



BREAKDOWN

Volume 22, Number 3, January 2008

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 \$5 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 \$5 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 Saturday in February. Each spring and fall there is a field meet. Watch for dates.

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MAR Business Meeting set for February 23, 2008 PCC Meeting to follow

The Mid Appalachian Region Business Meeting will be held at the home of Jay Herbein on February 23, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

You will find a map to the meeting on page 2.

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC) will follow the MAR Business Meeting.

Officer elections were held at the fall MAR field meet. The current officers were all re-elected. MAR officers are listed to the left on this page.



Inside

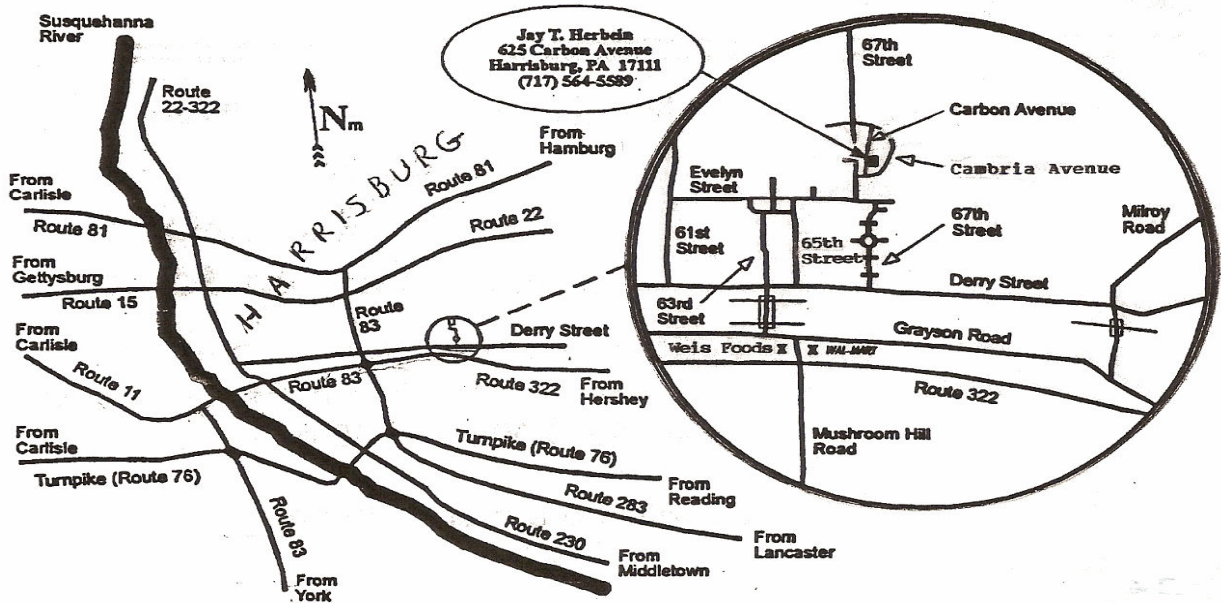
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Map of Business Meeting Site

Maps to Dale Ibberson's will be available at the business meeting



From the East on Route 322:

Turn right on Mushroom Hill Road (look for the Wal-Mart and Weis Markets Store) at the second traffic light after Hummelstown.

From the West on Route 322:

Intercept Route 322 toward Hershey. Turn left on Mushroom Hill Road (look for the Wal-Mart and Weis Markets).

Once on Mushroom Hill Road, proceed one block to Grayson Road (T-intersection) and turn left. Travel one more block and turn right onto a bridge which crosses the railroad tracks. Turn right on Derry Street. Follow Derry Street to 67th Street which will be a left hand turn up the hill. Follow the inset map above to reach Jay's house.

Note: If you are driving from the West on I-83 N., there is no exit at Derry Street. Use the Route 322 exit.

PCC Officer Elections

There will be a PCC meeting February 23, 2008 following the MAR Business Meeting. It is at this meeting that PCC officers are elected. Anyone wishing to run for office can put their name on the ballot by contacting any PCC officer.

Cave conservation and protection can only happen
if we all work together towards the same goals.

Get involved with PCC!

FALL 2007 MAR Field Meet

By Amos Mincin

The Fall 2007 MAR-VAR was held October 12-14 at the TRA (OTR) Site at Dailey, West Virginia. The weather was a bit cold but the spirit of those attending and of those hosting was warm and friendly.

Registration opened at noon on Friday. Some early arrivals went on caving trips. Later in the evening beer and soda was served, a bon-fire was blazing and music filled the air. Hans Nagl, Nate Hirneisen and Bill Schultz, of Philly Grotto kicked off the evening with live music. Then Jess Wilson acted as DJ and played an assortment of music and presented a light and laser show on screen. At 10 PM the guided cave trip sign up lists were put out. This worked out well and nearly everyone was able to sign up for the cave trip of their choice.

Saturday morning guided cave trips began to go out starting at 8:30 AM. There were trips to Friars Hole Cave, Cass Cave, Carpenter-Swago, Windy Run Cave, Sites Cave, Sinks of Gandy Cave, Alpena Cave, Sharps Cave, Elkhorn Mountain and Bowden Cave.

The Saturday catered dinner was sliced pork loin and all the trimmings. A nice selection of deserts and a vegetarian dinner option were also available. Following dinner drawings were made for door prizes. Many items were donated by Howies Harness, the West Virginia Cave Conservancy and others.

That evening, a presentation was given by Doug Medville on his early day caving with Philadelphia Grotto, giving an interesting insight into the trips and activities in the late sixties. This was followed by a presentation by the Japanese Exploration Team showing their facilities and caving activities in Japan, China and other places. Between 8 PM and 10 PM a live professional Blue Grass Band played some great sounding music, as beer, soda, and Philly Grotto 60th Anniversary cake were served. While many enjoyed the bon-fire, others tested their limits in the Philly Grotto squeeze box. At least one male and one female caver made it through the squeeze box set at only 6" high. Many others set personal records at more typical heights.

Sunday morning Front Royal Grotto did an excellent job of serving the Pancake Breakfast. Following the VAR meeting, the event closed and the campground was cleaned up and many positive comments were received in regard to all the weekend activities.

Thank you to all those who attended and all those who helped with the planning, and running of this successful field meet.

A total of 267 cavers registered. Twenty-five registered both MAR and VAR. VAR registrations totaled 198, and MAR registrations totaled 94.

Below is a summary of the income and expenses.

MAR-VAR Income

Amount	Description	Totals
\$3,532.00	Preregistration	\$3,532.00
\$ 120.00	Rope + Bag Auction	\$3,652.00
\$ 60.00	6 Dinners Sold	\$3,712.00
\$ 207.00	50-50 Raffle	\$3,919.00
\$4,462.00	Registration at MAR-VAR	\$8,381.00
	Total Income	\$8,381.00

MAR-VAR Expenses

Amount	Description	Totals
\$800.00	Band	\$800.00
\$1,160.00	Porta Pots (85x8)	\$1,960.00
\$230.00	Dumpster	\$2,190.00
\$744.00	Beer + soda + ice	\$2,934.00
\$48.00	Name Tags	\$2,982.00
\$112.00	Cake	\$3,094.00
\$20.00	Trash bags	\$3,114.00
\$3,000.00	Food (300x10)	\$6,114.00
\$401.00	Donation to TRA	\$6,515.00
\$0.00	Firewood (got for free)	\$6,515.00
\$40.00	Food For band	\$6,555.00
\$446.00	Guidebooks	\$7,001.00
\$219.00	Philly History Books/CD ROM	\$7,220.00
\$470.00	MAR Fee (94x5)	\$7,690.00
\$594.00	VAR Fee (198 x3)	\$8,284.00
\$71.00	Cups, Plates, Forks	\$8,355.00
\$26.00	Propane	\$8,381.00
	Total Expenses	\$8,381.00

Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy Corner

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by President Pat Minnick at the OTR site in Dailey, WV.

The following officers were present. **President** P. Minnick
 Secretary K. Bange **Treasurer** G. Bange

Representation was as follows:

Bald Eagle Grotto	JD Lewis	Huntingdon Co. Cave Hunters	---
Baltimore Grotto	---	Nittany Grotto	Cheri Schock- Proxy
Bucks County Grotto	Pat Richard	Philadelphia Grotto	Amos Mincin
Buffalo Valley Grotto	Matt Neyhart	Pennsylvania Inner-Earth Grotto	----
Central New Jersey Grotto	Frank Strahan	Pittsburgh Grotto	----
Commander Cody Caving Club	Mike Mostardi	Seven Valleys Grotto	Joe Schock-Proxoy
Franklin County Grotto	Pat Minnick	York Grotto	---
Greater Allentown Grotto	Dean Snyder		

Secretary Report: Pat Minnick reviewed the minutes from the May 2007 meeting as published in the Breakdown. Keith Wheeland made a correction to the minutes. The minutes should read that a memorandum of understanding was signed by The Nature Conservancy, not the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program.

Treasurer Report: George Bange reported on the PCC financial status. See published report.

Web Page: No report

PCC Breakfast: There will be no PCC breakfast at the 2007 Fall MAR/VAR. There is no hosting grotto for the 2008 Spring MAR. PCC will discuss the need for a PCC breakfast at the Spring MAR at the next PCC meeting in February.

PCC Brochure: Contact George Bange for PCC brochures

Mail: Dean Snyder reported there has been no mail since the last meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Baker Caverns: Franklin, County, PA- Pat Minnick reported the property is back on the market

Dragon Cave: Berks County, PA- No report.

J-4: Centre County, PA-No change in status

Red Church Cave: Schuylkill County, PA- No change in status

Merkle Cave: Berks County, PA.- No change in status

Cleversburg Cave: Franklin County, PA.- Pat Minnick reported Southampton Township has closed the cave because of the number of accessible keys to the cave. Ken Jones involved MAKC in working with the township and a lease arrangement has been worked out between Franklin County Grotto, MAKC and the township, pending agreement with the solicitor of the township. The key arrangements will be changed per the request of the township. Individuals wanting access into the cave will have to contact the key holder for permission and to obtain the key.

Corker Hill: Franklin County, PA- Pat Minnick was approached by Mike Walsh, Executive Director of the Texas Cave Conservancy (TCC), at the 2007 NSS Convention. TCC is interested in getting involved with negotiations with WASHCO. TCC has experience and funds for this type of project. A motion was made by Amos Mincin to give Pat Minnick authority to enter into discussions with TCC in regards to negotiations with WASHCO. The motion passed. Franklin County Grotto, York Grotto and Philly Grotto all voiced an interest in helping gate the cave as necessary.

Schofer Cave: Berks County, PA- Dean Snyder reported that Greg Turner of the PA Game Commission is interested in scheduling a clean up into Shofer Cave in the spring/summer of 2008.

This would be done in conjunction with MAKC and their annual members' weekend.

Durham Cave: Berks County, PA- No report

Penn Aqua: Mifflin County, PA- Good landowner relations continue. A motion was made by Joe Schock to remove Penn Aqua from the project list. The motion was seconded and passed.

PA Cave Database: Keith Wheeland sent an email to PCC reps in early August with an update to the PA Cave Database steward. Bill Herr, wherr@maserconsulting.com, has agreed to be the new Database Steward. Volunteers are now needed to serve as County Stewards. County Stewards are responsible for:

- Reporting on cave related activity in their geographical area
- Serve as contacts concerning scientific studies or projects
- Be contacted concerning changes to caves within their geographic area
- Report to the Database Steward any and all changes and additions to caves within their area

Garrett Czmor has volunteered to be the County Steward for Huntingdon County. Anyone interested in serving as a County Steward should contact either Keith Wheeland or Bill Herr.

Top Maps: MAKC was given the PA topo maps, a donation from Jon Pearson.

Sharer Cave: Karen Bange gave a follow up report on the dead bats found in Sharer Cave. Greg

Turner of the PA Game Commission was out to the cave the week after the Spring MAR. Greg Turner, Gary Dunmire, Andy McKinnon and Joe Turchick, went into the cave and retrieved approximately 250 dead and dying bats. Greg sent the bats to a lab for analysis but on site assessment suggested the bats had drowned. There has been no official report from the game commission. The cave is open per the bat moratorium dates.

PCC Treasurer: George Bange will not be running for PCC treasurer at the next meeting when elections are held. Anyone interested in the position should contact a PCC officer to have their name put on the ballot.

NEW BUSINESS:

Landowner Liability Act: Karen Bange gave a follow up report on changes to the landowner liability act. On June 30th, Governor Rendell signed into law (Act 11) that closes the loophole in the Recreational Use of Land and Water Act. This change was brought about by a shooting accident that occurred in Lehigh County in 2004.

Next meeting: The next PCC meeting will be Saturday, February 23, 2008 following the MAR Business Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm
Respectfully submitted,
Karen Bange, Recording Secretary

Sharer Cave Follow Report: Karen Bange did contact Greg Turner of the PA Game Commission after the September PCC meeting. Here is Greg's response to the cause of death for the bats in Sharer Cave: "Results were negative on all disease fronts. Bats that were alive during collection were targeted for necropsy, and they were found in poor physical shape regarding energy stores. Most likely due to the fact they were soaking wet and trying to spend their energy staying warm enough to move out of the water, and were not able to dry off. My best guess was that those bats were unable to negotiate the waterfall sections (maybe due to higher than normal water levels after that valentines snow storm????)"

Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy

Financial Summary

5/17/2007 to 8/30/2007

CHECKING ACCOUNT:

Beginning Balance :		\$241.84
Deposits :		\$0.00
	<u>Expenses</u>	
Total Expenses :		\$0.00
Ending Balance :		\$241.84

SAVINGS ACCOUNT:

Beginning Balance :		\$6,355.90
	<u>Donations</u>	
	Spring MAR 50/50	\$39.00
Total Donations :		\$0.00
	<u>Other Income</u>	
	Dave Garg	\$39.00
Total Income:		\$39.00
Interest :		\$26.62
Withdrawals :		\$0.00
Ending Balance :		\$6,421.52

COMBINED TOTAL :

\$6,663.36

NSS Member Search on the Web

A new benefit for members! An NSS Member Search function is now live on the NSS Web site. You can access it via the Search page (Home page/Search), or directly at www.caves.org/membersearch/. The database is automatically updated early each weekday morning.

The search is protected by a sign-in page, designed to make it available only to NSS members.

Search results (and uploaded database) do not include members' addresses or contact information. The database is not visible to Web crawlers and other search engines.

Grottos are encouraged to use the search when preparing their annual reports to check the membership status of their officers, and to see how many NSS members claim their grotto as their primary affiliation, for Congress of Grottos representation.

Once signed in, members will also have access to the NSS Business page, now protected by a log-on page. Access will be available until the browser is closed.

The Nature Conservancy - A New Focus

Reported by Keith D. Wheeland

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is becoming more interested in the conservation of cave areas, particularly where cave critters dwell. To emphasize this focus, TNC convened a two-day meeting of "cave experts" in Warm Springs, Virginia on October, 29 and 30, 2007. Their focus was the Central Appalachian Ecoregion consisting of the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia.

The first day was actually a two-group, two-hour trip into Butler Cave (Bath County, Virginia) led by Phil Lucas and Keith Wheeland. Phil's group went up to the Helictite Passage and that area, and Keith's group went up into Huntley's Section to see the aragonite needles. After the trip, the participants went to Keith's Roost where they were treated to a meal and beverages provided by TNC.

The second day was a work day. The session began at 8 a.m. in the Three Hills conference center in Warm Springs. TNC described the methodology that they developed to categorize potential cave areas for further consideration. Using drainage basins as general outlines, they looked at the size of the area, its condition, the landscape context, and the biodiversity of the area. They supplied some weighting since they want to have a representation of these potential cave areas dispersed through the whole Central Appalachian Region, not just concentrated in one area.

The participants had suggestions for refining the process. Many of the suggestions will be incorporated into the final methodology developed by TNC.

Using the methodology, TNC came up with a top priority list of 181 potential cave areas divided into four groups. The participants examined each of the 181 potential cave areas and determined whether it should be considered as is, upgraded, downgraded, combined with another potential cave area, or dropped from consideration. Participants were asked to look at the regional map and suggest additional potential cave areas to be added to the top priority list. This process went on until 4 p.m. with a 15-minute break for lunch.

TNC will provide the participants with a detailed account of the meeting and the final results.

Phil Lucas was not able to attend the work session, but Virginia was well represented.

My observations:

There were many more caves in Virginia and West Virginia than in Pennsylvania that had been surveyed for cave invertebrates. This may be due to two reasons. There are fewer invertebrates in the colder climate, or the scientists who looked for invertebrates concentrated on Virginia and West Virginia. Here is an opportunity for cavers to report what they find to the keeper of the Pennsylvania Cave Database.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the PCC and TNC has enabled this effort by the TNC to go forward. It could result in a large benefit to Pennsylvania Cavers.

At least one of the potential cave areas of Pennsylvania was not included because the Pennsylvania Cave Database does not contain locations for the caves. As the keeper of the database, I had asked for the information many times, but it was never forthcoming. I (or my successor) will keep trying.

Participants

Dan Feller (MD Heritage)
Bill Balfour (Greenbrier Co. WV)
Craig Stihler (WV DNR)
Jim Kennedy (BCI)
Greg Turner (PA Game Commission)
Jim Hart (WPC)
Keith Wheeland (PA Cave Conservancy)
Wil Orndorf (VA DCR-DNH)
Bill Jones (Karstwaters Institute, WV)
Dave Culver (American University)
Phil Lucas (Virginia Speleological Society)
Rick Reynolds (VDGIF)
Mark Anderson (TNC)
Arlene Olivero (TNC)
Ashton Berdine (TNC)
Keith Carson (TNC)
Scott Bearer (TNC)
Brad Kreps (TNC)
Angela Watland (TNC)
Alex Jospe (TNC)

MAR Breakdown
118 Ridge Road
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Mid-Appalachian Region Bulletins [including reprinted Bulletins]

NSS Member Price List

Effective May 2002

1-4	REPRINT VOLUME: Bulletins #1-4		7.00 + postage
5	REPRINT VOLUME: Caves of Western PA	29 caves, 19 maps 76pp	8.00 + postage A
	Armstrong, Clarion, Fayette, Lawrence, Mercer, Somerset, Venango, Westmoreland Counties		
6	REPRINT VOLUME:	93 caves 69 maps/5 large maps 126 pp	12.00 + postage B
	Caves of Southern Cumberland Valley, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin Counties		
7	REPRINT VOLUME: Caves of Fulton Co., PA	4 caves, 4 maps 17pp	5.00 + postage A
8	REPRINT VOLUME: Caves of Blair Co., PA	89 caves, 40 maps 90 pp	7.00 + postage
9	REPRINT VOLUME: Caves of Huntingdon Co., PA	94 caves, 36 maps	10.00 + postage B
10	Caves of Snyder Co., PA	20 caves, 14 maps	5.00 + postage A
11	Caves of Centre Co., PA	71 caves, 56 maps/1 large map	10.00 + postage B
12	Caves of Mifflin Co., PA	47 caves, 31 maps/5 large maps	10.00 + postage B
13	Caves of Perry Co., PA	13 caves, 6 maps	5.00 + postage A
14	REPRINT VOLUME: Caves of Bucks Co., PA	24 caves, 6 maps 43 pp	5.00 + postage A
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19	Caves of Bedford Co., PA	54 caves, 33 maps	7.00 + postage A
20	Caves of Westmoreland Co., PA	337 caves/187 maps/10 large maps	29.50 + 3.00 each

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A \$1.80 postage first copy; \$0.50 each additional to same address.

B \$2.00 postage first copy; \$0.50 each additional to same address.

◆ \$3.00 postage for each bulletin #20

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