUST CONTACT THE TRIP LEADER.**

**CCC Meeting  
October 8, 2000  
Meeting Minutes**

The eighth meeting of the Carroll Cave Conservancy convened at 1:05 PM at Truman Lake State Park Shelter House. The meeting was called to order by Rick Hines. Jeff Page recorded the minutes. Rick distributed a sign-up sheet to the group and asked each participant to introduce themselves and briefly discuss their interest in Carroll Cave. The attendees were as follows:

Wayne Burnett, Michelle and Bryon Carmoney, Bill Copeland, Terry DeFraties, Robert and Gerry Gattenby, Marty Griffin, Carolyn and Mike Hartley, Kay and Rick Hines, Lawrence Ireland, Andy Isbell, Tom and Tina Lounsbury, Jeff Page, Cyndia Chesshir, Dave Porter, Terry Sherman, Eddie Simmons, Kathy Sumner.

The meeting was led by Rick Hines and followed the discussion outline that he distributed to the group.

1. Only 3 at last meeting-Rick reported that the last meeting had only three people in attendance.

2. Treasures report

Rick cited the need to maintain a list of donors and send a Thank you letter to each. Treasurer Wayne Burnett reported a treasury balance of \$785.92.

3. New since last meeting

- a) No digging in sink since last December due to safety concerns about the instability of the rock in the rooms opened up at the bottom of the sinkhole.
- b) We now have tax exempt status, 501(c)(3) and need to establish a list of charter members to remain in compliance.
- c) Rick distributed maps of the land over Carroll Cave, which showed ownership of the various sections.
- d) Have Lease from Greg Fry, owner of land above the cave.
- e) Have Lease from Chris Danuser, owner of land above the cave.
- f) Have pinpointed a spot over the T-Junction
- g) Have pinpointed a spot over DR1 105 feet to cave
- h) Have pinpointed a spot over Convention Hall 50 feet to cave on Bill Fredrick property. (*Snip Edited out*)
- I) Have pinpointed a spot over Convention Hall Passage meets Thunder River 100 feet to cave on Chris Danuser property
- j) A second 50-foot to cave spot exists between Convention Hall and Thunder River that is probably on Danuser side of the fence. (*Snip*)

4. Other old Business

Rick mentioned that the first gathering of people who were interested in opening a new entrance to Carroll was first held on 11/18/95. That was a clean up of the sinkhole where we would dig. The CCC was established 1/22/98. One participant expressed interest in pursuing the sinkhole dig. (*Snip*)

5. What next? Without a lease from Mr. Fredrick, we should not pursue drilling on his land at this time, even though he is willing to have us do so. Rick suggests the next steps are:

- a) (*Snip*)
- b) Select site for shaft
- c) Have Stamper drill 9" hole at the spot (\$450 for 80' or less)
- d) Down hole video - drop video camera into the shaft
- e) Determine driller and cost for 3-foot hole- a discussion ensued regarding the option of dynamiting an entrance in the shaft. Rick noted that while this was a less expensive option, it would result in more labor intensive work removing the blasted rock and would result in a rougher entrance than would drilling. The group consensus was that drilling was more desirable.
- f) Raise \$10,000 to \$20,000
- g) Drill access shaft.

6. Committees: With the anticipated opening of a new entrance, it is time for CCC to form committees to handle the associated responsibility. Meeting participants were asked to volunteer for the following committees.

**Membership**, Chairman Bryon Carmoney, Member Andy Isbell

Categories for the committee's consideration

Sweat Equity (those who have devoted considerable time to the project so far)

Landowners (who have granted us access to their property)

Minor (to be determined if minors can be members)

Organization (to be determined if grottos and other organizations can be members)

Honorary (e.g. Bill Hays, Atty, who has done work for CCC pro bono)

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

New (committee determines membership requirements)

Current members are those with Sweat Equity, Landowners, and lawyer (see type column on CCC participants list).

Dues (committee to determine dues for the various categories)

**Access**, Chairman, Eddie Simmons Members Tom Lounsbury, Dave Porter, Mike Hartley, Gerry Gatenby

Committee will determine requirements for gaining access to entrance, the limits on trip sizes and prioritize the types of trips allowed. Gate security and hardware for the entrance are additional issues.

**Survey/Maps**, Chairman, Tom Lounsbury

**Landowner Relations**, Chairman, Rick Hines

Meeting participants agree that no one other than the chairman talks to the landowners about CCC business.

**Drilling**, Chairman, Eddie Simmons, member Bill Copeland

Responsible for seeking bids from qualified drillers.

**Fund Raising**, Chairman, Michelle Carmony member Kathy Sumner

**Bylaws**, Chairman, Jeff Page member, Lawrence Ireland

**Web Page**, Web Master, Marty Griffin

#### 7. Issues

Jeff Page submitted a list issues surrounding the opening of a new entrance. Most of these issues had been covered in the discussions on committees. Additional issues discussed were awareness that there may be media attention and relations with area residents.

Also discussed was an issue submitted by Kerry Rowland (not present at the meeting), who had participated in the most recent fieldwork. He was concerned that Convention Hall was not the best place to dig due to the ceiling being relatively weak sandstone and the possibility of entrants tracking mud from CH to Thunder River thereby endangering cave fish and other species. The points from the discussion that followed were that we are limited to where we drill by the number of landowners who will cooperate. Finding another location where the depth was acceptable would be very difficult. The mud could be dealt with by finding ways to harden it as has been done in other caves. We should spend whatever time is deemed necessary to prepare CH for traffic. Most thought that a safe route through the sandstone breakdown could be found or developed. The consensus was that we should proceed with our next steps as outlined in section 5.

#### 8. Other new business

One participant recalled that the cave might be listed on the registry of National Historic Landmarks that could possibly be an obstacle to the CCC efforts. He said he would look into it and report.

#### 9. Next meeting:

When 12/3/00

Where - to be determined.

This assumes that we have drilled a hole by then and need to discuss costs and other considerations. If this has not happened by 12/3, we may postpone the meeting until January.

#### 10. Meeting adjourned

Hi Steve,

Sorry for not getting back to you sooner, we've been really busy with the entry access replacement. The new culvert is 36 inches in diameter and made of stainless steel. We have 5 sections in place and presently backfilling up to the last section. This has been a very big job, much larger than first thought, however, it presently is (I think) 65% complete. We have two remaining sections of pipe to install before we start on the air lock enclosure itself. I estimate that the project will not be completed until the first of the year....hopefully sooner though. Access to Lechu-

guilla Cave will be sooner than the project is finished. The last phase of the project will be restoration of the entrance area and we will need volunteers, LEARN could really help here. I will try to keep you updated.

Jason

--

Steve Koehler

Secure Computing Corporation  
koehler@securecomputing.com

# Accident Report

## Preliminary Accident Report:

On Saturday evening, 1 October 2000, Joe Ivy was bolt climbing a dome at the back of O-9 Well in Crockett County, Texas. He had climbed the dome higher than most Texas caves are deep -- an estimated 60 m. He was about 5 m below what seemed to be a going passage with airflow, when he fell about 12 m to a ledge. He wedged between some rocks and his harness pushed high and constricted his chest. Tim Stich, who was taking turns leading the climb with Joe, climbed up to him. Joe had multiple injuries, and was conscious for a few minutes before he lapsed into unconsciousness and died. Tim managed to un-wedge him and rappelled with him to the floor of the room at the bottom of the cave.

Word of the accident was passed up the cave and to the surface, where a Sked stretcher was brought down and the already tired and now distraught crew began to haul Joe up the 15 m drop, and up the multiple short nuisance drops until they reached the base of the 20 m pit that is around 100 m from the 39 m deep entrance pit -- they covered the hardest part of the cave. I think it was 2 or 3 in the morning, when they left the cave, exhausted and with plans to complete the recovery in the morning.

People in Austin and San Antonio got word of the accident after midnight. We trickled into the cave camp between 5 and 7 a.m. (Crockett County is a roughly 4 hour drive from the nearest concentrations of cavers). The Sheriff had been out to the cave the previous evening and restricted further trips into the cave until his return and an approval from the county judge. When we got that approval, we also got word that John Green, Rod Dennison, James Davis, Monte Strange, and others with whom Joe had done a lot cave rescue work, were only about an hour away. We waited for them, especially since Rod had done a mock rescue with Joe at O-9 Well about a year earlier and knew how to deal with some of the tricky rigging issues. They did a magnificent job and Joe was soon up to the surface.

He was sent to the coroner's office in San Antonio for an autopsy. The results have not yet been released. One police report about equipment failure

was due to an error in communication. A detailed accident and equipment analysis is being performed. The results will not be released until the process is complete to prevent unwarranted rumors and speculations.

Joe's family is arranging a memorial service for Wednesday, 4 October 2000 in Hondo, Texas, located about 30 miles west of San Antonio. It promises to be well attended by cavers from throughout the state - some people are coming in from out of state too. On Saturday, 7 October 2000, an "Ivy-Sized" Wake will be held at the home of Gary and Bridget McDaniel near Spring Branch Texas (roughly midway between San Antonio and Austin, but due north of San Antonio) where cavers will gather to show slides, tell stories, and rude jokes that Joe would have appreciated.

Several people have been wanting to contribute money in Joe's name to whatever cause was felt appropriate. Joe's family greatly appreciates it and all the kind, supporting notes they have received. Joe's companion Becky Jones is looking into creating a fund in Joe's name. It is still too early to describe the exact nature of the fund and where it will be established. This information will be posted when it is known. In the meantime, Linda Palit is collecting donations in trust for the fund to hold them until the fund is established. Please make out any checks to "Linda Palit." Note in the check's memo field that it is for the "Joe Ivy Fund," and mail it to Linda at 4019 Ramsgate, San Antonio, Texas 78230. If you questions or suggestions about the fund, call Linda at 210-699-1388 or e-mail her at: . Becky has asked that some of her friends help organize and coordinate some things for her as she deals with her grief and a multitude of other things. No decision on the fund (or other items in this e-mail) will be or have been made without input and approval from her and Joe's brother Marvin.

Joe was a tough, highly skilled, and responsible caver that many people throughout the U.S., Mexico, and other countries respected and loved. His absence has left a hole so large in our community that I'm not sure we'll ever be able to push far enough to find its end.

# Sentinel Cave

RW: \_Well, we cheated death again.\_

KK: \_Yeah, some of us by a narrower margin than others!\_

After our caving trip to Carlsbad in January of 1997, my friend Rod Williamson started considering other, more technical caves that our merry little band of cavers could try in the Carlsbad area. Eventually he settled on two: Sentinel Cave, located in the Lincoln National Forest, and Deep Cave, just inside the boundary of Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Rod had friends who had tried Sentinel Cave before, and he seemed intrigued by the prospect of leading the technical traverse that would be necessary to reach the lower reaches of the cave. Sentinel also presented a pair of long (by our standards) rappels/ascents: 100' and 240' (30m and 73m, respectively). Deep Cave would be small by comparison, but it entailed a 300' (92m) rappel/ascent. Originally, the party for this trip was to consist of Rod, our friends Jim Rasmussen and Lenard Brunsdale, Rod's sons Chris and Jimmy, and me; however, in the end Chris and Jimmy couldn't go, so we four codgers determined to sally forth on our own.

Rod obtained permits for May 16-17, 1997, which placed some time constraints on Jim and me, since we had a choral performance scheduled for Saturday night the 17th in Albuquerque. In contrast to our group's rather extensive preparation for the January trip, this time around we didn't practice on mechanical ascenders at all, and our rappelling practice was limited to Jim and me doing short drops on our new Petzl "Simples" (a bobbin-type descender that Harry Burgess, proprietor of Guadalupe Mountain Outfitters in Carlsbad, had turned Rod onto). Nonetheless, we all realized that Sentinel would involve technical challenges beyond anything we'd encountered before, so I guess it was only natural for our wives--relative homebodies, all--to feel a hefty amount of concern for us, which manifested itself in a number of ways, some none-too-subtle.

We left Albuquerque on Thursday, May 15; since Jim had to work part of the day, Rod and Lenard left in the morning while Jim and I hit the road in the afternoon. Lenard was able to borrow a 4WD truck, which was good, because the final bit of "road" from the Dark Canyon lookout tower into Sentinel Camp was barely passable. Jim and I didn't get away until about 2:30 p.m., and it was almost dark by the time we met up with Rod and Lenard at the lookout tower. We parked Jim's minivan there, loaded all our gear in the truck, and took the wild ride into camp. Sentinel Camp is a fairly comfortable campsite, thanks to the stone chairs and fire pit assembled (presumably) by other cavers; however, it is also one of the more popular bovine bathrooms in the area, so one had to step lightly indeed. (As it turned out, I laid down my tarp that night on several piles of cow manure, which I didn't discover until we packed up to leave on Saturday.)

After we ate a bit, Lenard pulled out a volume of the works of Robert Service, and we read a number of his poems aloud (e.g.,

"The Cremation of Sam McGee"), a la "Dead Poets Society." Later, we talked for a while before retiring. On this trip I brought a thick, queen-sized air mattress, and I slept so well on it that I'm not sure I'll ever go camping without it again. Thursday night was marked by increasingly high winds and a creeping fog, an eerie sight superimposed against the moon. An omen, perhaps?

We woke up early the next morning, anxious to get the events of the day started; unfortunately, we found that the truck had a flat tire--no big surprise, given the terrain--which ultimately had a big impact on our plans, particularly since the truck had no spare. After wolfing down some of Rod's famed buttermilk pancakes, we checked over our gear and ropes and hit the trail. We took four static ropes (20m, 30m, 50m, and 100m) and a 50m dynamic rope for the traverse, and I took along a few camping devices just in case we needed some extra pro. We also took a fairly large quantity of webbing and locking carabiners, all of which came in handy before it was all over.

Rod and Lenard, who brought their mountain bikes, had made a reconnaissance sortie the previous afternoon, but they hadn't found the cave entrance. So, we used the step-log provided by the Forest Service--lining up the compass, counting steps, etc.--which kept us on the correct ridge as we hiked down the mountain. The last little scramble from the ridgeline to the cave entrance was steep and a little exposed, but we made it down all right. Rod then set up the first rappel at the front of the entrance, although he realized once he was down that it would have been much easier to descend the sloping right side. The rest of us followed Rod down over the overhang, however, not thinking it would make much difference in the end.

Once in the cave, we scrambled down a steep slope leading to a couple of larger rooms, one of which contained the cave register. Rod and Jim found a small room that contained a pretty, bell-shaped formation; too concerned by what was to come, however, I never went to check it out. We finally squeezed through to where we understood McCaullum's Pit to be, although there was some confusion about its location due to an initial sloping drop-off that we hadn't known about. After Rod crawled around a bit on a ledge to the left, Lenard rappelled down the slope to check out the bottom, and there he discovered the actual pit.

After the rest of us got down, Rod started checking out the moves on the traverse, which was completely different from what any of us had expected. We anchored off a formation (oddly, the only one I remember from the entire cave) called the Fickle Finger of Fate, which--one may have guessed--looks like a hand with its middle finger extended in a salute. Since I was the only one besides Rod who had any real belaying experience.

**Sentinel Cave** (Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 2) GUADS

son in their party had been to the cave previously they had been wandering for awhile. Their Step Log indicated that Sentinel was in the general direction of Gunsight so a couple of our group helped them. We later found out that they located Sentinel but did not have much time to explore. There was still daylight left when we returned to camp, so Terry and I decided to go to Cottonwood Cave which we were told was only a 20 minute walk from the road. I grabbed my camera and off we went. Inside the entrance to Cottonwood are a couple of the biggest formations you can set your eyes on. I think they are called Atlas and Goliath. As with Hidden Cave, there has been much restoration work done in Cottonwood. While inside the cave, the weather outside turned ugly. There was a lot of lightning which had us a little concerned. No aluminum walking sticks for us. We went to the back of the cave and found the lower section which is gated for preservation. I took several photos and we exited when it seemed safe. OHG was staying through Tuesday but we needed to leave on Sunday. So Saturday was our last caving day. Terry and I connected with a restoration team going to Three Fingers Cave. The team was led by cavers very familiar with Guad caves. Lawrence and Todd from OHG also went. Dennis, Fritz and ??? have been working on the new entrance pipe to Lech and had some interesting stories to tell of the development and installation of the new pipe. The new entrance will have an airlock to keep cave air from moving in or out of the cave unnaturally. We hopped a ride up the road towards Three Fingers through some extremely nasty driving sections. Leave your prissy Explorer and Blazers at home for this ride. Dennis is the restoration leader for Three Fingers. The walk from the parking area drops over 1,000 feet vertically but still well

above the canyon floor. Three Fingers was first explored in the 1960s and is now gated. There is an entrance drop of about 120 feet. There is another 300 foot drop well inside the cave which we would not be able to do. We were there for restoration. This was not Cottonwood Cave with easy access for any schmuck to enter, so the cave had not seen much traffic. The objective was to flag paths, clean up any broken formation areas and clean soiled formations with water, pump sprayer, sponge and brush. For several hours we toiled and we made a difference!! As a reward, Dennis took us back into some of the lower reaches of the cave for the treat of the weekend. Three Fingers is alive and growing. We saw beautiful formations photoed previously by the Bosteds for one of their calendars. Wherever there was a hole in the limestone, dogtooth spar would be abundant. In a small room there was a gorgeous azure pool reminding me of how the Azure Pool in Carroll once looked. We exited and dragged our butts back up the 1,000 vertical feet in the dark. The reflective twist ties on the shrubs made the walk back in the dark much easier. We got back to camp about 11:30 PM.

We left the next morning, hit Oklahoma City in time for some tornadoes and got back without incident. It was a nice trip. There were several caves that OHG had permits for that we were not able to visit due to time constraints. There were also many other caves in the area that are closed except for resto work. To enter, you must work with the resto leader.

(An older, entertaining trip report on Sentinel Cave, I found on the Internet) See page 7

Jerry Cindric



(Continued from page 7) **Sentinel Cave**

I tied onto the anchor and belayed Rod on lead. Rod first tried to get across wearing a pack and a rope, but that proved awkward, so he came back and lightened his load. Most of the traverse

involves a lot of stemming--not tremendously technical, but unnerving just the same, given that one has to place his feet up to 5' apart with a 70' black hole yawning up beneath him. Once Rod got past the fixed piton in the middle of the lead, I couldn't really see what he was doing, and it turned out that the last move was pretty tricky on lead. (At least it scared me when I followed the traverse, and by then the rope was anchored on both ends.)

Rod hauled a static line behind him so that we could ferry all our gear across the pit without carrying it with us. Lenard had little trouble following the traverse, but Jim and I were uncertain about the stemming business and wondered aloud if it would be that much more trouble to rappel into the pit and have Rod throw a rope down for us to ascend the other side. However, we gritted our teeth and did the traverse instead.

Once on the other side of the traverse, we still had to get around an exposed corner to get to the staging area for our next rappel. We left most of our non-essential gear there, anchored off a relatively small overhanging formation, and pressed on. To get to the 100' rappel, however, one has to climb and traverse up a 15' wall, which I thought was a little hairy in itself, especially since the wall drops right off the other side for 15-20'. The rappel itself, however, wasn't too bad.

At the bottom of the 100' rappel, we came to a nice resting place, where we could stage the big 240' drop to the bottom of the cave. It was here that I came up with what I--in my own humble opinion, of course--regard as the best line of the trip. We knew we were going to be in the cave for 10-12 hours, so we all took plastic bags in case we had to...you know...do our duty. I told Rod, "I should have known I wouldn't need a doo-doo bag--terror makes me constipated." One of the memories I will have of Sentinel is our turning off our headlamps and watching Rod's light flicker around on the massive walls of the cave as he rappelled down to the bottom. It brought to mind the Mormon scripture that says something about "the very jaws of Hell gaping] wide after thee."

I was second down the long rappel after Rod, amazed at how long it seemed (though not half as amazed as I was later at how long the \_ascent\_ seemed, but we're getting to that). The Petzl "Simple" works well on these longer drops, provided one uses both hands for braking, although I still wasn't fully comfortable with that. Jim had a problem with his "Simple," however--at one point it managed to insert itself in the locking carabiner through which the rope passes below the device, almost fouling his whole set-up. Generally, however, the "Simple" is just like my other Petzl gear: well-designed, well-made, and eminently functional.

The bottom of Sentinel Cave is a lonely place, indeed. After all four of us made it down, we went looking for the passage to Shield City, the Mecca of the cave. However, what we found was a 25' vertical wall with relatively few holds, and since we had no more rope (and I had left my camming devices up near the traverse), the only way to scale the wall was to free solo it. It didn't look that hard, but when one is 500' below the surface, prudence tends to win over daring in the sane mind. Lenard, however, ever the bold fellow, climbed up the wall anyway, and Rod, never one to be outdone, followed him. Jim and I just looked at each other and shook our heads--Shield City meant \_squat\_ to us under those circumstances. (As we found out later, Lenard and Rod never made it to the actual Shield City--evidently they needed to go up onto another ledge--so it all sort of went for naught.)

Jim and I went back to the rope and prepared for the ascent. I didn't feel ready to go up yet, so I let Jim go on ahead. While Jim was on ascent, Rod and Lenard came back down and explored the other end of the bottom of the cave, while I lay there in the dark and tried not to get worked up about the ascent. I had had a few sphincter-clenching moments on the way down, but, except for some low-grade claustrophobia and my usual bad cave vision, I felt pretty good at that point. However, after about 30 minutes Jim made it up, and it was my turn--and thus began one of the biggest ordeals of my life, which really abated only after I made it back to camp several hours later.

I first started noticing a problem about 25' off the deck, when my arms felt extremely fatigued. Things deteriorated from there, and in a short while I could move up only about 3-4' before stopping to catch my breath, and by the time I finally made it up to the anchor, I'd been on the rope for \_47 minutes\_! I had all sorts of odd thoughts going up, mostly about God and my family; however, I also gained greater insight into the stories I'd read about climbers who were so mastered by fear and/or exhaustion that they expressed a desire to end it all by throwing themselves off the cliff. Not that I seriously considered unclipping my ascenders and taking The Big Ride, but--for a brief moment--I understood.

Within a few minutes of my reaching the anchor, Jim wanted to start on the next (100') ascent, so we scrambled over to it. Just after Jim started, Lenard was already at the top of the 240' ascent, and Rod followed soon thereafter. It turned out that Lenard and Rod were racing to see who could get up first; Lenard won with a time of 17 minutes, with Rod close behind at 18 minutes. Obviously, I was wondering what the heck was wrong with \_me\_.

I didn't have much easier a time on the 100' ascent. Jim and I actually waited at the wall for Rod and Lenard to come up and go down the other side so that they could coach us on the down climb. The traverse back across McCaullum's Pit wasn't as hairy as the trip over, but the whole process of getting everybody to the other side took some time. When Rod finally came back over (with me belaying him again), he got a

**Sentinel Cave** (Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9) **Sentinel Cave**

sudden urge to get out of the cave, so he packed up and made a beeline for the cave entrance. I was the last to climb up the slope to the drop-off point, but when I got to the top I realized the rope had snagged at the bottom. I was so wasted by then, however, that I had to call Lenard back down to rap off and free the rope.

In a few more minutes, we made it back up the steep slope to the entrance. Jim and Lenard were fiddling with packs and ropes, so I decided to go up next. The ascent at the entrance goes over a truly remarkable overhang, and I was still having great difficulty getting up the rope. Getting over the lip, however, was exquisitely torturous for me. To get my top ascender to go up past the lip, I had to get my knees up on the face; however, my arms were so far gone that I couldn't pull myself up with them, so I had to fish around for my foot loop. Seeing the stars and moon and hearing the crickets outside chirping, I wanted nothing more than to get out. After about five minutes of thrashing about, I finally reached the anchor and almost collapsed.

Jim and Lenard got up without major incident, so we packed everything up and started up the steep path to the top of the ridge. I had feared making this scramble in the dark, but in the end it wasn't too bad. The hike back to camp, however, was almost more than I could handle in my exhausted state. I was thoroughly embarrassed by how poorly I'd done on the way up out of the cave, but I was almost reduced to crawling by the time I made it back to camp. We'd left camp that morning at 7:30 a.m. and had spent over twelve hours in the cave; it was well after midnight by the time I stumbled back into camp. Stupidly, I hadn't eaten anything in that entire time. By then it was a foregone conclusion that we wouldn't get to do Deep Cave--we had to worry about the flat tire on the truck, and besides, I couldn't bear the thought of another long ascent.

We'd planned to have a nice spaghetti dinner that night, and Jim--despite all the effort he'd expended--was kind enough to prepare most of it on his camp stove. I can't begin to say how good the spaghetti tasted, and when we finally hit the hay, I was out like a light. I've never slept as well in a sleeping bag as I did that night, even though we still got up fairly early the next morning.

Luckily, the truck had a mini-compressor in it, and Lenard was able to fill up the flat tire sufficiently to drive on it. As we were



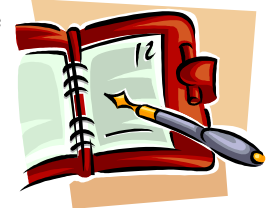
packing up, Jim happened to notice the reason why a strange, sick odor kept wafting through camp (I just figured it had something to do with the beans Rod and Lenard had for dinner on Thursday night): there was a rotting cow carcass about forty feet away. While we were reading Robert Service the first night, Rod had joked that we should call ourselves the "Dead Cavers Society"; now he offered the "Dead Cow Caving Society," a strangely appropriate name.

After we broke camp, Lenard and Rod dropped Jim and me off at the lookout tower. Jim and I needed to get back to Albuquerque for our performance that night, so we headed off toward Artesia while Lenard and Rod went into Carlsbad to find a used tire for the truck. All eventually returned safely to Albuquerque, much to the relief of the better halves.

Over the next few days, I mulled over in my mind the reasons for my poor performance in the cave. Certainly, physical conditioning played a part: I'd sprained an ankle bouldering a couple of weeks before and had not been able to do much running on it recently. Likewise, my mental state was not good: I felt exposed at virtually every juncture in the cave, and my discomfort came to the fore every time I clipped my ascenders onto a rope. Finally, I should have eaten something to keep my energy up. However, after talking to Rod and surfing through the Petzl web site, I also realized there was a problem with my equipment that exacerbated my other difficulties: the foot loop on my top ascender was about a foot longer than it should have been. That had the effect of (a) limiting the "throw" on my ascenders to about 10-12", and (b) forcing me to haul myself up mainly on my arms. In that light, it isn't any wonder I got so tired--I was having to work much harder than was really necessary.

Of course, I won't really know how much difference a properly sized foot loop will make until we go caving again, but I will definitely not ignore that part of my preparation again. All in all, Sentinel Cave was a highly technical cave that was probably beyond my meager caving experience--and, as a result, I never really took time to appreciate the beauty of the cave--but it was an adventure that created enduring memories. Rod, Jim, and Lenard are quality people and thoroughly enjoyable companions.

Author Unknown



## **Cascade Grotto meeting: Seattle 10/20/00** submitted by Jeff Page

Before traveling to Seattle in October to visit relatives, I thought to check the NSS members directory to see if any grotto meetings were taking place while I would be there. As it happened, there were three. I selected the one which would be closest to my cousin's house and emailed Jim Harp of the Cascade Grotto to ask if I could join in. Jim was very accommodating and even offered a ride.

My cousin's husband dropped me off at the library where the grotto meets on the third Friday of the month. I was a little late and they were just finishing up the normal business. I introduced myself and shared my copy of *The Wilderness Underground: Caves of the Ozark Plateau* with the group. I asked if any were familiar with Ozarks caves. There was one young man who was new to the group and applying for membership who had attended MU in Columbia and began caving there. One of the long time members of Cascade grotto, Paul Lindgren, said he traveled to St. Louis yearly to cave with friends there. He said he liked Missouri caves because they were so warm! Relative to the caves along the Canadian border, I'm sure they are.

None of the others in the room had been to Missouri. There were about 15 members in attendance. I got the impression that some were novices and others were very experienced vertical cavers. When I mentioned that KC cavers had to travel 5 or 6 hours to get into caves, there was laughter in response. Seattle area cavers have some caves up north in Washington

and British Columbia that they visit. These "rotten limestone" caves are typically short, low, undecorated passages. Their newsletter included a map of Mist Cave, just discovered in B.C. These caves soon lose their appeal and the next closest option is lava tubes in the Mount St. Helen's region of Oregon. Those also lose appeal quickly as they tend to be unchallenging and all look the same after awhile. One of the novices described his first trip to lava tubes in a newsletter article. Members told me that the "good caves" require a trip of at least 17 hours one way. They travel to caves in Nevada, Utah, California and the Dakotas. The grotto is planning a trip to England one year from now.

The meeting program was knot tying, in which we all took part. I attempted to master some Bowline variations and the Butterfly. After the meeting, the group adjourned to a nearby pizza shop, put a few tables together and chatted about caves. I found the Cascade Grotto to remind me of KCAG in many respects. A nice mix of new cavers and seasoned veterans. They even have their own Mike Fraley. I was given a couple of copies of their newsletter which I'll forward to Bryon and share at the November meeting. This was a good experience and one I'll try to repeat if I'm traveling to another area where cavers are meeting.

*Editor's Note: Way to go Jeff. Lets keep are feelers out there and let people Know who KCAG is. Lets set the pace!!*

Kansas City Area Grotto  
KCAG  
c/o Bryon Carmoney  
3512 N. 63rd Terrace  
Kansas City, Kansas 66104-1009

Your  
Mailing  
Label  
Goes  
Here

## Editor's Corner

Be sure To visit KCAG's Website.

<http://members.tripod.com/~kcagrotto/>

<http://www.wheresbernie.com>  
This Is Bernarhd's site



<http://www.texasroperescue.com/09>  
Site sep up for Joe Ivy's Accident

## 2001 KCAG Officers Election Ballot

Please fill out and submit your **Nomination**



President:

Vice President:

Secretary/Treasurer:

---

---

---



Please Return At the December Christmas Party  
or mail to:

Jeff Page  
10420 Conser #2H  
Overland Park, KS 66212