

T.A.G. CAVER

In Honor of the Original Pink Lady, Avis Moni



Sewanee Mountain Grotto

Volume 5, Issue 4

TAG Caver ~ Volume 5 Issue 3

Winter 2014

TAG Caver is the official newsletter of the Sewanee Mountain Grotto & is published on a quarterly basis. Sewanee Mountain Grotto is a non-profit internal organization of the National Speleological Society dedicated to the exploration, mapping and conservation of caves. If you are interested in joining the Sewanee Mountain Grotto we invite you to attend one of our monthly grotto meetings. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at various locations in the heart of TAG. A typical meeting starts with a potluck dinner at 6pm CST, followed by the meeting at 7pm. On occasion we also have special presentations following our meetings. Annual dues are \$10 per person and are due in January. Please email sewaneemountaingrotto@caves.org or one of our editors for more information on the location of our next meeting. You may also visit our website at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountaingrotto/>

2015 Sewanee Mtn Grotto Officers:

Chairperson: Jason Hardy
Vice Chair & Programs: Kristine Ebrey Medlen
Treasurer: Blaine Grindle
Secretary: Bambi Dunlap
Member at Large: Hali Steinman
Conservation Chair: MaureenHandler
Survey Chair: Ben Miller
Webmaster: Tina O'Hailey

TAG Caver Editors:

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Jason Hardy
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Email articles and photos for submissions to one of our editors. Content may include articles/photos from non members as well as other caving regions. Statements and opinions expressed in the TAG Caver do not necessarily reflect the policies or beliefs of the Sewanee Mountain Grotto or the NSS.



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Front & Back Covers

Front Cover: Photo of the late Avis Moni
by Don Hunter.

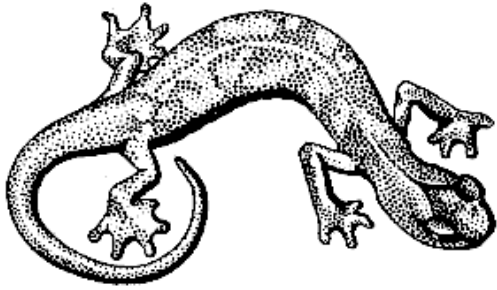
Back Cover: More photos of Avis Moni, provided by
members of her family.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

All times are CENTRAL

February 14, 2015 – **Sewanee Mountain Grotto Meeting**. Meeting starts at 6pm central with potluck dinner, followed by business at 7pm. The meeting will be at the home of Kristine Medlen.

February 21, 2015 – **SERA Winter Business Meeting & Banquet**, hosted by the Sewanee Mountain Grotto. Meeting starts at 1pm, followed by banquet at 6pm.



February 22, 2015 – **SKTF & SMG Russell Cave Watershed cleanup**.

February 28, 2015 – **Fricks Cave Open House**. Open to SCCi members & their guests. Sewanee Mountain Grotto Meeting. For more info go to: <http://www.scci.org/events/fricks-cave-open-house/>.

March 14, 2015 – **Sewanee Mountain Grotto Meeting**. Meeting starts at 6pm central with potluck dinner, followed by business at 7pm. The meeting will be at the home of Fennigan Spencer in Tracy City, TN.

April 4, 2015 – **Spring Tennessee Cave Survey Meeting in Sewanee, TN**. For the facebook event page go to: https://www.facebook.com/events/949535035058506/?ref_dashboard_filter=upcoming.

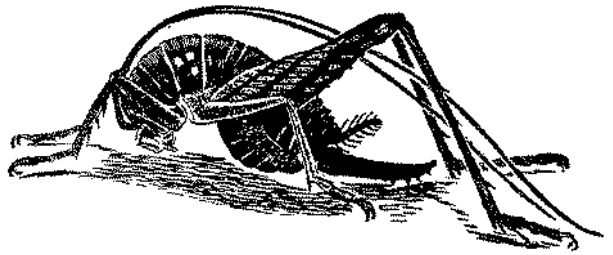
April 11, 2015 – **Alabama Cave Survey Meeting** at the Scottsboro, AL Public Library. Meeting begins at 9am.

April 11, 2015 – **Sewanee Mountain Grotto Meeting**. Meeting starts at 6pm with a potluck dinner, followed by the meeting at 7pm. The meeting will be at the home of Peter "Mudpuppy" Michaud.

May 8-10, 2015 – **SERA Summer Cave Carnival**. (pre-registration ends March 8. Pre-registration cost \$30). <http://sera2015.subworks.com/>

Connect with the Grotto

If you're new to the Grotto, here are a few ways you can get to know other members:



Join us on a Grotto Trip, Survey Trip or a Cleanup.



Sewanee Mountain Remailer

After you have joined the grotto, join our mailing list to keep up to date with cave trips and meetings. Go to: http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/sewanee_mountain_grotto and click join. Please provide your real name so we'll know who you are.



Facebook – Join our official unofficial Facebook Page to meet other area cavers and plan trips. Search for Sewanee Mountain Grotto under groups.

Grotto Merchandise



The Grotto has 3' patches for \$5 and KOOZIES for \$1. Both items have our grotto logo on them. Please contact Kelly Smallwood at rowland7840@bellsouth.net to purchase.



THE TAG SCOOP

****2015 Dues are due.** You can download an updated membership list from the Yahoo group. Membership dues are \$10. You can pay Blaine at a meeting or send them via snail mail. Send check payable to Sewanee Mountain Grotto, 669 Old Sewanee Road, Sewanee, TN 37375. Make sure to include your contact information (name, address, phone #, email address, & NSS #).



2014 Sewanee Mountain Grotto Donations

\$50 Cave Sim (for transport to Convention)

\$1,000 to the SCCi at the TAG Fall Cave In as a "Matching Contributor"

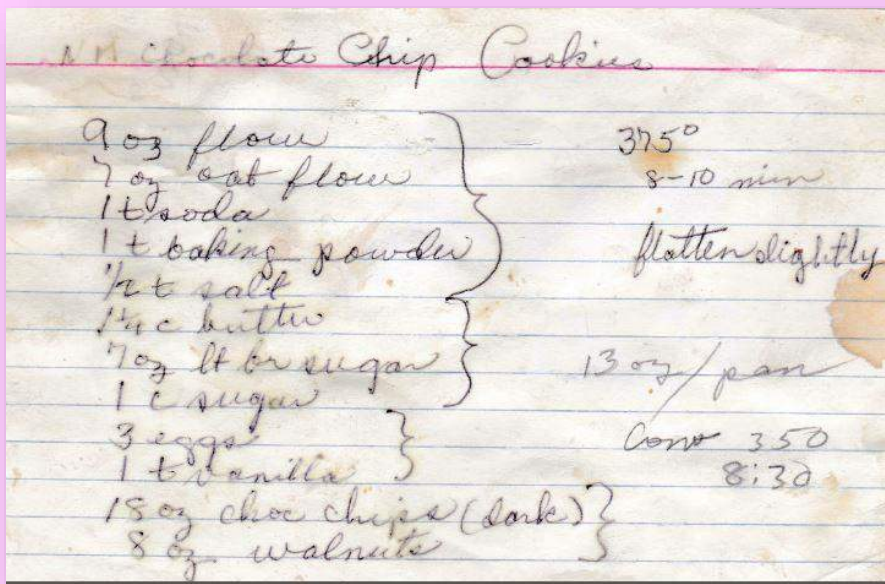
\$1,000 to the NSS New Building Fund

\$250 to the Chattanooga Hamilton County Rescue Squad

\$300 NSS Team 404 Member

\$400 Sweedens Cove Dye Trace Project

Thank you to everyone for their continued support of the Sewanee Mountain Grotto. Without our members and Cave Fest donations we would not be able to give back so much to the caving community!

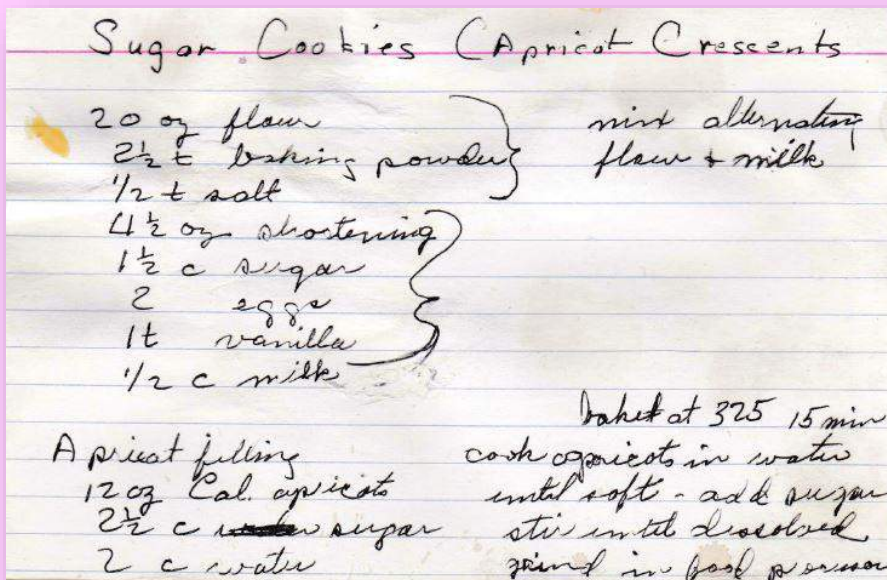
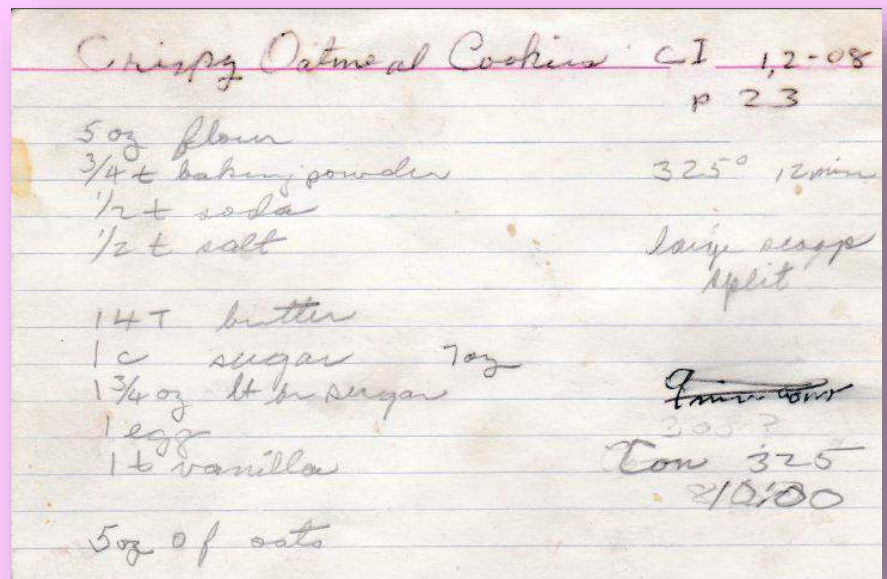


In Loving Memory of
Avis Arlene Moni
NSS 21217 RL (FE)
1928-2014

TAG's Original Pink Lady!

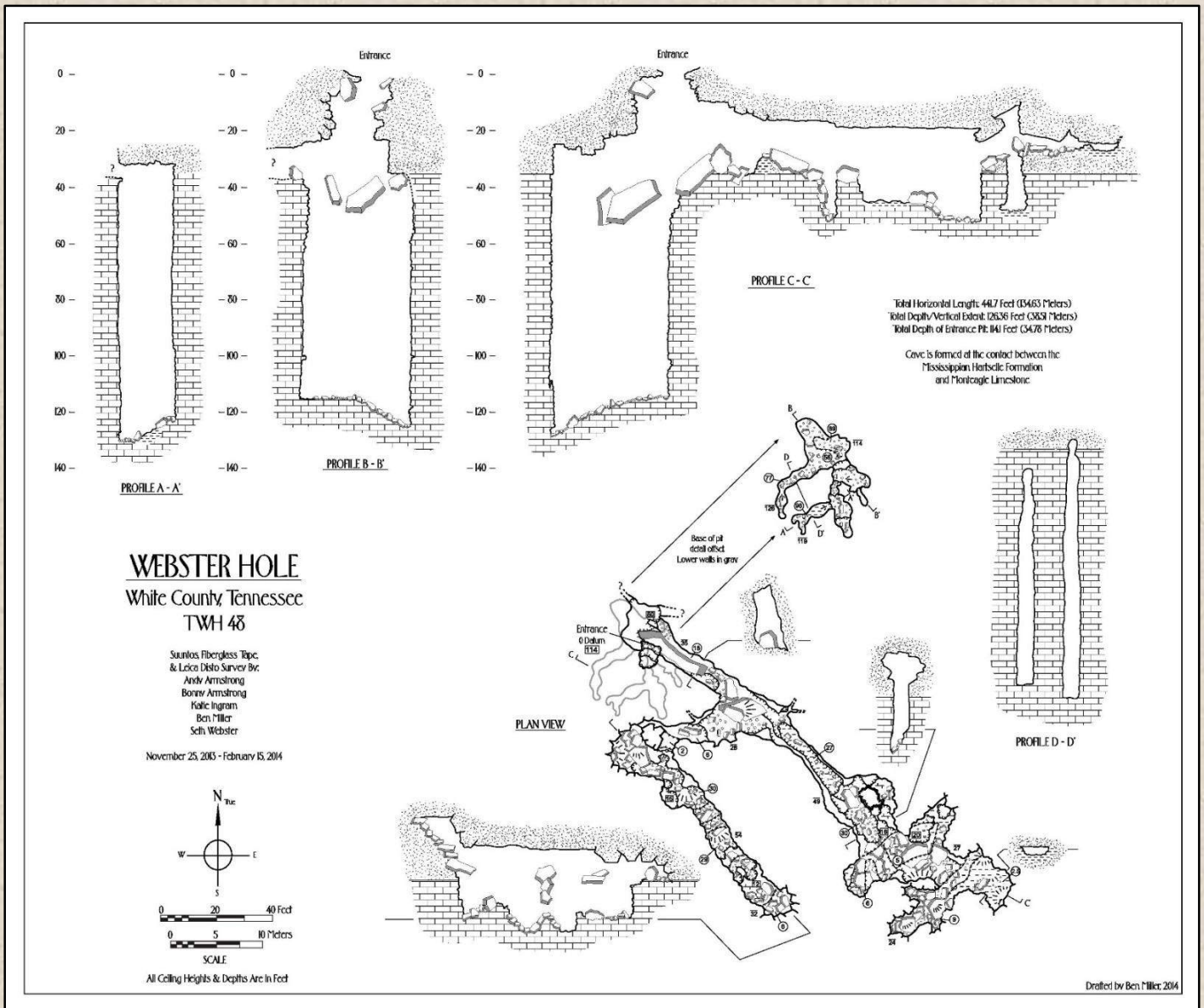


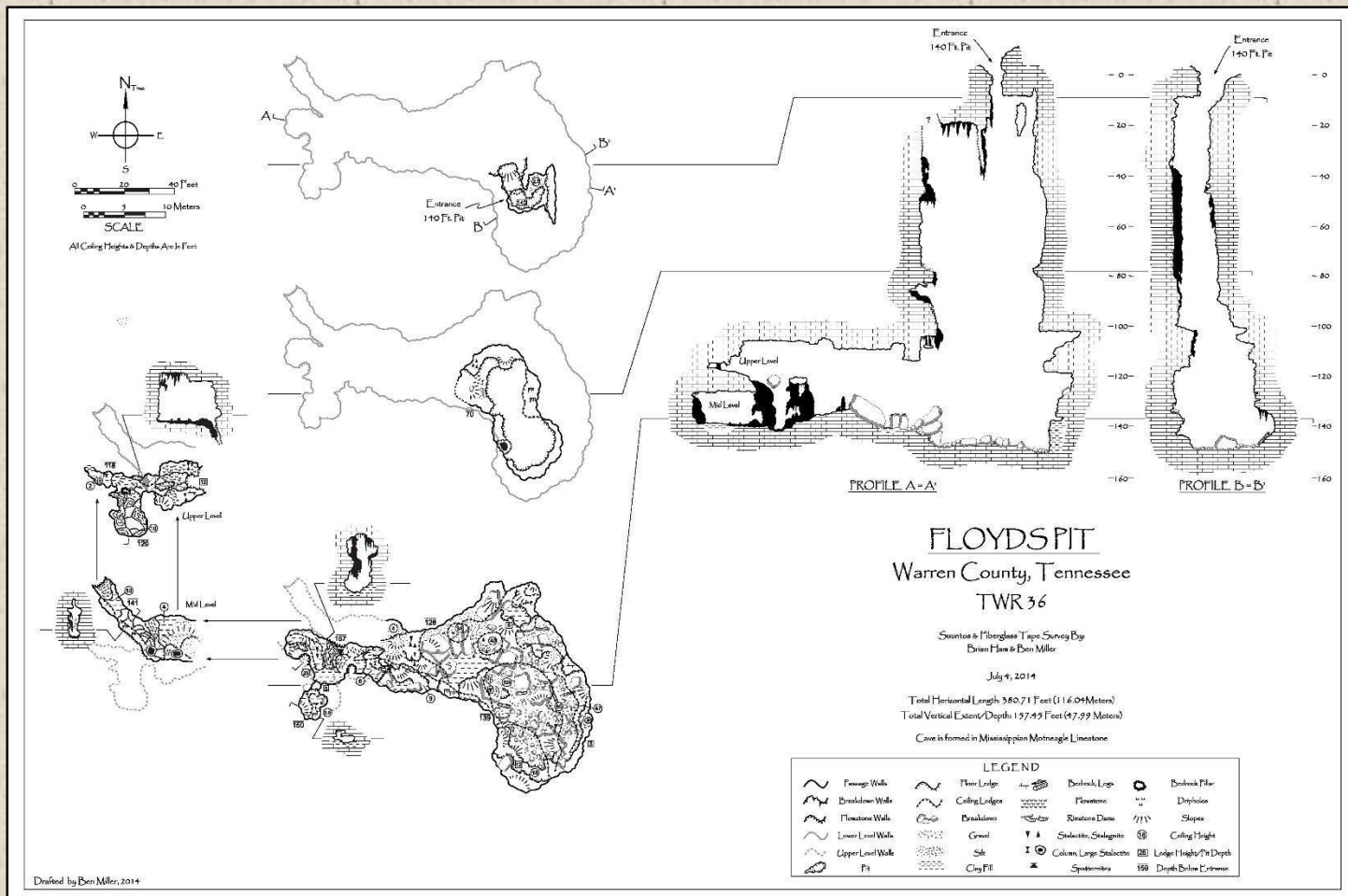
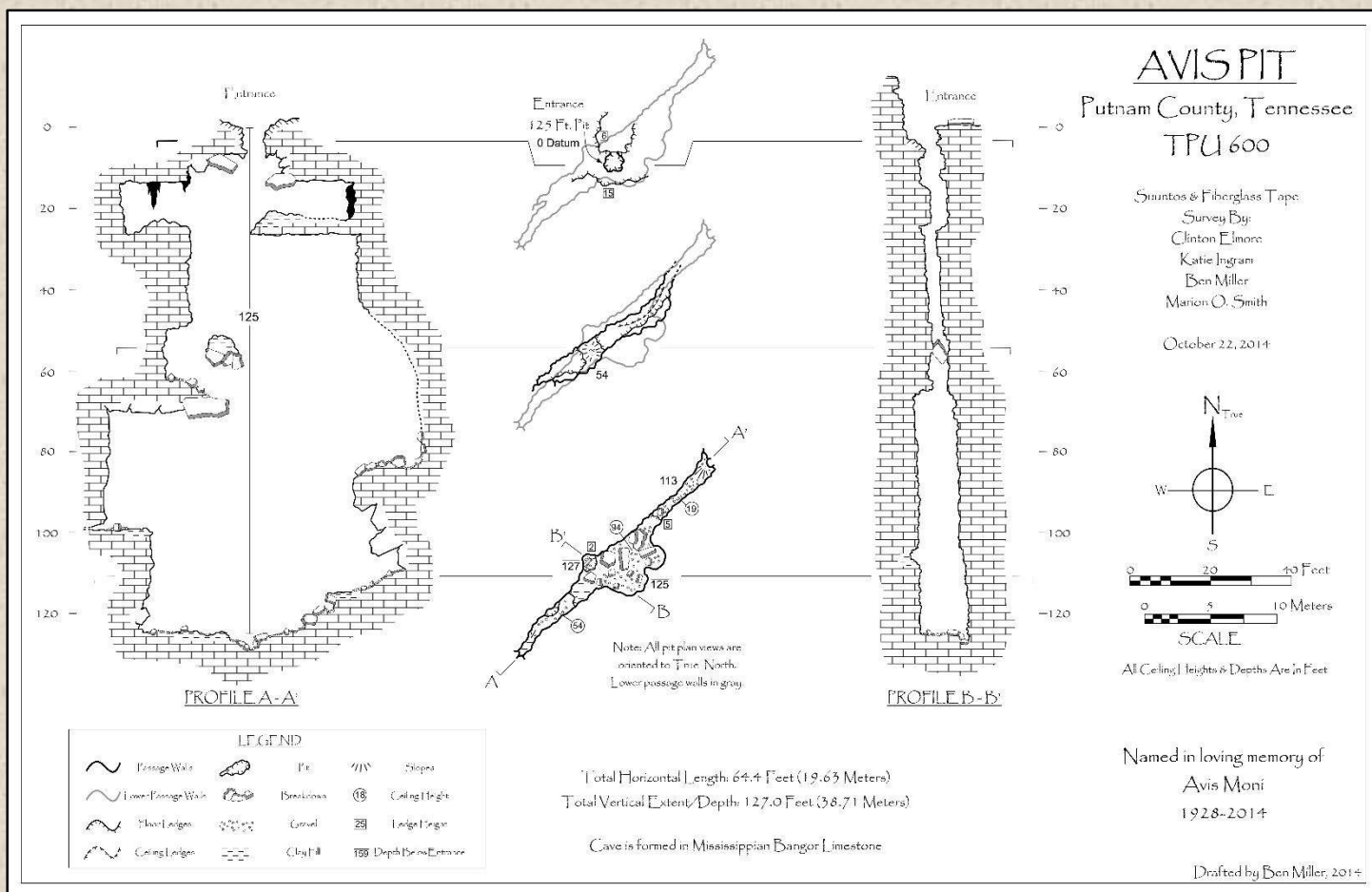
Thank you to
Avis's family
for sharing
these
priceless
handwritten
recipes from
Avis.



More maps from Ben Miller & the DPAS Project.

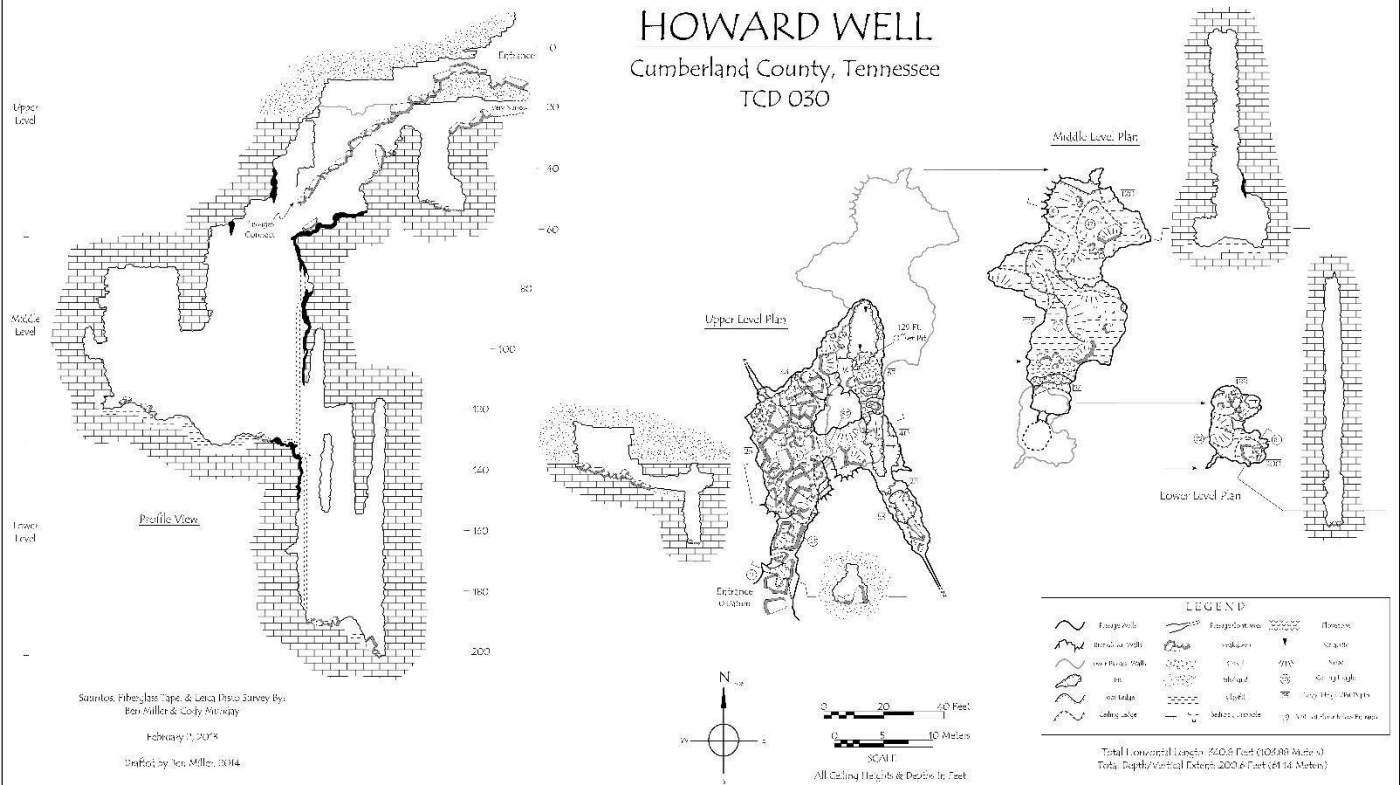
We've been busy over the past few months despite some travel taken us out of Pit Country. We've also mapped a few very nice caves outside of TAG. In Arkansas on the Buffalo River we mapped Squirrel Pit (125' open air pit), Bear Pit (highly decorated 135' pit), and Mickey Mouse Pit (a little multi drop totaling 180' deep) in TAG, we've knocked out a lot of the deeper unmapped pits and we are still going to the obscure ones. We mapped South Laurel Pot (125') and Riverview Pit (98') both in Van Buren County, TN. We also started Road Noise Cave in the same area and are continuing to work on the fairly extensive Hartselle maze above the pit. We finally finished mapping Hole in the Wall in Putnam County, which ended up being over a quarter mile in length. We helped push the survey to the bottom of Dorton Knob Smoke Hole through several trips. One other quick trip was a week night trip to map Avis Pit, deep inside England Cove, which is a new 125' pit named in honor of Avis Moni. Drafting wise, a bunch of maps have been added to the files and Ben is currently finishing up the maps for Good to the Last Drop in Franklin County, TN and The Sinkhole in Marion County, TN. The Sinkhole will be a pretty cool looking map and will hopefully be submitted for the 2015 NSS Map Salon. We are still chipping away at our list and are still in need of help. If you are interested in helping Ben Miller and the DPAS Project, please contact Ben.





HOWARD WELL

Cumberland County, Tennessee
TCD 030



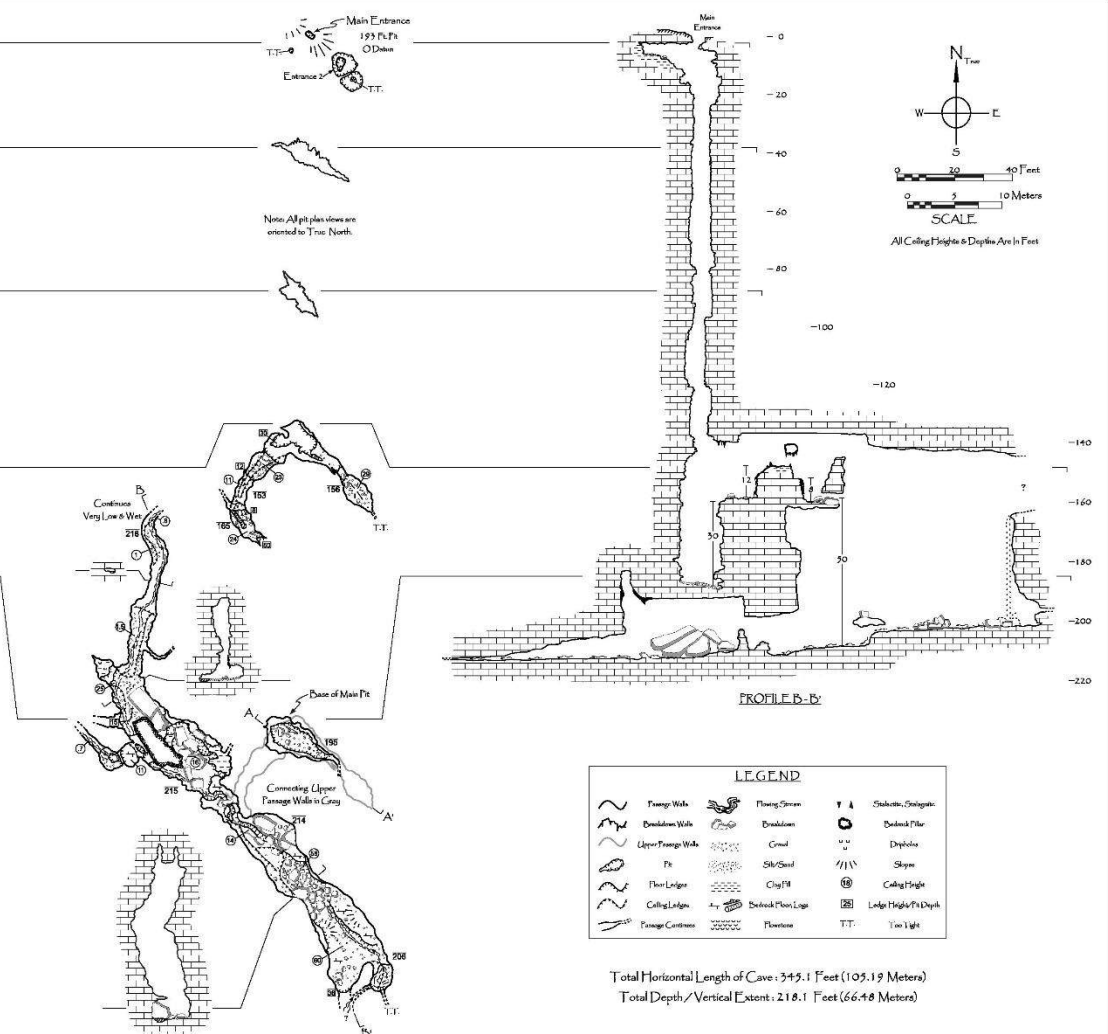
JACKPOT

Marion County, Tennessee
TMN 311

Suanto, Fiberglass Tape, & Leica Diato Survey Day
Clinton Barber
Katie Ingram
Ben Miller
Mike Tennant
Natalia Tennant

October 5, 2012 & October 11, 2013

Drafted by Ben Miller, 2014

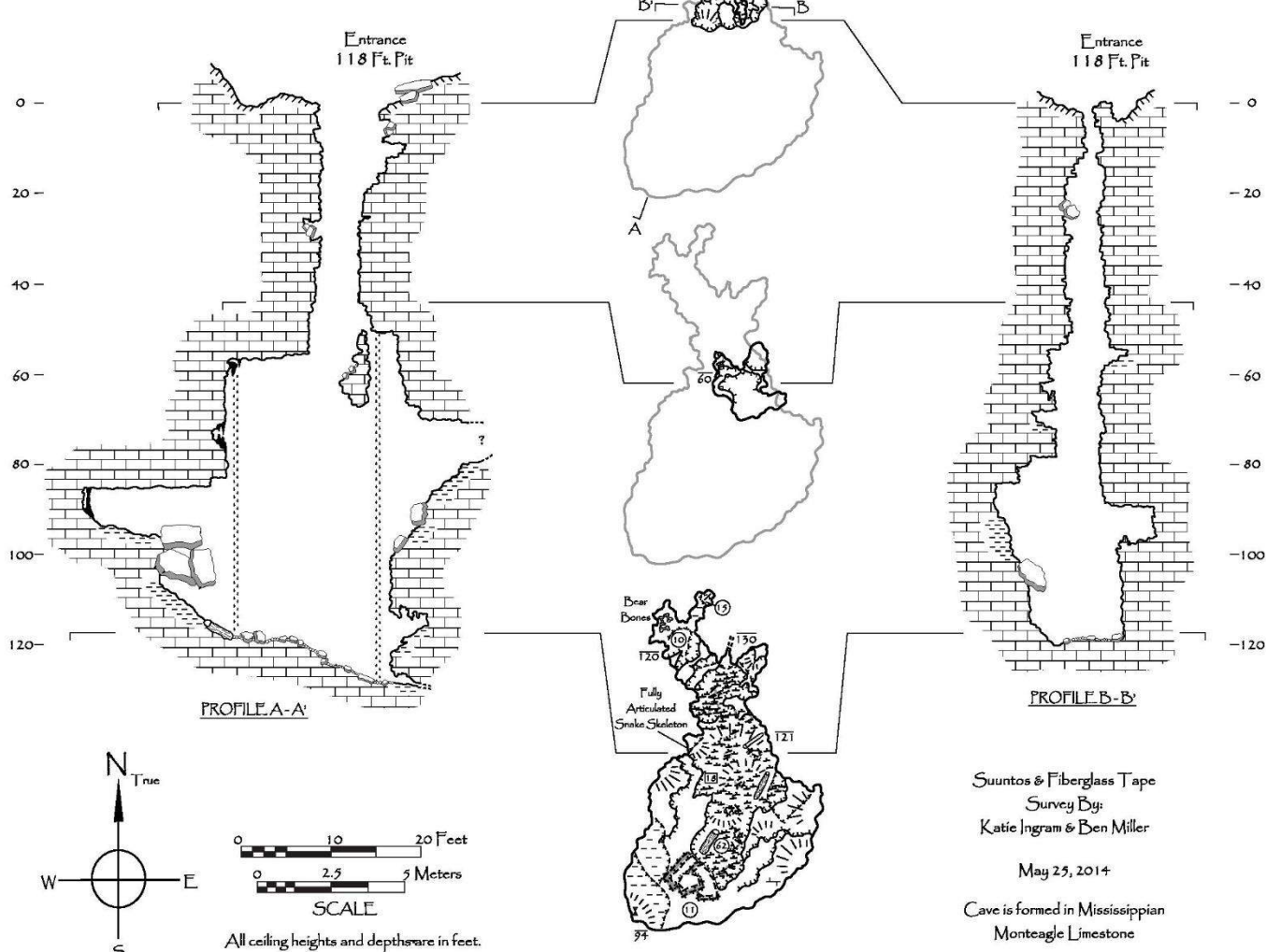


DEVIL'S DESCENT

Pickett County, Tennessee

TPI 128

Note: All pit plan views are oriented to True North.
Lower passage walls in gray.



Drafted by Ben Miller, 2014

Total Horizontal Length: 72.9 Feet (22.22 Meters)
Total Depth/Vertical Extent: 130.5 Feet (39.78 Meters)

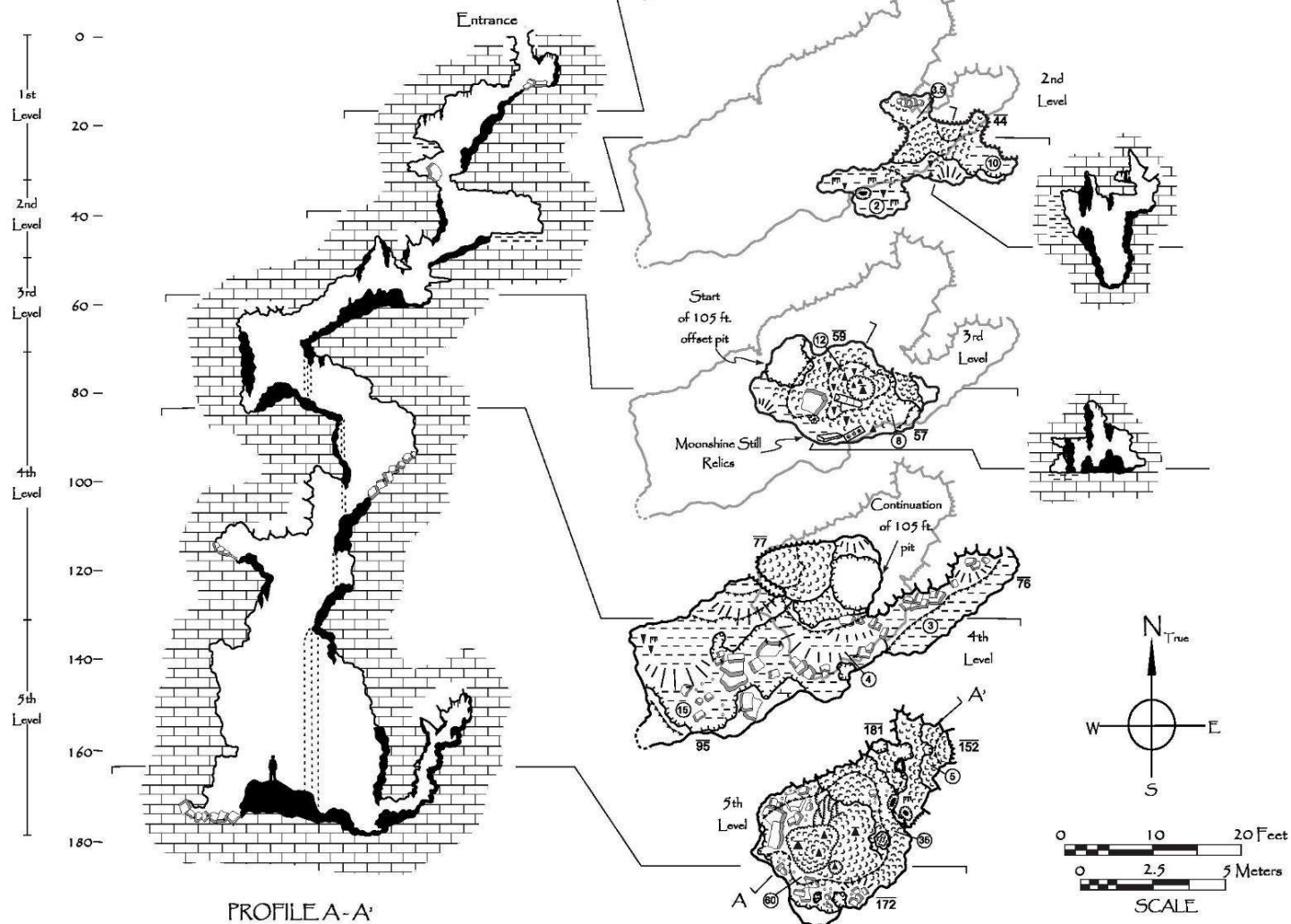
SHINE WELL

Franklin County, Tennessee

TFR323

Suuntos, Fiberglass Tape, & Leica Disto Survey By:
Chris Coates, Nikki Fox, Katie Ingram, & Ben Miller

7/17/2014 & 8/30/2014



Total Horizontal Length: 367.85 Feet (112.12 Meters)
Total Depth/Vertical Extent: 181.14 Feet (55.21 Meters)

Note: All pit plan views are oriented to True North.
Lower passage walls in gray.

Drafted by Ben Miller, 2014

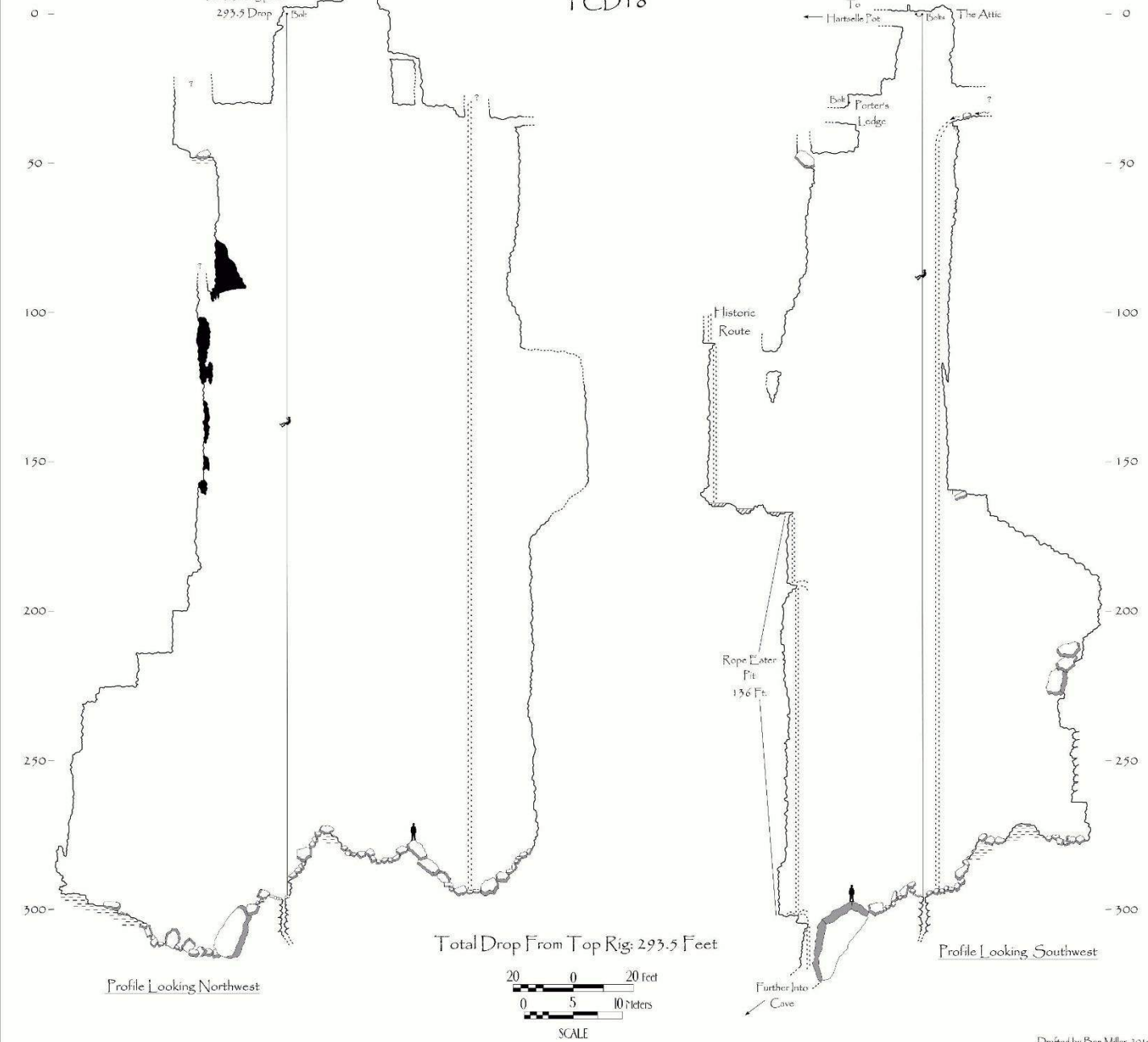
HIDDENWELL

Dorton Knob Smoke Hole

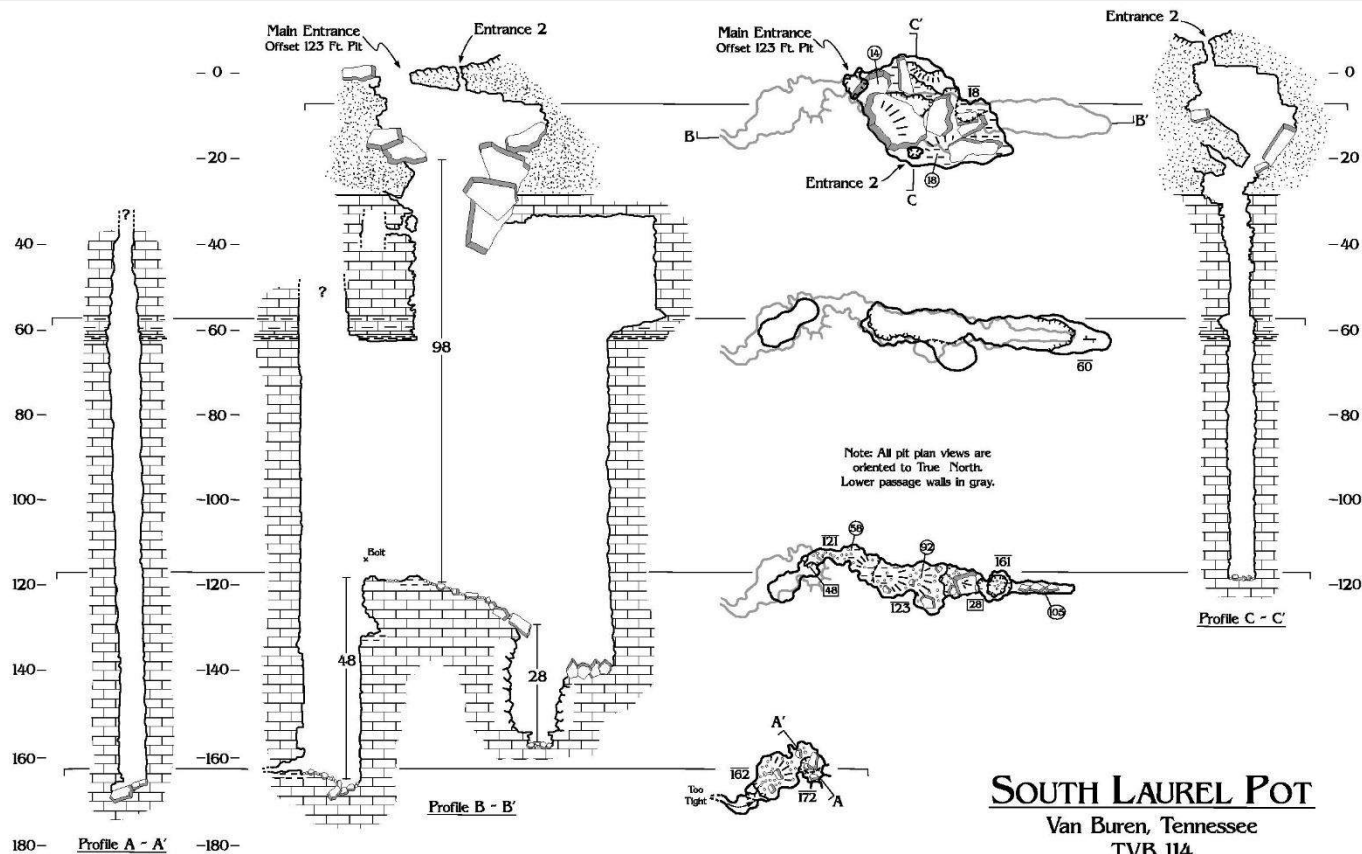
TCD18

Depth from
Top Rig Point/The Attic

Depth from
Top Rig Point/The Attic



Drafted by Ben Miller, 2014



SOUTH LAUREL POT

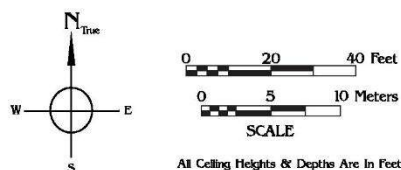
Van Buren, Tennessee
TVB 114
















Suuntos, Fiberglass Tape,
& Leica Disto Survey By:
Jason Hardy
Ben Miller
Kelly Smallwood

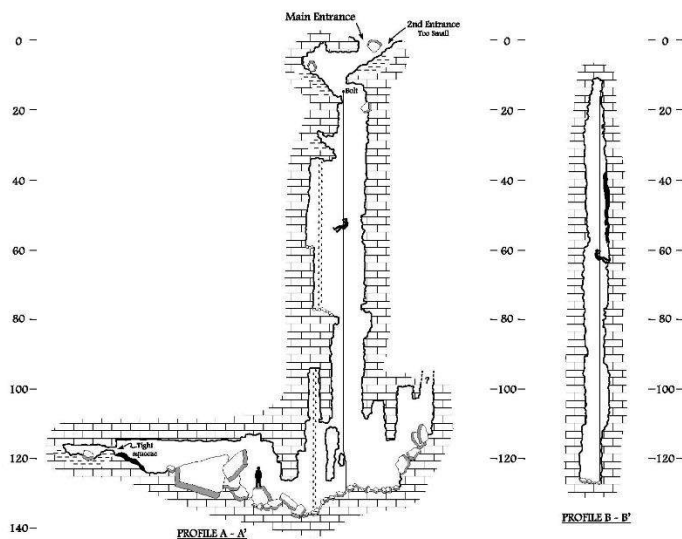
November 16, 2014

Drafted by Ben Miller, 2014

Total Horizontal Length: 94.2 Feet (28.7 Meters)
Total Vertical Extent/Depth: 172.25 Feet (52.5 Meters)



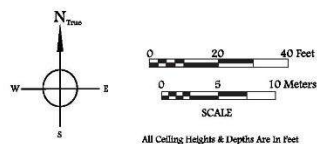
LEGEND					
	Passage Walls		Breakdown		Slope
	Lower Passage Walls		Gravel		Intermittent Stream
	Floor Ledge		Clay Fill		Ceiling Height
	Ceiling Ledge		Bedrock Floor		Ledge Height/Pit Depth
	Pit		Bones		Depth Below Entrance



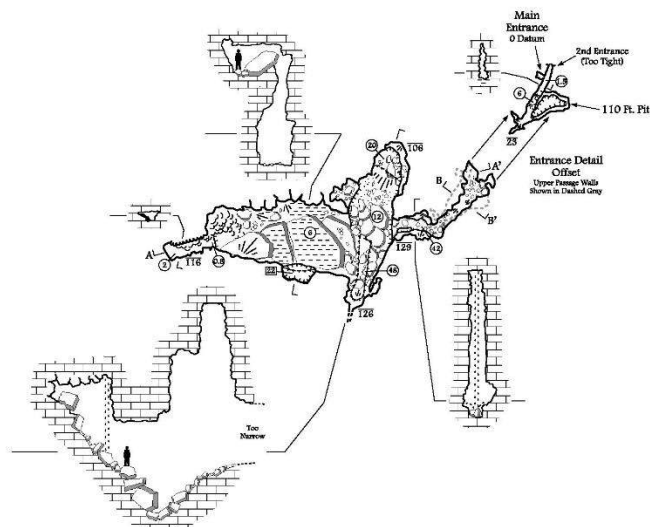
STORM CHASM

Marion County, Tennessee
TMN432

Grade 5
Suuntos, Fiberglass Tape,
& Leica Disto Survey By:
Jim Campbell
Brian Hant
Jason Hardy
Ben Miller
Kelly Smallwood
January 11, 2014



Total Horizontal Length of Cave: 298.6 Feet (91.01 Meters)
Total Vertical Extent/Depth: 129.6 Feet (39.51 Meters)



Drafted by Jason Hardy & Ben Miller, 2014

M. O. Smith's diary
Nov. 5, 1988

Marion O. Smith, Patricia Anthony, Gerald Moni

We parked at the gate at the mouth of Cave Cove. "Eventually, we... walked NE. to the mtn. w. of Martin Spgs. & up to approx. the 1280' elevation level & we ridge-walked N. on the E. side of Cave Cove. Eventually, somewhere above, or a "hair" N. of the old L.S. quarry at foot of the mtn... we found a 5' x 9' opening to an offset 53 or 54 foot blind pit, 25' long, which only I did. I named it FUSS WELL because of the "fussing" Harold & I were doing w/ea. other over where to measure it. We continued walking, & perhaps 1500' further N., in the lat. Blue Limestone ravine N. of the Quarry, we found a definite contact. About 30' S. of the northernmost of 2 ravines (400' N. of the S. ravine) I found a small opening showing air, and I started digging on it. Soon, 90' S., at the same elevation, Harold began digging on another hole. I managed to get my hole enlarged enough to squeeze in a "T" (The entrance to a joint). About 10 horizontal & 10 vertical feet away I came to top of a "Fists plus foot" pit. With the help of Harold & Pat, in a very threatening weather situation (a dark cloud, lots of wind, & about 1/2 hr. of light rain), we rigged the rope. Pat came inside & went past the top of the pit and waited in a 6-7' high pocket I called "Pat's Belfry." Then I descended the narrow but free to sheer virgin dry, which was considerably over 40 feet. I had 25' of rope on bottom (my 170' + rope was used) and I saw about 60 ft. of passage, most of which was in a 40' diameter breakdown room. I unspooled & didn't climb down a 20' climb on the other side of a breakdown slab, the top of which was approx. 10'-15' above the lowest point I reached. In time I presubbed up & Pat & I went outside. ^{Pat came this far but saw 300 ft. CHASER began at the threatening storm.} Harold, meanwhile, had dropped his hammer in the pit 90' South. I dug on it w/ my hammer & eventually tried to back into it w/ jammers. I got wedged. Somehow, I got my seat harness off & managed to slip through & I jammed down 24' to a ledge, cleared a rock & then jammed down 22 more feet. From there I (de-jammed) went down 3' of slope & down two 7 foot pits as climb (depending on a person's interpretation), and then squeezed down a 6 foot w/o a

rope, & at -70 feet was stopped above a too tight for me to do 10' deep vertical hole. I never saw Gerald's hammer (most of the time I had no glasses). With my hammer I enlarged the constriction more & was able to get out, just when it was beginning to rain again. I called this little horror hole TIGHT AS WELL. A cold shower fell, amid thunder & lightning & at 4:15 PM EST, all 3 of us abandoned the ridge. ...))

NOV. 6, 1988

Jim Smith, Gerald Mori, Ray Gregory, Trent Aigron, & Marion O. Smith (Patricia Anthony stayed at the truck).

- A) Trent & Jim did Tight as Well. Trent made it through the 10' deep hole below where I stopped the day before but couldn't go any more. He needed a rope to get out. Mori's hammer was found & Jim took it out.
- B) All 5 of us yapped Storm Chasm. "Ray climbed the 20' deep hole I didn't climb yesterday but it was blind. Trent tried to push the breakdown where there was air movement, but it soon got too tight even for him." Trent & Jim measured the pit at 112 feet.
- C) Jim, MOS, Mori, & Ray ridgewalked N. & found nothing but sandstone rubble.

WOODMEN of the WORLD

8 Jan'y., 2014

Jason:

In case you break through some hole we missed or wimped on in 1988 here is a copy of my diary entry for the discovery of Storm Chasm & notes from the next day's Follow-up.

During the next day or two I'm going to get on a ridge somewhere.

Hope to hear from you & Kelly sometime soon.

Marion



On January 11, 2014 Ben Miller, Jason Hardy, Jim Campbell, Brian Ham, and Kelly Smallwood surveyed Storm Chasm in Marion County, Tennessee. These photos are from the survey and were taken by Kelly.





Reign of the Den Master

*Published by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources
09/29/2014*

Biologists video seldom-seen breeding behavior of hellbenders

Eastern hellbenders are super-secretive – active mostly at night, living under submerged rocks, camouflaged so subtly that even by day these giant salamanders, the largest in North America, disappear into the cobbled beds of the cold mountain streams they inhabit.

All of which makes the recent video of a hellbender guarding a “nest rock” even more amazing. Wildlife biologist Thomas Floyd of DNR’s Nongame Conservation Section and Dr. Shem Unger, a postdoctoral researcher at UGA’s Savannah River Ecology Laboratory, were looking for larval hellbenders Sept. 5 as part of a State Wildlife Grants project exploring the impact of sedimentation levels on young salamanders. But in the bend of a rain-swollen creek on the Chattahoochee National Forest, the snorkelers saw the head of an adult male hellbender protruding from a gap in the rocks.

The scientists watched, fascinated, as the male defended the site against male and female hellbenders trying to get in. The male even bit a large female. Undeterred, she slipped past him. Floyd says the male was a den master, a large, dominant male that controls access to a prime nest site. “We just happened to be at the right place at the right time. If we had been there just 30 minutes before or after, we would have missed seeing the whole event.”

Possibly drawn by pheromones and maybe by habit – hellbenders can live more than 50 years and “who knows how long these particular hellbenders have been doing this skit,” Floyd said – the females were trying to enter the nest to deposit eggs. Out of sight, the den master would externally fertilize the clusters, much like native trout in north Georgia streams do.



The other males also had reproduction in mind. Adding their milt could extend their family line. Unger said that while little is known about the breeding biology of hellbenders in the wild, genetic research conducted in another state recently confirmed multiple parentage of a nest guarded by a single male. It has been widely believed that only one male and one female contributed to each nest. The genetic evidence, however, suggests the story is more complex.

Either multiple females enter and deposit eggs in the same guarded nest, or multiple males, possibly smaller “sneaker males,” help fertilize eggs in that nest – behavior common in other amphibians. Although multiple paternity has not been confirmed in hellbenders, “the entry of multiple males under a single nest rock suggests this,” Unger said.

“Our video is the first known documentation of this behavior in Georgia.”

Floyd said other males and females tried several times to access the nest rock through other entrances. “Two males and two females made it in.” (One of the smaller males quickly fled the nest rock, possibly forced out by the den master.) The den master will guard the eggs “through hatching until the larvae are ready to leave the nest, probably into March,” Floyd said.

Considering that habitat loss has hellbenders on the decline, den masters and the nests they guard are critical to the species, and part of a seldom-seen aquatic “skit” that can now be watched by all.

Watch the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_Uyz1W1eri&feature=youtu.be.

Love nip?

It's not clear why this den master nipped the large female trying to enter the nest site.

Floyd's theory is that maybe female suitors are not quickly discerned from male intruders, and the den master's guard helps ensure that only the strongest or smartest mates make it into the nest.

Added Unger, “The den master likely has an overriding instinct to defend his nest rock, biting all intruders. Clearly in hellbenders, love hurts!”

Nest rocks

- During late summer, males begin excavating saucer-shaped depressions under flat rocks.
- Suitable nest rocks have a sizable cavity underneath and few entrances. Dominant males defend these sites.
- Females attracted or lured to the nest deposit from 450 to nearly 1,100 eggs in a single compact cluster, with the eggs strung together, similar in appearance to a pearl necklace. Occasionally, several females will oviposit in the same nest.
- Following external fertilization of the eggs, the male guards the clutch from predators until hatchlings disperse from the nest rock.
- In Georgia, hellbender breeding season lasts from about mid-August to late October.
- Repeatedly disturbing habitat by flipping or moving rocks in streams is detrimental. DNR surveys a stream for hellbenders only once every several years and never in breeding season.



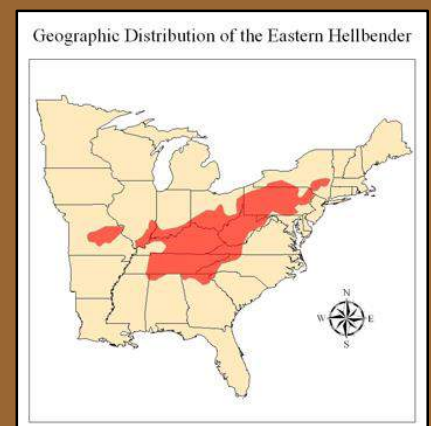
Interested in knowing more about Hellbenders:

The hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*), also known as the hellbender salamander, is a species of giant salamander endemic to eastern North America. A member of the Cryptobranchidae family, hellbenders are the only members of the *Cryptobranchus* genus, and are joined only by one other genus of salamanders (*Andrias*, which contains the Japanese and Chinese giant salamanders) at the family level. These salamanders are much larger than any others in their

endemic range, they employ an unusual means of respiration (which involves cutaneous gas exchange through capillaries found in their dorsoventral skin folds), and they fill a particular niche—both as a predator and prey—in their ecosystems, which either they or their ancestors have occupied for around 65 million years.

Both males and females grow to an adult length of 24 to 40 cm (9.4 to 15.7 in) from snout to vent, with a total length of 30 to 74 cm (12 to 29 in), making them the third-largest aquatic salamander species in the world (after the Chinese giant salamander and the Japanese giant salamander) and the largest in North America. An adult weighs 1.5 to 2.5 kg (3.3 to 5.5 lb). Hellbenders reach sexual maturity at about five years of age, and may live 30 years in captivity.

Hellbenders are present in a number of Eastern US states, from southern New York to northern Georgia, including parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, and even a small bit of Oklahoma and Kansas. The subspecies (or species, depending on the source) *C. a. bishopi* is confined to the Ozarks of northern Arkansas and southern Missouri, while *C. a. alleganiensis* is found in the rest of these states.



Sneak peek offered of Mountain Goat Trail expansion

By Bob Butters

Published Sunday, August 10, 2014

by www.nooga.com

Left Photo: Hikers getting a look at one of the newest acquisitions for the Mountain Goat Trail. (Photo: Kim Butters)



On Aug. 2, the Mountain Goat Trail Alliance, in collaboration with the Land Trust for Tennessee, hosted a "sneak peek" hike at Sewanee, Tennessee, on a section of the old railroad bed that is part of a planned expansion of the Mountain Goat Trail. Approximately 40 hikers and staff from both organizations gathered at Saint Mary's Sewanee for the event.

There were three options available. Some participated in a short hike down the mountainside as far as the Hawkins Cove State Natural Area, a 249-acre unit of the South Cumberland State Park, formed in 1985 to protect the rare Cumberland Rosinweed. Others continued on for an approximately 4-mile hike to the Cowan Tunnel, passing through verdant mountainside forest rich in biodiversity. At that point, some hiked back up the mountain, while others, myself included, took advantage of van rides offered back to our cars.

A brief history

The half-mile-long Cowan Tunnel, the only place for many miles for a train to cross the Cumberland Plateau, was built in the 1850s and is still used regularly by train traffic today. The Mountain Goat Railroad, constructed in 1853, split off from the main line near the tunnel and carried coal and passengers between Cowan and Palmer, going up and down the side of the Cumberland Plateau in the process. Gaining 1,200 feet of elevation in 7 miles, it was considered the steepest railroad in the world at the time of its construction. The line was decommissioned in 1985.

The power line provides a view of Hawkins Cove from the Hawkins Cove State Natural Area, which is bordered along its upper side by the Mountain Goat Trail. (Photo: Bob Butters)



The Project

It is the goal of the Mountain Goat Trail Alliance to turn the 35 miles of old railroad bed into a multiuse recreational trail. The Tennessee Department of Transportation and the town of Monteagle have recently approved a contract for the construction of phase two of the trail, a 3-mile section between Monteagle and Sewanee, which—coupled with the existing 2 miles of paved trail in Sewanee—will create 5 miles of paved trail.

In addition, Gov. Bill Haslam recently presented the mayor and City Council of

Tracy City with a Tennessee Department of Transportation grant award of over \$603,000 for continuing construction of the Mountain Goat Trail through Tracy City.

According to a recent University of the South report, the completed Mountain Goat Trail could potentially bring over \$1.2 million annually in economic benefits to the local area.

A train disappears into the Cowan Tunnel. (Photo: Kim Butters)



The Land Trust for Tennessee gets involved

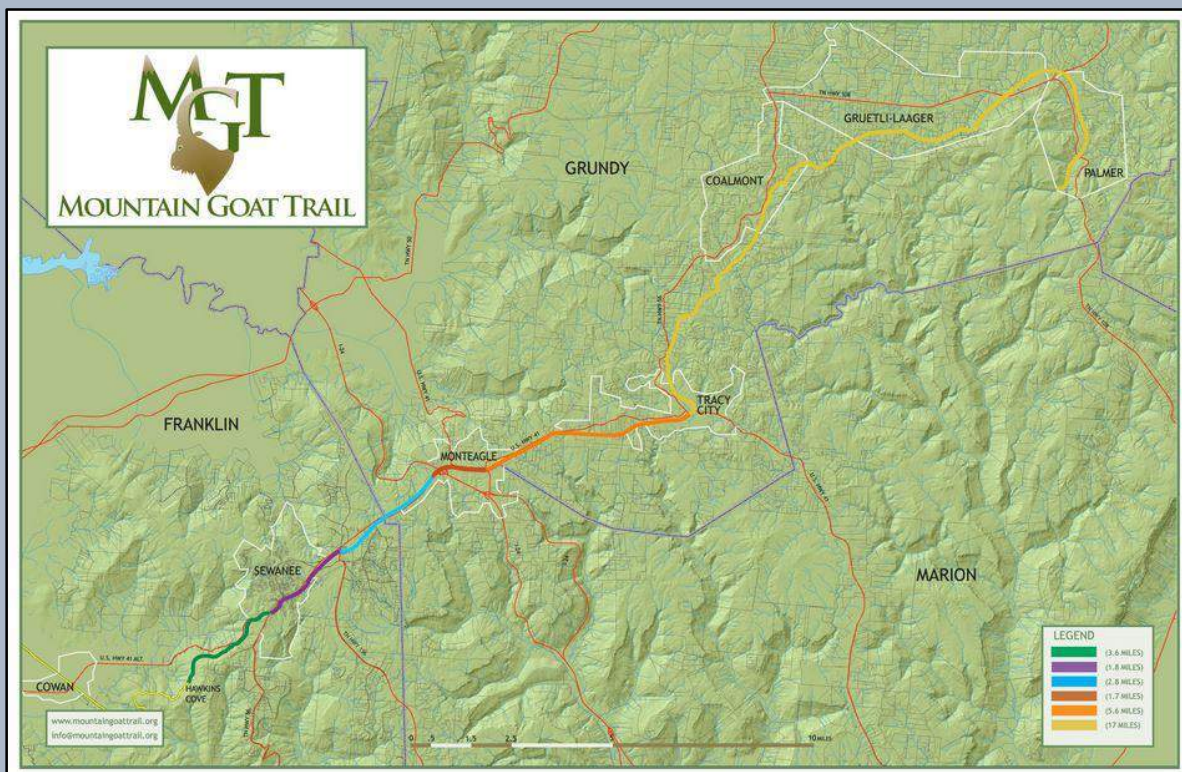
The Land Trust for Tennessee has been partnering with the Mountain Goat Trail Alliance to raise funds to help acquire land for the trail. Deals are now in progress for acquiring two 100-foot-wide trail corridors; the approximately 4-mile section between the top of the mountain at Sewanee and the Cowan Tunnel, where the hike took place; and a 17-mile section between Tracy City and Palmer, adding 20 miles to the trail.

The section of trail we hiked on is currently not open to the public but will be when the acquisition of the property is finalized, which should take place

in a couple of months or so. The ultimate plan is for the trail to be paved and to have an additional access point near the bottom of the mountain. This section of trail will be a great addition to the outdoor recreation opportunities currently available in the Sewanee area.

View a full size map of the Mountain Goat Trail and more information, go to: <http://mountaingoattrail.org/route/>

Bob Butters explores nature and the outdoors, primarily in and near the South Cumberland region, and publishes the blog www.Nickajack-Naturalist.com. The opinions expressed in this column belong solely to the author, not Nooga.com or its employees.





Jack Daniels Distillery Lynchburg, Tennessee

Jack Daniel's is a brand of Tennessee whiskey and the highest selling American whiskey in the world. It is produced in Lynchburg, Tennessee, by the Jack Daniel Distillery, which has been owned by the Brown-Forman Corporation since 1956. Despite being the location of a major

operational distillery, Jack Daniel's home county of Moore is a dry county, so the product is not available for consumption at stores or restaurants within the county.

The product meets the regulatory criteria for classification as a straight bourbon, though the company disavows this classification and markets it simply as Tennessee whiskey rather than as Tennessee bourbon. As defined in the North American Free Trade Agreement, Tennessee Whiskey is classified as a straight bourbon authorized to be produced in the state of Tennessee. Packaged in distinctive square bottles, a total of 11 million cases of the flagship "Black Label" product were sold in the company's fiscal year ended April 30, 2013.

The Jack Daniel Distillery in Lynchburg is situated in and around a hollow known as "Stillhouse Hollow" or "Jack Daniel's Hollow", where a spring flows from a cave at the base of a limestone cliff. The limestone removes iron from the water, making it ideal for distilling whiskey (water heavy in iron gives whiskey a bad taste). The spring feeds into nearby East Fork Mulberry Creek, which is part of the Elk River watershed. Some 1.9 million barrels containing the aging whiskey are stored in several dozen barrel houses, some of which adorn the adjacent hilltops and are visible throughout Lynchburg.

The distillery is a major tourist attraction, drawing over a quarter of a million visitors annually. The visitor center, dedicated in June 2000, contains memorabilia related to the distillery and a gift shop. Tours of the distillery are conducted several times per day. Drop by for a firsthand look at the distillery where one of their guides will accompany you on a tour and tell you the complete story of their whiskey. And you'll probably hear an interesting story or two about Mr. Jack as well. The tours are mostly outdoors and involve a lot of walking and steps, so be sure to wear comfortable shoes. The regular Distillery tour is FREE and lasts about 1-hour and 10-minutes. The wait time between tours may vary depending on the number of visitors.

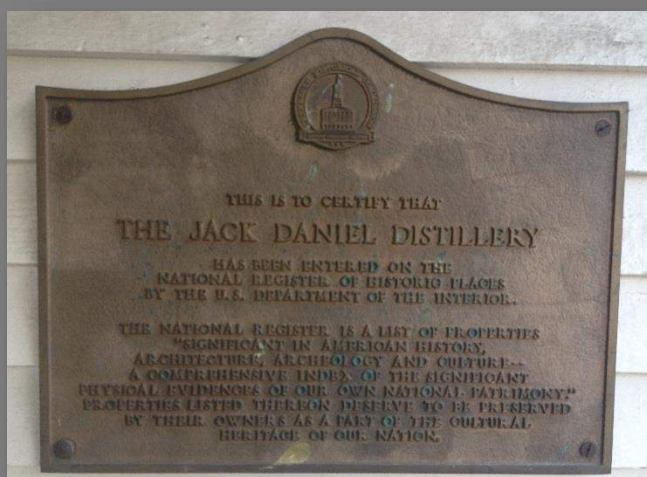
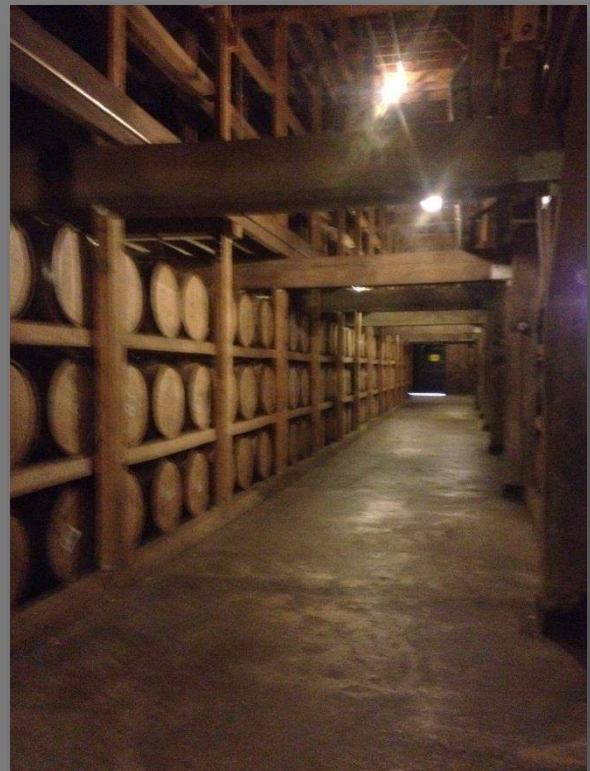
For a \$10 fee, Jack Daniel's is now offering sampling tours, which include a taste of their hometown product. This enhanced tour lasts about 1-hour and 45-minutes. All taking this tour must be 21 or over. Sampling tours are available Monday through Sunday with the exception of Independence Day and Labor Day. They sell out quickly, so be sure to arrive early in the day.

Their commemorative White Rabbit Bottle Shop is open Monday through Sunday with the exception of Independence Day and Labor Day.

All tours are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis every Monday through Sunday. The Jack Daniel's Visitor Center is closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve, New Year's Day.

The town of Lynchburg is the seat of Moore County, the smallest county in Tennessee. Even though it's home to the Distillery, it's a dry county and has been ever since Prohibition. And while the Distillery may be the main attraction here, you don't want to miss other local favorites like lunch at Miss Mary Bobo's Boarding House and a trip to the Lynchburg Hardware & General Store. If you want to explore all the sights in Lynchburg, take your time. There's plenty to see.

In December of 2014, Myself, Jason and Dakota visited the Jack Daniels Distillery for their tour. Below are some pictures from our trip. Make sure you allow enough time to not only check out the distillery but also downtown Lynchburg where you will find the Jack Daniels General Store and Barrel Shop.



Fenix HL 55 Headlamp Review

By Jeff Cody NSS# 23961

Many of us cavers have seen recently the popularity of Zebra Light and similar high output single 18650 headlamps. This is for good reason, these lights are small , reasonable priced, bright and have proven to be durable for most caving situations. Fenix has entered into this market by introducing the HL 50 and HL 55. The HL 50 runs off a single AA battery or a single CR 123 and has a maximum output of 365

lumens. The HL 55 appears to be a bit longer and runs off a single 18650 or 2 CR 123 batteries. The HL 55 has a maximum output of 900 lumen. This output puts this light with a similar output as the Zebra H 600 series. Fenix was kind enough to provide me with an HL 55 to test . This light was mailed direct to me from Fenix in China. My test light did not come in the commercial packaging that lights sold at the retail level come in. My HL 55 did come with an extra O ring and a two piece head strap.



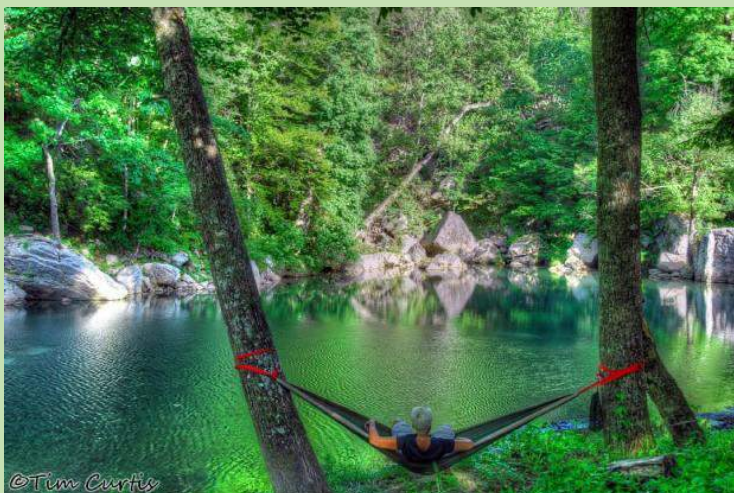
The HL 55 specs are as follows: Single Cree XM-L2 T6 neutral white LED with a lifespan of 50,000 hours.5 output selections 10 (150 hours) 55 (30 hours) 165 (10 hours) 420 (3Hours 45 min.) and a temporary burst mode of 900 lumens. A single switch for easy operation. 160 degree tilt mechanism . All metal housing to shield heat and impact. Digitally regulated output for constant brightness. Reverse polarity protection. Waterproof to IPX 8 standards (submersion in 6.5 feet for 30 minutes) . Construction is made from a durable aluminum alloy with an anodized anti abrasive finish. The lens is a toughened ultra clear with anti reflective coating. This light appears to be a bit smaller than a Zebra HL 600. It is 3.3 inches long, 1.8 inches wide and 1.9 inches height. The weight is listed at 115 grams excluding batteries. This light is a neutral white with superior definition in high humidity environments. The beam distance is listed at 380 feet (116 meters) . Fenix appears to have made this light with cavers in mind. The price is currently 60.00 US Dollars from [www.fenixlight .com](http://www.fenixlight.com).

I received this light in late August . I took it out of the box and noticed how sturdy it felt in hand. It came with the single sweatband type strap connected to it and an optional over the top of the head strap . I loaded it with a single 18650 battery and ran through the output options in a dark room. I was immediately taken by the wide angle beam this has. There is a bit of a hotspot in the center of the beam. With such a small lens I was expecting more of a tight spot. In order to get to the 900 lumen burst mode you have to depress and hold the switch for a couple seconds. The light is designed to run the burst mode for no longer than 30 seconds. After that time it will go back to the previous mode. I was able to wear the light on my head with just the single elastic strap. My plan is to use this as a back up light so I will leave the single strap in place . I will carry it in my pack and wear it under my helmet. This eliminates the need for multiple lights mounted to a helmet. I never felt this was a good look . One could easily eliminate the strap and hard mount if this was going to be used as a primary. I waited until dark and decided to test it against my El Speleo Limited edition, my El Speleo Nichia Go Pro and also my Fenix HP 15 headlamp. When performing these tests I did take in consideration that this is a 60 US Dollar multi purpose sport light and the The El Speleo's are more expensive cave specific lights. When comparing to both El Speleo's running both spot and flood the Els had a bit wider angle and the spot was more defined with a further reach . Especially The Limited Edition El Speleo that is rated at 2000 lumens. I felt the most fair comparison to make with that light was the 500 lumen spot -500 lumen mode 8. When comparing to the less powerful Nichia Go Pro I used full spot and flood (1000 lumens) . When comparing to just the flood of the El Speleo lights the HL 55 had less of an angle but more spot in the middle. The HL 55 has a wider beam angle than The Fenix HP15 but less spot. The HL 55 seems to have a wider angle than many single optic headlamps. Inside a cave the HL 55 has

a nice blend of both flood and spot. The tilt feature allows you to easily get light at your feet . You only need to tilt down a couple clicks to get light around your feet. I was only able to compare this to a spot Zebra . Zebra makes both flood and spot optic lights. As expected this light had a much wider angle than the Zebra H600 spot but less spot. The HL 55 in my opinion has a very desirable optic for most caving situations. I feel one can easily use this as a primary .

My final thoughts on The HL 55 is that it appears to be a steal at 60 US Dollars. Similar output Zebra lights are 20 to 30 US Dollars more. One advantage The HL 55 has over Zebra is it can run off both a single 18650 or two CR 123s. I also noticed the HL 55 can accept the larger diameter 18650 batteries. I normally use Panasonic 18650 B but I have seen larger diameter 18650s out there. Other small Fenix flashlights will not accept the larger diameter 18650 batteries. The Zebra is a lighter lamp(39 gram) and just a bit longer with a smaller diameter. The Zebra has a more round shape where this light has more of a square shape. The HL 55 has a very robust feel to it. Similar to Fenix flashlights. Those who are all about weight and are used to Zebra will find this light heavier but The HL 55 is much lighter than premium cave specific headlamps. The HL 55 is new to the market so the jury is still out on its longer term durability. I have heard of and read about a few instances of failures with Zebra but for the most part those who use them are happy with them. The standard Fenix warranty is 24 months that can be extended to 30 if you register your light with them. After the warranty expires, Fenix will repair the light with no labor charges for the life of the light . You will only pay shipping to Fenix and for parts as long as parts are still available. They will ship the repaired light back to you at no shipping charge. Fenix offers this repair option for the life of your light. Although Fenix is a volume “multi sport” manufacturer I get the impression they are marking to cavers. I say this because of the beam angle I see on the HL 55 and also The HP 15 headlamp.





Crusher Hole property added to Fall Creek Falls State Park

by Ben Benton published on the
www.timesfreepress.com August 12, 2014

A visitor enjoys the quiet of the "blue hole" known as "Crusher Hole" along state Highway 285 in Van Buren County, Tenn. The site has been acquired by Tennessee State Parks through the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation and will be managed as part of Fall Creek Falls State Park. The icy waters of Crusher Hole, situated on eight acres, was officially dedicated on Saturday. (Contributed Photo by Tim Curtis)

IF YOU GO

Crusher Hole is on state Highway 285 off state Highway 30, west of Pikeville, Tenn. From Chattanooga, take U.S. Highway 27 North to state Highway 111 North toward Spencer, Tenn. In Spencer, take Highway 30 East about 6.5 miles and start looking for event signs directing visitors onto Highway 285.

A small tract of land in Van Buren County, Tenn., has added to Fall Creek Falls State Park more than eight acres of Cumberland Plateau land and an icy swimming hole known as Crusher Hole.

The Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation bought the Crusher Hole property off state Highway 30 last year in an auction, according to foundation lands conservation coordinator Christie Peterson. The site is on state Highway 285 near the Cane Creek Bridge.

Crusher Hole was dedicated Saturday in a ceremony at the site not far from the Fall Creek Falls park entrance. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner Brock Hill and representatives of Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation and Fall Creek Falls State Park were among those scheduled to speak.

"It's a beautiful spot," Peterson said.

The foundation in April 2013 purchased the property from a local family, she said.

"It's a very pristine, beautiful color," she said of the water in Crusher Hole. "But keep in mind it's cold water because it's spring fed."

Crusher Hole is situated amid limestone rock formations common in the Fall Creek Falls area and is connected underground to Cane Creek, which flows through the state park. The chilled "blue hole" sprouts from a cave pool at the site about nine miles from the park entrance off Highway 30, according to officials.

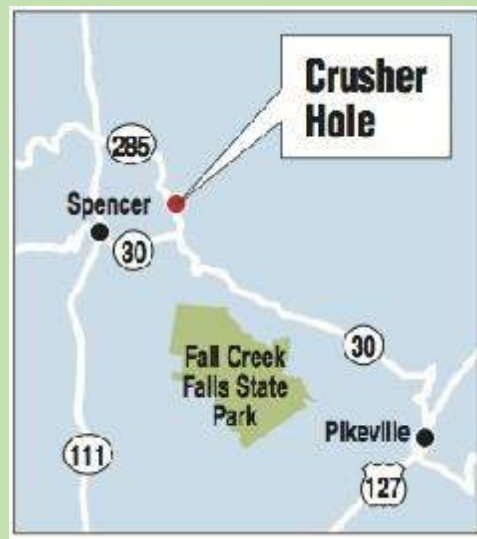
"We are very pleased to dedicate additional acreage at Fall Creek Falls," Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Conservation Brock Hill said. "The dedication of these eight acres is especially critical to preserving rare species that inhabit Cane Creek."

The property touches Fall Creek Falls land, although there are no trails yet connecting the park to the swimming hole. Foundation officials said Crusher Hole is home to "rare life that loves icy-cold, clear water."

Crusher Hole has been a local swimmers' favorite for years, according to Tim Curtis, a nature photographer and Sparta, Tenn., resident who has been to the site lots of times.

"They purchased the property to protect the view," Curtis said of the foundation's acquisition. "It's a small piece of property but it's very beautiful."

Curtis, 50, said the property will help link the greenway being planned to connect Virgin Falls with Fall Creek Falls.





New type of tick disease shows up

Originally published by the Times Free Press July 10, 2014 by Dr. Clif Cleaveland (cleaveland1000@comcast.net.)

Ticks are nasty, numerous and carriers of a variety of complex illnesses worldwide. In the U.S., they may transmit Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever (despite its name, much more frequent in the Southeast and Atlantic Coastal states), and a number of less-common but potentially dangerous illnesses.

Recently, red-meat allergy has been linked to bites of the lone star tick, which is common in our area of the country. The biting female of the species is red-brown with a yellow-white spot on the back. The bite may show no symptoms or may cause localized itching. Once attached, the tick may hang on for days.

Red-meat allergy results not from transmission of a microbe but from injection into the skin of a chemical found in the gut or saliva of the tick. This chemical is also found in red meat -- beef, pork, lamb and venison. It does not occur in poultry or fish. The injected substance can sensitize the victim to future contact with red-meat. Sensitization may occur within two weeks of the tick bite.

Symptoms may begin with generalized itching that worsens over a span of several hours. This may respond to antihistamines, such as Benadryl, taken by mouth. Subsequent eating of red meat, however, can trigger anaphylaxis, a severe, generalized allergic response. Swelling of lips, tongue and upper airways create a medical emergency. The victim may collapse.

This cascade of symptoms may begin shortly after red meat is eaten and progress rapidly. Immediate injection of epinephrine will buy time by temporarily reversing the most severe symptoms. Prompt transfer to a medical facility is vital. Subsequent treatment may involve intravenous fluids, antihistamines and corticosteroids.

In addition to avoiding all red meat, the affected individual will need to have immediate access to an epinephrine self-injector and antihistamine tablets.

The exact incidence of red-meat allergy is unclear. Thousands of cases have been reported thus far across the U.S. and in the Southeast, in particular. Also unclear is whether all lone star ticks carry the sensitizing chemical.

Avoiding tick bites is an important tactic in the Southeast. Ticks live in grasslands, brush and leaves. They are attracted to heat and may drop from limbs onto hikers. Avoid walking in tall grass. Stick to the center of hiking trails, avoiding contact with brush and undergrowth at trail's edge. Ticks may lurk in clothing and outdoor gear, biting victims hours after an outdoor excursion.

Ticks are successfully repelled by application of DEET-containing repellants to exposed skin and clothing. Permethrin is an alternative, a tick-killing chemical that may be sprayed onto clothing and camping gear. It will be effective through several washings. Outdoor clothing may be purchased that is impregnated with permethrin that will persist even longer.

Careful inspection of the entire skin is important following hiking and camping. Ticks will be hard to spot in skin creases, between toes, and in scalp and bodily hair. A tick may remain in place for hours to days, ingesting blood and regurgitating its stomach contents and saliva into its host.

Safe tick removal requires needle-nose tweezers. The tick is grasped at its headpiece, immediately adjacent to the skin. The tick is lifted off with care to remove it in its entirety. A headpiece left behind may still transmit disease. Folk remedies such as touching the attached tick with a lighted cigarette until it withdraws, applying alcohol to it or covering it with Vaseline until it releases are not appropriate and may stimulate the tick to release its contents into the skin.

Since most tick-related illnesses have a two-week incubation, after a bite establish an internal timer in which you are vigilant for symptoms such as itching, rash, fever, muscle aches, headache and/or swelling of lips and tongue. If these occur, contact your health provider promptly.



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Web: www.scci.org

October 15, 2014

Sewanee Mountain Grotto
900 Old Sewanee Road
Sewanee, TN 37375

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your contribution to the Southeastern Cave Conservancy. With the support of friends like you, SCCi has been able to protect more than 120 caves on 26 cave preserves throughout the southeastern U.S., and also to protect nearly 2,000 acres around our caves.

We offer outdoor enthusiasts access to some of the most valued recreational caves in the region, including Tumbling Rock Cave, Neversink Pit, Fern Cave, and Valhalla. We also are proud stewards of the natural and cultural heritage in caves such as Frick's Cave, which is home to over 10,000 endangered gray bats, early Native American cave drawings, and even Civil War-era graffiti!

After 22 years, the SCCi Board of Directors recently took on a big challenge – to double and eventually triple the number of caves we are able to buy and protect each year. A first step is to raise public awareness of the great value that caves provide for recreation, in preserving rare plants and animals, and in protecting water quality.

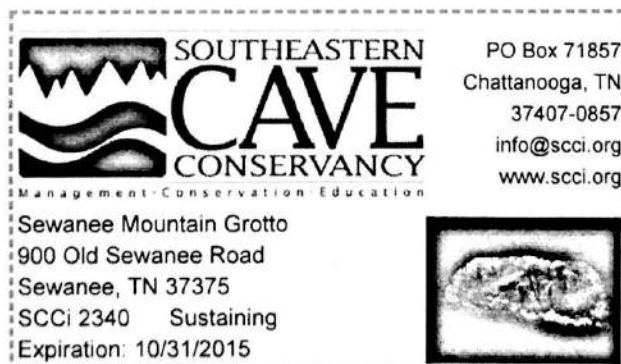
Your support makes our success possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Buddy Lane
Treasurer, SCCi 43

Your gift of \$1,000.00 was received on September 30, 2014 by the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc., a 501(c)(3) public, non-profit conservation organization. The non-deductible portion of your contribution is \$0.00. We attest that no other goods or services were received in consideration of your contribution. Gifts made to SCCi are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. For your records, SCCi's tax ID numbers are: Federal# 58-1950768, GA# 7251351, TN# 0443777 and AL# FNP 924-157. For more information about SCCi, please visit our website: www.scci.org.

Here is your SCCi membership card!



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DEDICATED TO THE EXPLORATION, STUDY, AND CONSERVATION OF CAVES

November 14, 2014

Sewanee Mountain Grotto
c/o Blaine Grindle
900 Old Sewanee Rd
Sewanee, TN 37375-6032

Dear SMG Members,

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the National Speleological Society, thank you for your contribution of \$1000.00 to the Headquarters Fund of the National Speleological Society. We appreciate your support.

Because this letter serves as our official acknowledgment of your donation, you should keep this letter with your income tax records for the year. (You should not attach it to your return.) The Society did not provide you with any goods or services in exchange for your gift. Please consult with your tax return preparer for specific information.

Thank you for your generosity. Enclosed you will find a donation form to pass along to a friend.

Sincerely,

Wm Shrewsbury, President
National Speleological Society, Inc.
FEIN: 54-6026867

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