



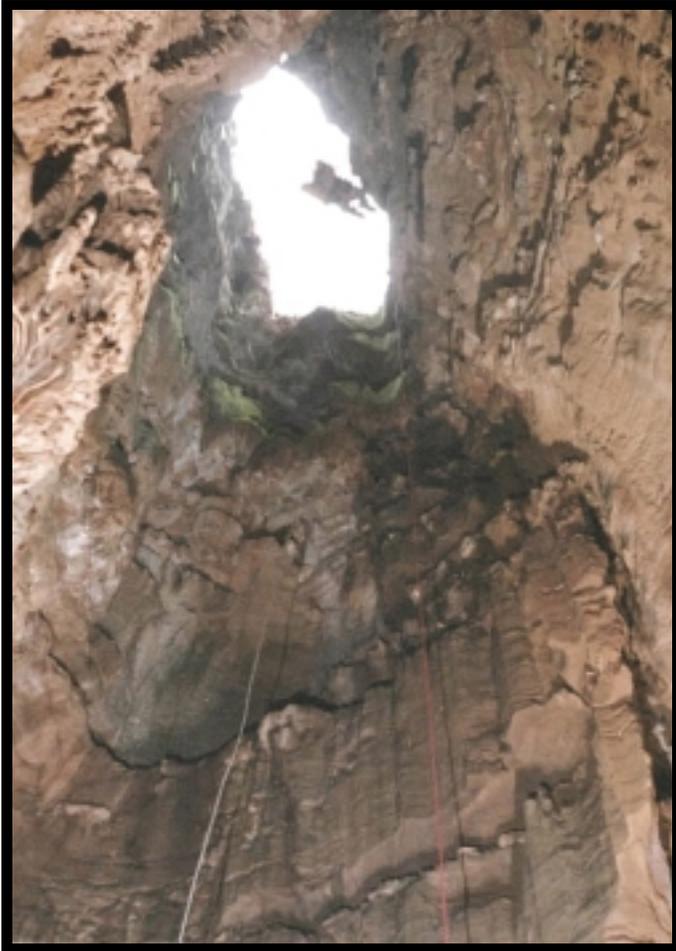
The Month's Guano

May 2002

Kansas City Area Grotto

Volume 16, Issue 5

entrance pit to Big Hole. Rodney Tennyson did the maps and photo.



May 2002 Vol. 16 Issue 5

The Month's Guano is published on the last Wednesday of the month. Twelve issues annually. **Submit articles** to editor by the last Wednesday of the month. Guano subscription rate for nonmembers: \$ 6.00 annually. Electronic FREE

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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: \$ 15 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

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

- May 4-5, 2002 **Mammoth Cave Restoration Project** See Article in the December 2001 *Guano* for details Go to <http://oldsci.eiu.edu/physics/len/mammoth/mcrp0.html> for More information
- May 18-19, 2002 **Spring MVOR.** This one is being sponsored by CCC. If interested in helping give Rick Hines a call. <http://www.mvor.org/>
- June 8, 2002 **MCKC annual picnic** See Article in April Guano pg. 6 or contact Jeff Page. jpage2@kc.rr.com
- June 8, 2002 **KCAG Grotto Picnic. Rick Hines Home. Begins around 4:00 pm. Contact Rick for directions.**
- July 4, 2002 **PARTY TIME.** As usually Michelle and I are having our annual 4th of July party at our home at 3:00 pm. **Everyone is invited!!!** All we ask is this you bring your own drinks and a dish to pass. I will provide the meat. I will have the rope up if anyone wants to do vertical work. This year we are going to try something different. Everyone Bring a 1/4 pound of fresh shrimp. We will have a shrimp boil and if you want you can put yours on the BBQ. Fireworks are permitted except for bottle rockets so bring your best show. Grotto Guests are also welcome. Please RSVP.
- August 4-10, 2002 **Mammoth Cave Restoration Project** See Article in the December 2001 *Guano* for details Go to <http://oldsci.eiu.edu/physics/len/mammoth/mcrp0.html> for More information
- November 2-3, 2002 **Mammoth Cave Restoration Project** See Article in the December 2001 *Guano* for details Go to <http://oldsci.eiu.edu/physics/len/mammoth/mcrp0.html> for More information.

Our Grotto Website has changed to www.kcgrotto.com

Mammoth Cave Restoration Camp

Please forward this message to all your grotto and caving buddies lists. The more folks at camp, the easier the work.

Greetings everyone,

Make plans now to attend the May 4-5 weekend camp. All the details can be found at www.restorationcamp.org Click on "Upcoming Events & Participation". Make sure to read the new FAQ. Just send me an E-mail with your intent to attend, and show up for a great time.

Also, it's not too late to register for the summer camp in August. Even if you can't spend the entire week, a few days are fine. Remember, extra cave trips are planned for participants. Summer camp is where the fun is!

In case you didn't know, a crew from the Today Show filmed the last weekend camp. The program hasn't been put together yet, but I have been assured that we will know when it is to be aired. I'll send a message out to everyone as soon as I get a time and date.

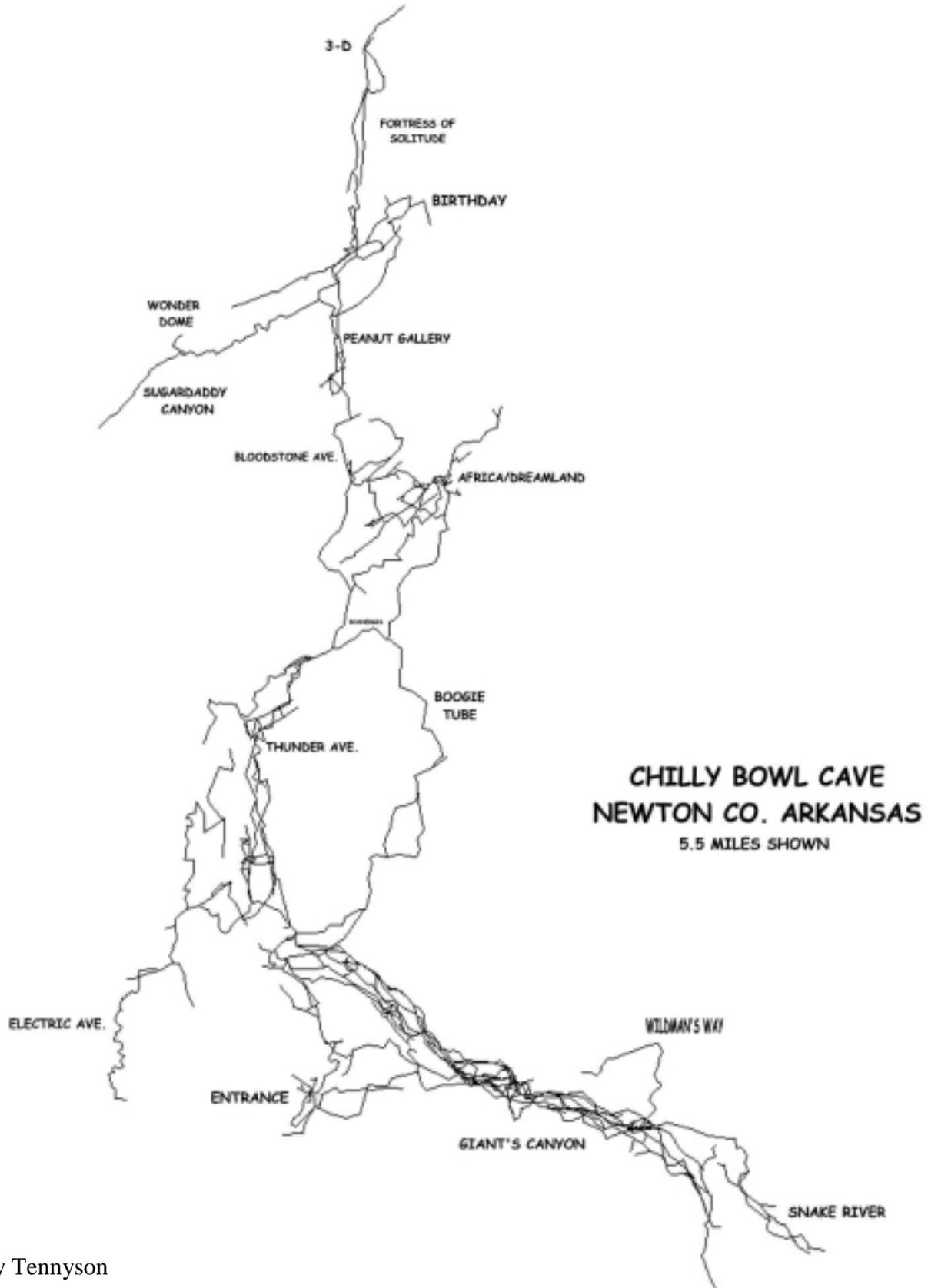
See you in the cave,

Norm

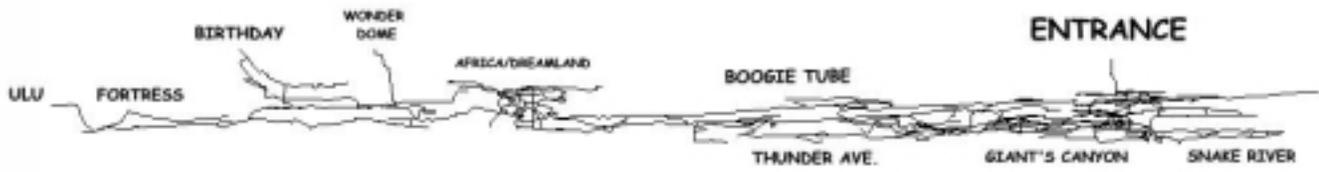
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Have fun. Keep informed and up to date. Join the Restoration Camp Group at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Restoration_Camp



Rodney Tennyson



CHILLY BOWL PROFILE MAP

TOTAL DEPTH: 264'(-224,+40)

VIEW: 270 DEGREES

Rodney Tennyson

Grotto Roster Updated March 2002

This Page
intentionally
left blank

Beaver
Dam with
the flood
gates
open.

Photo By
Jeff Page



The Pocket Medical Kit

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Objectives

- List at least 2 reasons why personal cave rescue equipment should be lightweight, inexpensive, and small.
- Differentiate between physical vs. functional characteristics of zip top bags, safety pins, duct tape, and gauze.
- Create at least 3 different pieces of rescue equipment from zip top bags, safety pins, duct tape, and gauze.

Lightweight, inexpensive, and small rescue equipment is best.

Large pieces of rescue equipment can make a pack awkward and heavy. This situation creates at least 3 problems:

1. Extra energy is expended on moving a pack. This can wear a caver out. A tired caver is an accident waiting to happen.
2. Most cavers will not voluntarily carry large heavy equipment. Given the choice, the cavers will leave the items at home - where they are useless if needed during a rescue.
3. Many cavers hesitate using expensive equipment because it may be damaged, and they will have to replace it using their precious caving money.

We need equipment that is lightweight, small and inexpensive. How do we achieve this objective? One solution is the **Pocket Medical Kit**. It consists of 4 items:

1. Zip top bags
2. Safety pins
3. Duct Tape
4. Gauze

Functional vs. Physical Characteristics

Definition:

Functional Characteristic - What it does.

Physical Characteristic - What it is.

Zip Top Bags.

1. Functional
 - a) Store food, clothing, or other small items.
2. Physical
 - a) Waterproof
 - b) Airtight
 - c) Flexible
 - d) Slippery
 - e) Tight Seal
 - f) Clear
 - g) Acts as a container

Safety Pins

1. Functional
 - a) "Pin" together pieces of clothing
2. Physical
 - a) Small
 - b) Rigid
 - c) Oval Shaped
 - d) Closes
 - e) Punctures
 - f) Sharp
 - g) Round End
 - h) Pointy

Gauze

1. Functional
 - a) Put on wounds
2. Physical
 - a) Small
 - b) Flexible
 - c) Soft
 - d) Absorbent
 - e) White

Duct Tape

1. Functional
 - a) Tape things together
2. Physical
 - a) Water resistant
 - b) One side sticky
 - c) Flexible
 - d) One side smooth
 - e) Smells terrible
 - f) Long

KCAG's restoration project - A work in progress

Submitted by Jeff Page

Last year, the grotto discussed the possibility of adopting one or two Ozark caves for restoration purposes. It was an idea well received at the time. We reasoned that it would be good PR for us in the caving community and it was the right thing to do on its own merit. During the spring 2001 MVOR, Bill Gee and myself attended an introduction to cave restoration led by Jon Beard, one of, if not the most proficient cave restorer in our region. I later asked Jon for his opinion on caves we could adopt. He was pleased with our interest and suggested Ash Grove (AKA Skylight) and Watkins Caves northwest of the Springfield area in Greene County.

Ash Grove Cave (appr. 4500' of passage), located in the town of Ash Grove, is mentioned in the winter 2002 issue of MCKC Digest as one of the more significant caves in the Springfield Plateau. With three large, impressive, entrances and located in a town, adjacent to a quarry, it is very vulnerable to human disturbance. It's a favorite spot for local youths who need an out of the way place for their coming of age rituals. Vibrations from blasting in the quarry have caused damage to speleothems in the cave, as well. This cave is privately owned and the owner is agreeable to our project, asking only for signed liability releases from each participant. Ash Grove Cave takes in significant quantities of water through the "Sewer"* entrance after heavy rains, which will back up into various passages before finding its way to the Sac River Entrance. That creates an ongoing problem with brush and human waste washing into the cave. There are also places where flashlight cavers will break glass bottles and record their visits with spray paint. Gating this cave is out of the question. It would be too expensive with three immense entrances and a never ending supply of young people who see it as their birthright to invade it. There is one NO TRESPASSING sign on the property that is seemingly not taken seriously by anyone.

Watkins Cave, a short drive from Ash Grove, is owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). Legend has it that it was used as a "speakeasy" during prohibition days. It receives quite a bit of visitation, although not as much as Ash Grove. It's a fairly easy walking cave of about 1700' of passage with a few crawls. Water flows through the cave are less dramatic than Ash Grove. Rain water will increase the size of a couple of pools in the north end. Trash is not much of a problem here, but there is a vast amount of graffiti from the last one hundred years. The graffiti seems to have tapered off in recent years, judging by the dates. MDC is in agreement with our efforts to clean up this cave.

The first restoration trip took place in January of 2002 when Bill Gee and myself from KCAG with Brent Gerling and Steve Potter from PEG led a Johnson County scout troop on a novice trip in exchange for their clean up services. It was a mostly successful trip. Our main goal was to pick up trash and make an assessment of the overall task. Dividing into four groups, we put two groups into each cave in the morning, then switched caves later in the day. We found Watkins to be more or less trash free, but much graffiti to deal with on future trips. The groups picked up a fair amount of trash from Ash Grove, some of it larger items. The trash includes what is left by partiers and what is washed in. The graffiti in Ash Grove is spread out, except for a round area similar to the "Dance Hall" in Watkins where there has been much recent activity. We had a good time with the scouts and learned quite a bit about the job that lay ahead. I must confess losing my film roll of photos taken from that trip and regret not being able to share the memories with the troop.

Fortunately, I was able to acquire some lovely models for the next trip. What I thought best for the next trip was to take photos of the graffiti in both caves and be able to make plans from home on specific goals for future trips. I'd been promising a cave trip to a friend who works as a waitress in one of my favorite haunts. She informed me she and her friend would be on spring break in March and I saw a perfect opportunity to get the photos. We arranged a one day, down and back, trip to the caves during mid-week. With eager novices Mary Beth Eastwood and Becky Tipton, I headed south on day with great weather. We tried Watkins first, since it is the easier of the two caves, although neither are too challenging. The pools of water were deeper than on my previous visits. The graffiti is spread throughout the cave and I took some random shots until we got to the Dance Hall room where it is the most concentrated. This was my first attempt at serious documentation and I didn't totally succeed at a systematic approach. What should have been done, in retrospect, was have the girls frame each shot and provide scale. What I did was go around the room and take the frames in sequence. After development, there were some overlap and gaps. I used a lot more film than expected and was humbled by the size of the removal task. We tried some short crawls and climbs to see how the girls took to caving. They loved it. We grabbed lunch at the truck, then headed to Ash Grove.

We first tried the Sewer entrance as it's located nearest the best parking. What we discovered on this trip, however, was the Dry Fork Creek which runs into the Sewer entrance, was anything but dry. This was a surprise since we had not been getting rain in the KC area. The water was running swiftly in the cave; the area we'd taken the scouts through earlier was now partially flooded. The flow was swift enough to make me decide to leave and come in through the Skylight entrance, a short hike away. That part does not flood and was the safest option. We hiked a short distance inside the cave to the Sac River entrance just to make sure we got photos. The Sac entrance is probably the most dramatic of the three, although all are worth seeing. Traversing massive breakdown boulders, we made our way out of the cave where I got a couple of shots of the girls in the 80 foot

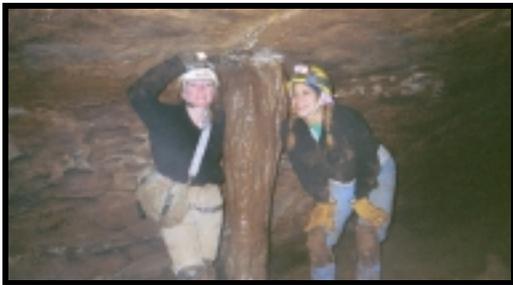


Mary Beth and Becky dwarfed by the Sac River entrance

span. Then we got back to the business at hand, doubled back past the Skylight and on to the round room in the south part of the cave where I remembered the biggest concentration of graffiti. We got our shots here, then attempted to press on south through a low passage. We encountered a large family of young pickerel frogs in rimstone pools enjoying the protection of the cave. We couldn't figure a way past them without risking mashing one or two. We turned back deciding we'd try this on a future trip. The pickerels usually move on when the young get a bit larger in size. We explored a nicely decorated passage off the round room which was fairly free of vandalism. After that, we called it a day. We marched toward the Sewer entrance, only to chicken out again at the rushing water. We backtracked to the Skylight. The girls told me they loved caving and would gladly go again.

What's the next step? This depends on the level of involvement we can muster. Using scouts in novice trips will not yield great results. Most of the scouts, understandably, are not going to get focused on restoration on their first trip underground. This is not to say we shouldn't try it again. Now that we have a better idea of the work load, we can set small achievable goals for a two or three hour restoration project, then devote the remaining time to recreation. If we can get some grotto groups to go once in awhile, we could accomplish considerably more. My concept at this time is to work on graffiti more in Watkins and concentrate on trash in Ash Grove. With very active flashlight cavers in Ash Grove, it's reasonable to assume the graffiti would reappear more quickly. I would like to see this project discussed briefly at each grotto meeting. We have to see it as a long term commitment and be careful that it doesn't get dropped off the radar screen. I welcome any ideas or suggestions.

*So named because the town once actually ran its raw sewage effluent through the cave, believing the cave would process the contaminants through some kind of natural filtration method. In reality, much of the solid waste was simply left high and dry in the cave only to be washed out later to the Sac River. This practice was discontinued in the late 1960s.



The girls next to a column



The girls beneath the Skylight en-



Sampling of Ash Grove graffiti



Mary Beth (R) and Becky spooked by flying bat



The girls emerge from Watkins



, Becky & Mary Beth inspect graffiti in Watkins



Becky inspects graffiti in Watkins

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Your
Mailing
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Goes
Here

Editor's Corner

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