



BREAKDOWN

Volume 12, Number 1, April 1997

The *MAR Breakdown* is the journal of the Mid Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society. It is published three times a year - prior to the annual business meeting and prior to the Spring and Fall field meets.

Subscriptions —

A complimentary copy is sent to each grotto in the MAR. For individuals it works this way. When you attend a field meet, \$4 of your registration fee goes directly to the MAR to pay for three issues of this newsletter and other MAR projects. You may also subscribe by sending \$4 to the treasurer. The number of issues you have remaining immediately follows your name on the mailing label.

Meetings and Meets —

The annual business meeting is held the last Sat. in February. Each spring and fall there is a field meet. Watch for dates.

Officers —

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Spring MAR Field Meet set for May 9, 10, 11, 1997

The Spring MAR field meet will be held May 9-11, 1997 at the Greencastle American Legion Picnic Grounds near Williamson, PA. It is being hosted by the Franklin County Grotto of the NSS. See inside for details.

SPRING MID - APPALACHIAN REGION MEET
Hosted by: Franklin County Grotto of the NSS
May 9, 10 and 11, 1997
Greencastle American Legion Picnic Grounds
Near Williamson, Pennsylvania

Cave will open at 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 9

1. Guided Cave Trips
2. Saturday evening catered meal on site
3. Carving program and Fellowship

Registration: \$17.00 includes meal, camping & M.A.R. Registration
(No Pre-Registration) \$8.00 Age 15 and under; includes meal and camping
No one under 18 admitted without parent or guardian

INFORMATION Call Pat Minnick at (717) 361-0521 or
Ken Jones at (717) 267-2669

8108

M.A.R. SITE

517 Statech Rd. 81

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MINUTES OF MAR BUSINESS MEETING

22 FEBRUARY 1997

Meeting called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Secretary's Report - Franklin County Grotto moved to accept the minutes as published. Greater Allentown Grotto seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report - Printed copies were distributed. Andy Churlik moved to accept. Foom Sanders seconded. Motion passed

Breakdown Report - A call was made for articles

Field Meets

Spring 97 - Will be hosted by the Franklin County Grotto - fliers were distributed - surveying trips are planned - assistance needed from experienced cavers - plans are to make maps on site.

Fall 97 - Will be hosted by Philly Grotto on Columbus Day weekend in conjunction with their 50th Anniversary celebration. A geology field trip is planned. Doug Medville will be the guest speaker at the dinner.

MAR Bulletins - Will White reported:

Fayette County is in progress and a draft copy exists

CCLUM (Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Union, Montour) - is nearly complete

Huntington County - needs updating

Blair County - needs updating

Editorial Policy - is extremely flexible

Old Business

Hosterman's Pit - No update from that printed in the January *MAR Breakdown* (Vol. 11 # 2)

Hillside Quarry - hearings are in progress - then postponement until May - Copperhead Cave has been saved - case may conclude this year - 3 civil suits are pending

Pennsylvania Cave Database - A copy was at the meeting. The committee is to take over the project of working on cave definitions for PA. Proposed guidelines were circulated - refinements may be made. Two lists will be developed based on the definitions. The

"official caves", and the FRO's (For Reference Only). Number of "official" caves in the database - 937

Harlansburg Cave map will be published - only one half of the cave has been mapped.

Cave Conservation - Signs are still available at \$10. One sign is still available for installation - courtesy of the Baltimore Grotto.

Cave Register - no report

ER NCRC - no report

Game Commission - Keith Christenson reported:

Schofer Cave Plan was submitted - no official reply has been received. Unofficially - the plan is sitting on a desk in land management. It is not exactly what the Game Commission wants. It was suggested that a representative be contacted and inquire why there has been no action. Comments are needed from the Game Commission so they can be incorporated to make the plan acceptable to both parties. The two year moratorium on caving has expired. Getting this one through will enable the movement of other plans i.e. Strangford. A liaison is needed for the Game Commission.

Aitkin Cave bat count found Indiana Bats are back. The cave is accessible for summer caving.

2000 NSS Convention - Plans are in progress to develop a bid in the Westmoreland/Fayette County area.

Procedures for elections - Results from canvassing the region grottos, the majority of those responding are in favor of mail ballots if an election does not take place at the Fall Meet. Based on the ratification by the grottos, the by-laws will be changed.

Incorporation - The option of incorporating as a non-profit organization rather than as a business is being investigated, as well as incorporating in another state.

Westmoreland Co. Bulletin - Bert Ashbrook moved that five additional copies (total of ten) be turned over to Kim Metzgar to distribute as gratis copies. Keith Christensen seconded. Motion passed.

York County Bulletin - John Rosenfeld reported there are 50+ caves. Field work may be completed this year. Projected two years to completion.

THE MAR REVIEW

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MID APPALACHIAN REGION

BERT ASHBROOK

Note: If your newsletter is not reviewed in this column, send a copy to Bert Ashbrook, 1257 Lehigh Parkway South, Allentown PA 18103-3875.

Two Walt Hamm maps of small Westmoreland County caves appear in The **Netherworld News** (Pittsburgh Grotto) for October 1996. They are Yeager Fissure Cave (100 feet long and nearly 50 feet deep) and Harbridge Drop Cave (23 feet long). In the December 1996 issue, there are more of Walt's Westmoreland maps, including Hidden Hollow Caves Nos. 1 and 2, The Rubble Room, and Hillside Quarry Cave. None are over 100 feet long.

Loyalhanna Grotto's Fall 1996 issue of the **Loyalhanna Troglodyte** reports that self-guided wild cave trips in Laurel Caverns (Fayette County) are ending. Insurance concerns are to blame. Next year, wild trips will all have a guide. The resurvey led by Jay Reich now totals 2.8 miles, with the survey expected to reach 3.5 miles. The newsletter also reports that a resurvey of Shafer Run Cave (Somerset County) by Walt Hamm will likely yield 1500-2000 feet of passage.

The Winter 1996 issue of the **Loyalhanna Troglodyte** contains several cave maps and descriptions. The largest is Con Cave (Westmoreland County) by Walt Hamm, which is 932 feet long. This map won a merit award at the 1996 NSS Convention. The others are Groundhog Carcass Cave, Homewood Hangover, and Homewood Hideaway (all Butler County and under 60 feet long) by Tom Metzgar. Tom also offers an informative history of the Penn's Cave Lake (Centre County). Finally, Kim Metzgar describes an authorized trip to the Chestnut Ridge Quarry site (Westmoreland County) to document the pre-quarry status of the area.

For Spring, 1997, the **Troglodyte** devotes most of its space to a 10-year history of the Loyalhanna Grotto. Also included is a description and award-winning map of Sawmill Cave No. 1 (Sandeppley Cave) in Westmoreland County, by Walt Hamm (2540 feet).

The Winter 1997 issue of the **Pack Rat Scat** (Greater Allentown Grotto) has Keith Christenson's Pennsylvania hibernating bat key as its cover story. Keith gives a way for cavers to identify the Commonwealth's six hibernators without having to touch them. (But remember; even being around hibernating bats may kill them!) Rip the page out, laminate it, and stick it inside your helmet for your next trip. Also in that issue is another Dean Snyder history article, this time on nineteenth-century Berks County cave explorer, Dr. John Schoenfeld.

Caves in Baltimore? Read the **Baltimore Grotto News'** September 1996 issue for George Wetzel's review of a cave-ins and underground tunnels within the city limits over the last century. In the August 1996 issue, Bill Plummer offers some ideas on the shape of stalagmites relative to *the* distance the drops of water fall.

The December 1996 and January 1997 issues of the **BGN** detail two trips by Joseph Kaffl past the upstream sump of Alexander Caverns (Mifflin County). Photos in the January issue show some very fine speleothems.

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MAR REVIEW

The Winter 1996 issue of the *Central Jersey Caver* includes a fine article by Kevin Psarianos on route finding in caves, including what to do when you're lost. The same issue contains some entertaining fiction by Paul Steward (at least, we hope the cave-in was fiction). Finally, there is a good introduction to cave radios.

The *Nittany Grotto News* for January 1997 is full of good stuff, as usual. An authorized trip into Hosterman's Pit last fall is described. Employees of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission were escorted into the cave by cavers to collect animal and plant remains while the quarry owner waited at the entrance. Keith Christenson notes the location of some new caves in Elk County (no limestone up there!). Keith's bat key is also included (see its description in the *Pack Rat Scat*.

The January 1997 *NGN* also has lots of cave maps and descriptions. Most significant is Keith Christenson's map of Stitzer Cave (Centre County, 400 feet long). Keith also offers maps and descriptions of Bucknell Cave (Union County, 23 feet), Leaping Trout Cave (Clinton County, 33 feet) and the Crystal Crater Section of Butler Cave (Bath County, Virginia, 250 feet). There's also a fine map of Clinton County's Tomkins and Lamar Caves (136 and 169 feet long, respectively) by Bryan Crowell. As if that wasn't enough, Mike Petry's map of Prison Den Cave (Berks County) rounds out the issue.

In the Huntingdon County Cave Hunters' *Cave Hunter* for December 1996, Mike Cullinan describes his trip to Ireland and the caves he saw there.



DREIBILBIS CAVE OPEN AGAIN

The following report has been excerpted from the Dreibilbis Cave Management Policy.

Access Policy

For most trips, owner notification will not be necessary. The owner must be notified prior to any trip if any access restrictions need to be relaxed.

Liability release forms are required on a one-time basis. Mike Mostardi will be responsible for collecting signed release forms and maintaining a master file.

There is no restriction on the number of trips that can be made within a particular time period. It is the responsibility of the key holders to insure that conflicting trips are not scheduled.

Trips may not be made at night.

Cavers must be properly outfitted.

Trips shall be limited to no more than 7 persons.

No one under 18 is permitted access without being accompanied by a legal guardian.

Conservation

This cave conservation plan is based on the premise that recreational caving can be compatible with sound cave conservation and management.

Goals:

1. Protect and conserve the mineral and biological resources in the cave and the area surrounding the cave entrance.
2. Promote "soft" caving techniques among cavers visiting the cave.

3. Promote cave conservation awareness among cavers, landowners, and other citizens.
4. Promote the scientific study of the geology, hydrology, and biology of the cave and the soils, flora, and fauna of the cave entrance and the surrounding area.

For each natural resource associated with the interior of, the entrance to, or the area surrounding the cave, caving and management precautions and practices are recommended.

The Area Surrounding the Cave Entrance

The property and privacy rights of the landowner will be respected by all cavers and others visiting the cave.

Vehicle parking by cavers and others visiting the cave should be conducted in such a way as to minimize or eliminate soil rutting, compacting and erosion that might be caused by vehicle tires. When possible cavers should car pool to the cave in order to minimize the number of vehicles present.

Injury to natural vegetation and farm crops and scuffing or gouging of the topsoil should be minimized when cavers are suiting up to enter the cave and when walking to and from their vehicles and the cave entrance

Some of the plants growing around the cave entrance are invasive exotic weeds. These include multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, burdock, and wineberry. Physical and other means of control of these exotic pest plant species may be an important part of any plan for vegetation and soil management of the area surrounding the cave entrance. Native species of trees, shrubs, vines, and wildflowers and other herbaceous plants should be encouraged and protected.

Non-game wild animals, livestock, and game animals out of hunting season outside of the

cave are not to be molested.

Cavers and others visiting the cave will leave the area cleaner than they found it

Cave Entrance

Cavers walking up and down the slope leading to the entrance pipe should walk in such a way as to minimize soil disturbance. Plants directly adjacent to the cave entrance should not be molested unless they pose a safety hazard to cavers (i.e., overhanging vines).

At the cave entrance, particularly on the north (or right side when facing the cave entrance from outside of the cave) side (south-facing), mosses, liverworts, and miniature ferns grow on the moist rock. Some of the lower plants are evergreen. This plant community occupies a unique habitat which occurs at moist cave entrances, limestone overhangs, and wooded cliff seeps. Cavers entering and leaving the cave should exercise great care to avoid disturbing or injuring this unique community of very small, primitive, moisture and limestone loving plants.

The cave gate will be kept "bat friendly" at all times. Passageways built into the cave gate frame will allow complete freedom of cave ingress and egress by bats. These bat passages should be kept free of vegetation, sediment, and debris.

The exact location of this cave will be recorded but will not be made public in popular media or publicly accessible karst databases.

Inside the Cave

Bats roosting or flying in the cave are not to be molested. This means never touching them or exposing them to excessively loud voices, human breath, fumes and heat from carbide caving lights, bright electric caving lights, and or camera flashes.

A bat survey of Dreibilbis Cave is being conducted from fall 1996 to fall 1999 and possibly beyond that time. Cavers entering the cave will take a photocopy of the cave map with them and record on the map the numbers, type (if known) and location of any bat observed in the cave. The date and name of the person making the observahon should also be included. Those sections of the cave which are not explored or observed sbould also be marked. These field notes and related data and documentation are to be compiled for eventual data analysis, presentation of results in an appropriate forum and to aid in making any decisions on additional measures needed to protect the bats using this cave

Dreibilbis Cave contains extensive boxwork, flowstone, and splatterstone. The cave also contains some cave coral (smaller than cave popcorn), anthodite crystals, easily dislodged rock, floor sediments, rock breakdown, and other speleological features. To protect these speleothems and other mineral surfaces, cavers should exercise care when moving through the cave. Speleothems should be actively avoided when cavers choose hand and foot holds. "Soft" caving techniques require moving through even difficult sections of the cave without injuring cave formations, limestone surfaces, or cave floor sediments.

Water drips and seeps into parts of the cave. Cavers should, where possible try to avoid disturbing small water and mud pools formed by these drips and seeps. No spent carbide or other waste should be left in the cave. Land surface management should aim toward minimal negative impact on the water seeping and dripping into the cave.

Scientists conducting research in the cave will do so in as unobtrusive and low-impact a manner as possible. No research equipment, supplies, or samples will be abandoned in the cave. The results of cave research will be made available to the landowner and to the

two NSS Grottos (Philadelphia Grotto and Commander Cody Caving Club) responsible for management and conservation of this cave.

Release And Hold Harmless Agreement

KNOW A LL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, the undersigned, in considerahon of being permitted to enter a certain cave(s) upon property of Warren Weber Jr. in Perry Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, do hereby stipulate that I hereby remise, release, and forever discharge Warren Weber Jr., his heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, of and from all, and all manner of, actions and causes of action, suits, debts, dues, accounts, bonds, covenants and contracts, agreements, judgements, claims and demands whatsoever in law or equity, especially arising from any claim for damages arising out of any accident or occurrence in which I have sustained any personal injury or death, or property damage, while exploring said cave(s) which against the said Warren Weber Jr. and the Pennsylvania Cave Concervancy, I ever had, now have, or which my heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, or any of them, hereafter can, shall or may have, for, or by reason or any cause, matter or thing whatsoever.

Dated: _____ Signed _____

Note: Mike Mostardi stated that only NSS members will be loaned the key to the cave.

Key Holders

Mike Mostardi Comdr Cody Caving Club
767 Old Westtown Road
West Chester, PA 19382
(610)430-8076

Joe Durant Philadelphia Grotto
1324 Church Rd.
Oreland, PA 19075
(215)836-1565

THE PENNSYLVANIA HERPETOLOGICAL ATLAS PROJECT

TOM METZGAR

As kids, most of us plucked a toad from the porch steps, our curiosity dampened by the animal urinating in our hands. The topic of snakes can quickly divide a roomful of people into two groups: those who think that the only good snake is a dead snake, and those who are fascinated by these maligned creatures.

Reptiles and amphibians are common inhabitants of Penn's Woods, but surprisingly little is known about their populations, distribution and behavior.

A detailed study sponsored by the Pennsylvania Biological Survey, Pennsylvania Fish Commission, Carnegie Museum, and Indiana University of Pennsylvania hopes to add significantly to our knowledge of these animals.

The study involves the entire state, which has been divided into about 5200 blocks of about 8 square miles apiece. Each block represents one sixth of a 7.5 minute USGS topographic quadrangle map.

If you can spare some time to complete the survey forms and you need yet another excuse to get out of the house and office, why not volunteer to do a map section? You might want to share a section with several grotto members. Conveniently, your map section might include your favorite cave.

An interest in amphibians and reptiles is a great start, and some rudimentary knowledge of these animals is helpful. But even if you can't tell the difference between a salamander and a lizard, you can easily learn to use the taxonomic keys provided in the study's field manual. The project director conducts several workshops to help volunteers hone their searching and identification skills.

Currently, 313 Atlas Project volunteers are surveying 17.5% of the state. This leaves plenty of areas for you to pick from.

Caves, rock outcrops, old quarries and their sediment ponds offer ideal habitat for many species of amphibians and reptiles. You can combine your "herp" survey with your caving activities like I'm doing in Westmoreland County's Bear Cave vicinity.

MAR chair, Rich Rosevear, is also participating in the project. You can call either of us if you want a volunteer's perspective.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Arthur Hulse, Project Director
April Claus, Field Director
Biology Department
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Indiana, PA 15701
412-357-2279 Fax 412-357-6949.

CONSERVATION DIRECTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Your Grotto may want to consider being listed in this directory. See next page.

The Conservation Directory of Pennsylvania is also available in electronic formats. For those who are interested, the Directory can be received on 3.5 floppy disk or downloaded via DEP's Web Site. <http://www.dep.state.pa.us>

Please contact DEP's Public Participation Coordinator at (717)783-7404 for information.

CONSERVATION DIRECTORY UPDATE SHEET

The following questionnaire provides interested parties the opportunity to either update a current listing or be added to the *Conservation Directory of Pennsylvania*. Please return the questionnaire to the DEP Public Participation Coordinator, Office of Policy & Communications, P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Allen by phone (717-783-7404), fax (717-783-8926) or e-mail Allen.Christopher@pa1.dep.state.pa.us.

Group or Organization: _____

Type of Organization: Advisory Advocacy Conservation
 Education Public Interest Government
 Other _____

Contact Person: _____ Position: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____ County: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

FAX: _____ World-Wide Web Address: _____

Mission Statement: _____

Focus of Your Group (Check all that apply):

- Wetlands
- Air Pollution
- Water Pollution
- Oil & Gas Issues
- Pollution Prevention
- Mining & Reclamation
- Environmental Education
- Other _____
- Recycling
- Local Land Use
- Municipal Waste
- Hazardous Waste
- Land Conservation
- Industrial Site Reuse
- (LLW) Radioactive Waste
- Forestry Issues
- State-Owned Land
- Hunting or Fishing
- Outdoor Recreation
- Heritage Preservation
- Wildlife Conservation & Management
- River, Stream or Watershed Protection

Geographic Area or Region Served:

Local Community County Multi-County State Multi-State

Membership (#): _____ Membership Fee: YES NO

Publications / How Often Published: _____

Additional Questions

Yes / No

- ~ Would you like to receive the *Environmental Protection UPDATE*?
- ~ Do you use DEP's web site to obtain information about environmental issues?
- ~ Would your group be interested in creating a home page on the World Wide Web?
- ~ Is your group interested in more information on state level advisory committees, stakeholders groups, and regional roundtables?

If Yes, please list specific issues of interest.

~ Are there programs and services your group would want to learn more about? If Yes, please list them below.

~ Additional comments or questions?

I, _____ (Name and position/title

in group) of _____ (Name of group) give my consent for the above information to be used in the "Pennsylvania Conservation Directory." I understand that the information given for publication is subject to editing. My signature indicates permission to publish this information and to make it available to the public upon request.

_____ (Signature) _____ (Date)



SPRING MID - APPALACHIAN REGION MEET

Hosted by: Franklin County Grotto of the N.S.S.

May 9, 10 and 11, 1997

Greencastle American Legion Picnic Grounds
Near Williamson, Pennsylvania



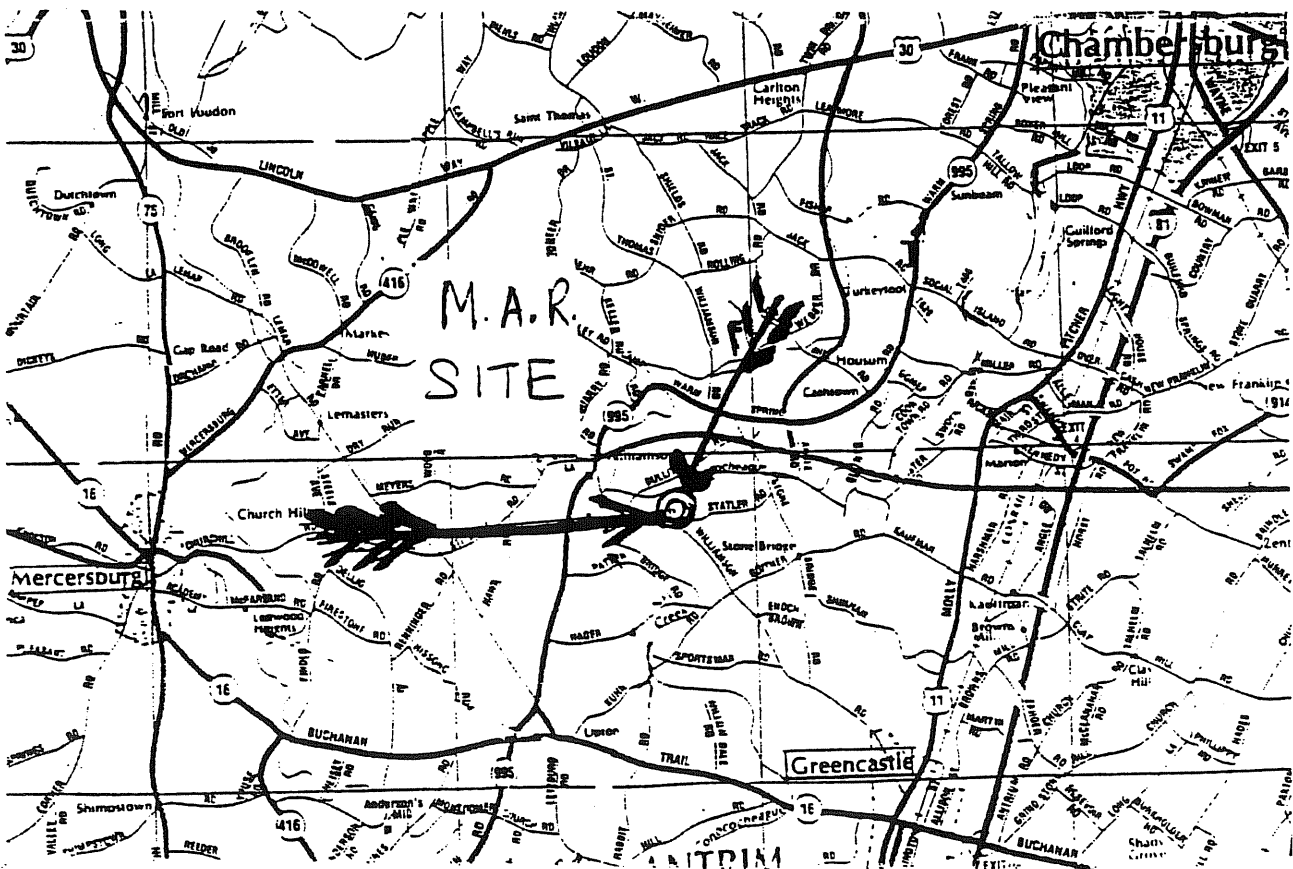
Gates will open at 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 9

1. Guided Cave Trips
2. Saturday evening catered meal on site
3. Caving program and Fellowship

Registration: \$17.00 includes meal, camping & M.A.R. Registration
 (No Pre-Registration) \$8.00 Age 15 and under: includes meal and camping
 No one under 18 admitted without parent or guardian

B.Y.O.B.

INFORMATION: Call Pat Minnick at (717) 765 - 0521 or
 Ken Jones at (717) 267 - 2669



Exit 3 Interstate Rte. 81

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- April 12-13 ER-NCRC Beginner's Cave Rescue Orientation, Laurel Caverns. For information call John Chenger (412)437-5215
- April 25-27 VAR, RASS Fieldhouse, Burnsville Cove Area, Bath Co. Va. Lots of worthwhile caves to explore. Guided trips, a guidebook listing caves and descriptions are part of the package, camping, parties, beverages on Friday & Saturday, Chicken BBQ on Saturday night. (804)282-5138, rass@richmond.infi.net
- May 3-4 OTR Work weekend. Lizzie Molina (301)949-1417
- May 9-11 MAR Spring Meet, Franklin Co. Grotto (See details in this issue.)
- May 9-11 Nittany Grotto Spring Picnic Usual place. Sorry MAR, being a student grotto, we had to schedule around final exams and end of semester. Michael Glass (814) 867-1759
- May 9-11 Basic Cave Rescue Orientation, Seven Springs Resort, PA. John Appleby
- May 16-18 Spring NRO. Hancock, Mass. (413)458-3125
- May 24 BCCS weekend, Al Grimm (540) 943-3766
- June 23-27 NSS Convention, Sullivan, Missouri. Pat Saberton (314)772-6956
- September 13 BCCS weekend, Al Grimm (540) 943-3766
- October 10-12 Philadelphia Grotto 50th Anniversary & MAR Fall Field Meet, Woodward Cave Campground, Frank Strahan (215)549-1908. More information will appear in the next issue of the *MAR Breakdown*.

WHAT I'D NEVER KNOW IF I DIDN'T READ THE GROTTTO MAIL

THE EDITOR

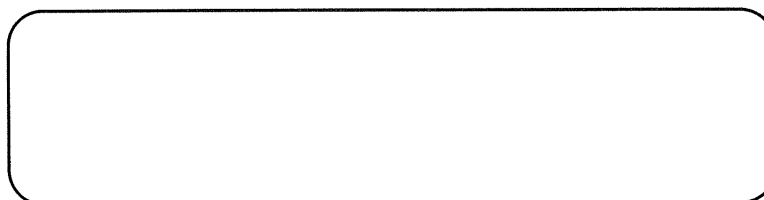
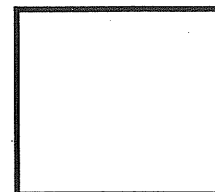
This from the GPSAR News of the Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescue Team.

A terrible diet and a poorly ventilated room were the apparant cause of death for a man killed by his own gas. A diet of beans and cabbage along with poor ventilation in the room caused large amounts of natural methane to kill the man when he breathed the poi-

sonous cloud hanging over his bed. The medical examiner said he was a big man with the capacity to create this amount of deadly gas.

Isay. Watch what you eat before you squeeze into those tiny Pennsylvania Caves.

MAR Breakdown
 Keith D. Wheeland, Editor
 2191 Mt. View Ave.
 State College, PA 16801-7214



Mid-Appalachian Region Bulletins

NSS Members Price List		Caves	Maps	Large Maps	Cost	Postage Code
No.	County					
8	Caves of Blair Co., PA	89	40		6.50	A
9	Caves of Huntingdon Co., PA					OUT OF PRINT
10	Caves of Snyder Co., PA	20	14		2.00	A
11	Caves of Centre Co., PA	71	56	1	9.00	B
12	Caves of Mifflin Co., PA	47	31	5	7.00	B
13	Caves of Perry Co., PA	13	6		5.00	A
14	Caves of Bucks, Co., PA					OUT OF PRINT
15	Caves of Lehigh Co., PA	25	13		3.25	A
16	Caves of Northampton Co., PA	24	13	1	5.50	A
17	Caves of Northumberland Co., PA	20	10		5.00	A
18	Caves of Berks Co., PA	64	32		7.00	B
19	Caves of Bedford Co., PA	54	33		5.50	A
20	Caves of Westmoreland Co., PA	Over 300 features.			29.50	C

Postage codes

- A US Postage: \$1.25 for first copy: \$0.50 for each additional copy to the same address.
- B US Postage: \$1.75 for the first copy: \$0.50 for each additional copy to the same address.
- C US Postage: \$3.00 each bulletin.

Non-US Postage: \$2.00 each first copy, \$1.50 each additional copy.

Please make checks payable in US funds to MAR. Send to Bette White, 542 Glenn Road, State College, PA 16803