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-**
Event notices and MAR Breakdown newsletters are distributed electronically. When you attend a field meet, the email address provided on your registration form is added to the distribution list. You may also add yourself to distribution by going to [http://eepurl.com/P2f5j](http://eepurl.com/P2f5j) and completing a short registration form.

**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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**Chair:** Paul Winter  
PA Furnace, PA 16865  
(412) 849-6824  
pawwinter@gmail.com

**Vice Chair:** Rick Smith  
Lewistown, PA 17044  
(717) 953-4727  
rickbannerville@gmail.com

**Secretary:** John Boswell  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050  
(717) 462-9350  
boswellemail@yahoo.com

**Treasurer:** Bette White  
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Petersburg, PA 16669  
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wbw2@psu.edu

**Editor:** Gretchen “Red” Schock  
81 Appalachian Drive  
Carlisle, PA 17015-8515  
(717) 697-3264  
redcaver@verizon.net

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**2023 Spring MAR**  
**May 5 - 7**  
**Harper’s Memorial Park**  
**Shade Gap, PA**  
**Hosted by Franklin County Grotto**

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- 2023 Upcoming Events  
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Volume 38, Number 1, April 2023
Mid-Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
February 25, 2023
[Held at the Mt. Laurel Church of God in Harrisburg and via Zoom]

Officers Present:
Paul Winter, Chairman
Rick Smith, Vice-Chairman
Bette White, Treasurer
Hope Brooks, Secretary

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by MAR Chair, Paul Winter, at 2:00 PM, February 25, 2023.

Introductory Remarks: Paul Winter welcomed all meeting attendees and thanked them for their attendance at the first ever hybrid Zoom and in-person MAR Business Meeting.

Vice Chairman Report: Nothing to report.

Reading of the Minutes: The minutes from the previous business meeting, held on February 26th, 2022, were shared by Chairman Paul Winter and read by Secretary Hope Brooks. Carol Tiderman moved and Gretchen “Red” Schock seconded the minutes, and the minutes were accepted with minor grammatical changes.

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s Report was read by MAR Treasurer, Elizabeth “Bette” White. There was $13.11 in expenses and $829.52 in income for the year (see report in January 2023 MAR Breakdown issue).

MAR Breakdown: Gretchen “Red” Schock reported that the MAR Breakdown has been published on schedule, and it is available on the MAR Website. If you are not receiving MAR Breakdown via email, please contact one of the MAR officers. Any additional items needed for the April MAR Breakdown issue can be sent to Red by March 20th, 2023.

Internet: Christopher Catherman reported that we have an active Google listserv that we use, and if you are not on the listserv sign up via the MAR website. We are still maintaining our MailChimp listserv. The website is functioning well. If there is any new information to be published on the MAR website or via our listservs, let Christopher know.

The NSS regions, sections, and surveys will be added to the new NSS website in the future. Paul Winter will gently approach.

MAR Bulletins: Many MAR Bulletins were published in the 1960’s and 1970’s (see additional article on page 10). These bulletins have not been updated with new maps, discoveries, and science. Additionally, some caves have been filled in and/or access has been lost. If there are sensitive caves which should not be published publicly, data can be entered into the Pennsylvania Cave Database and flagged for privacy. If anyone is interested in working on updating bulletins, let Will White know. Paul Winter can provide guidance on how to digitally compile bulletins for easier editing in the future.

Paul Winter reports that the Centre County Bulletin #23 is being updated. There are 128 cave entries currently. New GPS locations of caves are being collected and access information updated. The bulletin will be updated with new entrance photos, updated geology, and maps. Karst features may possibly be entered into an appendix of the Centre County Bulletin.

Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC): Mike Scafini reports that Aitken Cave had an increase in bats (from 222 bats in 2022 to 462 bats this winter). Canoe Creek Mine No. 2, a manipulated bat hibernaculum, is now up to 336 bats. In 2015, the PGC opened a second entrance to cool internal temperatures, at which time it only had 7 bats. Woodward Cave is now on par with Canoe Creek (Hartman) Mine as the top hibernaculum in the state, with both having just under 1,000 bats. The PGC continues to treat a few sites with PEG-8000 with very positive results in Sabula Tunnel and Woodward Cave. Some work was done at the Dunbar Mines in Fayette County. The sinkhole entrance to Mine #2 was mostly plugged, and a new cupola gate and concrete vertical entrance was installed. Surveys in Ruth Cave yielded 152 bats, which is much better than last survey. There is a draft Heller springtail report written by Dr. Aaron Katz with the US Army Corps of Engineers. The
Heller springtail was absent both from physical surveys and eDNA surveys. However, a springtail was potentially found at one of the Ganister caves, which would mean it is likely not totally endemic to single site.

**MAKC:** Ryan Maurer reported that the MAKC has changed its scientific permitting protocol. There is a new permit process in the works, and updates on permitting requirements will be shared with the caving community shortly. Rogers Belmont is nearly ready for caver access pending the completion of the entrance culvert. The MAKC has created a Conservation Committee focused on cave restoration and other cave conservation projects. Stay tuned for details on upcoming cave restoration projects.

**White Nose Syndrome:** White Nose Syndrome continues to spread. Though, bat counts in the Mid-Appalachian Region appear to be rebounding slightly.

**New Business:**

**2022 Field Meets:**
- **2022 Spring MAR/VAR Field Meet:** Seven Valleys Grotto and Charlottesville Grotto co-hosted a successful MAR/VAR at Grand Caverns, Grottoes, VA on May 20-22, 2022.
- **2022 Fall Field Meet:** Out of Bounds Grotto hosted a Fall Field Meet at Lincoln Caverns, PA on September 16-18, 2022.

**2023 Field Meets:**
- **2023 Spring MAR Field Meet:** Franklin County Grotto is hosting at Shade Gap, PA May 5-7, 2023.
- **2023 Fall Field Meet:** Still looking for a host!

**Tytoona Cave:** Ann Dunlavy, owner of Lincoln Caverns, is now the NSS Preserve Manager of Tytoona Cave in Huntingdon County, PA.

**Congress of Grottos:** Craig Hindman reported that the Congress of Grottos is calling for all issues that they would like to bring up to the Congress of Grottos at their meeting on Wednesday of the 2023 NSS Convention. This is a direct way of getting grotto or regional issues brought up to the NSS Board.

**Fantasy Cave Survey:** Ryan Maurer reported that Todd and Linda Hancock wanted to report that the previous survey was 3800 feet long. To date, the survey is 3,000 feet long within a fifth of the previous survey’s footprint with many going leads. If anyone is interested in visiting the cave for recreational trips, reach out to Todd and Linda. If anyone is interested in seeing parts of the cave off the tourist trail, surveying is the way to see more of the cave.

**Sarah Furnace Cave Survey:** Bert Ashbrook reported that there have been 118 trips in four years involving 135 individuals. Approximately 100 surveyors were taught to survey in the cave. 6700 survey shots were shot. The cave is 8.6 miles long, and the end of the cave is in sight. There are 100 going leads remaining in the cave. Bert reports that the survey still needs folks to help survey the cave.

**Officers for 2023 Term:** Elections were conducted online and were well received. The four officers elected are: Paul Winter, Rick Smith, John Boswell, Bette White (Treasurer). Due to their success, online elections will be held again for the upcoming 2024 Term.

**Next Meeting:** The next MAR Business Meeting will be on Saturday, February 24, 2024 at 1:30 pm in person and via Zoom.

**Adjourned:** MAR Business Meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm on February 25, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,
Hope Brooks,
Secretary of the Mid-Appalachian Region of the NSS

**Representatives at the MAR meeting:**
- Bald Eagle Grotto
- Baltimore Grotto
- Bucks County Grotto
- Central New Jersey Grotto
- Franklin County Grotto
- Greater Allentown Grotto
- MAKC
- Nittany Grotto
- Philadelphia Grotto
- Pittsburgh Grotto
- Seven Valleys Grotto
- York Grotto
The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm by Vice-President Amos Minchin at the Mt. Laurel Church of God, Harrisburg, PA on Saturday, February 25, 2023.

The following officers were present: President -- Vice President Amos Minchin
Secretary Gretchen Schock Treasurer --

Representation was as follows:
Bald Eagle Grotto JD Lewis Huntingdon Co. Cave Hunters Dean Snyder (proxy)
Baltimore Grotto Carol Tiderman Nittany Grotto Hunters Paul Winter
Bucks County Grotto Steven Warnke Out of Bounds Grotto --
Central New Jersey Grotto Amos Minchin Philadelphia Grotto -- Amos Minchin
Commander Cody Caving Club -- Seven Valleys Grotto Joe Schock
Franklin County Grotto Pat Minnick York Grotto Randy Hurst
Greater Allentown Grotto Dwight Kempf

Secretary Report: The meeting minutes from the September 18, 2022 meeting were accepted as published in the January 2023 MAR Breakdown.

Treasurer Report: Amos Minchin reviewed the PCC account activity since the last meeting (provided below) as prepared by John Boswell.

### Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy

**Financial Summary**

9-19-22 through 2-25-23

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**Ending Balance:** $5,563.48

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* $1.17 Interest credit applied to each 12/31/22.

**COMBINED TOTAL:** $9,026.41
Web Page: no report.

PCC Breakfast: The PCC plans to host a fund raising pancake breakfast Sunday, May 7, 2023 during the 2023 Spring MAR. Contact one of the PCC officers if you are willing to volunteer to help.

PCC Brochure: Dave Briggs has the supply of PCC brochures. Anyone interested in obtaining brochures should contact Dave Briggs.

Mail: Dean Snyder reported that the annual post office box fee has been paid. Recent mail items included a statement from F&M Trust as well as a $50 donation from Central New Jersey Grotto.

Christmas Cards: Kim Kehs assumed the task of sending the PCC Christmas Cards beginning in 2018. Please contact Kim if you know of a landowner you would like added to the PCC Christmas card list.

T-shirts: The PCC t-shirts are available for purchase on the PCC web site for $15, which includes shipping and handling.

PA Cave Database: Paul Winter reported that the PA Cave Database continues to be maintained. They are working towards a more automated way to report updates for the caves/database.

OLD BUSINESS:

Project and Caves of Interest List:

Cold Air Cave (Northampton County) – no report.

NEW BUSINESS:

Penn Aqua Project Work: George Bange requested volunteers for an upcoming work day at the Penn Aqua cave property. Some of the tasks would include leveling work, stone work around the kiosk, clearing dead/fallen trees, general cleaning up around the property, etc. George estimates 6-12 strong volunteers to help would be ideal. The upcoming Earth Day weekend (April 22, 2023) was selected for the work day. Please contact George and Karen Bange directly if you are available to help and willing to volunteer.

Tytoona Preserve Request: Ann Dunlavy has been in contact with PCC President, Dave Briggs, regarding possible PCC assistance with maintenance work at the Tytoona Cave Preserve. Ann gave a presentation during the meeting and highlighted the following items as possible tasks:

- Parking area cleanup/barrel placement
- Painting
- Solution for No Trespassing signs – possible purple paint as a replacement
- Removal of path leading to portions of property that should not be accessed by general public (protected plant species)
- Kiosk work – redo portion that was vandalized
- Brochures for kiosk – brochure holders are currently empty
- Access steps/railing – last step requires attention, caps on posts, rebar needs to be pounded back into the ground
- Graffiti clean-up
- Trail cam installation
- Possible QR code as replacement for brochures
- PCC Conservation Project at the Tytoona Cave Preserve has been scheduled as an activity during the 2023 Spring MAR event. Other future work dates are also possible.

Carnegie Cave Query: Paul Winter stated that he was contacted by an individual voicing concerns about proposed construction/development in the area of Carnegie Cave and the impact on the cave. Franklin County Grotto stated that they were contacted by the same individual and have looked into the matter. FCG reported that the project in question poses no issues for Carnegie Cave.

Thousand Steps of Lebanon County: Steve Warnek announced that he plans to do a cleanup at the Thousand Steps of Lebanon County site around Earth Day this year. He may also coordinate a future
effort with the PCC next year. Anyone interested in lending a hand should contact Steve for more details/information.

Alexander Caverns book: Dean Snyder stated that a new book on Alexander Caverns will be coming out within the next few weeks. Anyone interested in ordering a copy of the book should contact Dean for additional information.

2023 Spring MAR: Franklin County Grotto (FCG) will be hosting the 2023 Spring MAR Field Meet. The event will be held at Harper’s Memorial Park in Shade Gap, PA on May 5-7, 2023. Additional information and registration can be found at https://www.franklincountygrotto.com/fcg-spring-mar-registration/.

2023 NSS Convention: From June 26-30, 2023, the NSS will host the society’s annual convention in Elkins, West Virginia. This week-long event includes extensive presentations across all disciplines related to cave science. Camping for the event will be available at the OTR site. Additional information can be found on the convention website https://www.nss2023.caves.org/.

Elections: A motion was made and seconded to re-elect the current PCC officers to serve another year. The motion passed.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the PCC will be held during the 2023 Spring MAR at Harpers Memorial Park in Shade Gap, PA on May 7, 2023 at 9:30am.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen (Red) Schock, Recording Secretary

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**Host Needed for the 2023 Fall MAR**

As of April 2023 there is no grotto, or individual, slated to host the 2023 Fall MAR Field Meet. If you are interested in hosting this event, a helpful guide to hosting a MAR field meet can be found on the MAR website (https://mar.caves.org/hosting.htm). Think about it - can you or your grotto host the event? If there are no volunteers there will be no field meet. If you’re interested in hosting one of the events, please contact a MAR officer.

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**MAR Anniversary!**

The Mid-Appalachian Region (MAR) of the NSS is celebrating its 70th Anniversary this year (1953-2023). Happy Anniversary!
Overview

The 2023 Spring MAR is scheduled for May 5-7, 2023 at Harper’s Memorial Park in Shade Gap, Pennsylvania, hosted by the Franklin County Grotto. All details are subject to change as more information become available. Check the web site often for updates https://www.franklincountygrotto.com/fcg-spring-mar-registration/

Registration

Pre-registration price is $35 for adults and $15 for children 6-12. Children 5 and under are free. To qualify for the pre-registration price, registrations must be post marked by April 14th, 2023. We cannot guarantee dinner for those who do not make the pre-registration deadline.

On-site registration is $40 for adults and $20 for children 6-12. On-site registration and check-in opens at noon on Friday, May 5th.

Camping

Ample space for tents and vehicles will be available. Bathrooms and showers are also available on site.

A limited number of centrally located RV sites will be available at an extra $25/night charge. These sites are also available (first come, first served) for car or tent campers who wish to pay the additional fee. RV site reservations must be made separately from the Spring MAR event by contacting the Harper’s Memorial Park campground. Contact information will be provided on the event website once the campground opens in April.

Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are BYOB. Please be discreet when drinking and remember the legal drinking age is 21.

Camp Fires

No individual campfires will be permitted in the camping areas. There will be a bonfire centrally located in the event area for all to enjoy!

Dogs

Well-behaved and leashed dogs are welcome! You MUST clean up after your pets. Pets must be kept on a leash and restrained at all times.

Caving

Bring your Vert-gear! – not only will there be a few vertical-trips, but “The Gauntlet” will have an ‘Alpine SRT Ropes Course’ setup for you to test/improve? your vertical-skills (** pending insurance approval**)!

Bring your Wetsuit! – we’ll have up to four wetsuit-cave trips planned!

Bring your Caving-gear! – we’ll have cave trips to suit EVERYONE – from beginner to advanced – and enough trips that everyone will have plenty of choices!

Commercial Caves:

Lincoln Caverns, U.S. Route 22, Huntingdon, PA 16683

Wild Caves:

Led Trips:

Kooker Cave

Penn Aqua Cave – Bring your wetsuit!

Rupert Cave – New Section
Fantasy Cave – Details being worked out now, watch for updates!

Corker Hill Cave – Details being worked out now, watch for updates!

Frustration Pit Cave – Details being worked out now, watch for updates!

Black-Coffey Caverns - (formerly known as Baker Caverns)

Open (Self-led) Cave Trips:
  Rupert – Historic Section
  Tytoona Cave
  Black-Coffey Caverns - (formerly known as Baker Caverns)

** Watch the event website for more cave trip updates!

Other Activities

Don't want to get down and dirty? Don't blame you; there is so much to do above-ground!

  Thousand Steps, along Rt 22 approx. 1.3 miles west of Mount Union, PA
  East Broad Top Railroad, Orbisonia, PA (6 miles from MAR site) ** Discount for MAR attendees**
  Rockhill Trolley Museum, Orbisonia, PA (6 miles from MAR site)
  Gauntlet Ropes Course, test and hone your vertical skills on this elaborate ropes course set up right in the campground! (** pending insurance approval **)

Vendors

- Karst Woodcraft – original wood burned designs and stickers
- Out Standing Stitches – Specializing in custom sewing for outdoor adventure gear – https://sites.google.com/view/outstandingstitches
- Sophi Reaptress – unique caving gear and fashion accessories – www.sophireaptress.com
- MAKC – the Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy – https://www.karst.org/
- Others TBD

Friday, May 5

We will open the weekend on Friday at noon for those who want to come for a long weekend. Caving is on your own on Friday.

Cave Trip Sign-ups

Cave trip sign-ups for Saturday’s organized (led) cave trips will take place Friday evening. Time TBD.

Saturday, May 6

Saturday Organized (Led) Caving Trips include:
  Kooker Cave
  Penn Aqua Cave
  Rupert Cave
  Fantasy Cave
  Corker Hill Cave
  Frustration Pit Cave
  Black-Coffey Caverns

Conservation Project

This MAR will be partnering with the PCC to organize a conservation project at the NSS Tytoona Cave Preserve. Activities will include tidying up the parking area, kiosks and entrance at the Preserve. Additional details coming soon!

Dinner

Dinner will begin at 6:30 so don’t be late! The Saturday evening meal will feature a Shade Gap fire house favorite of bbq chicken, sides, and dessert. A vegetarian option is available upon request on the pre-registration form.

While we will attempt to accommodate all the hungry cavers, only those who pre-register will be guaranteed a meal.

Evening Program – Pavilion II

After dinner, Corey Hackley will regale us with tales and photos of his Caving Adventures!

Door Prizes

After Corey’s presentation, there will be drawings for door prizes at the Pavilion. You must be present at the drawing to win and have your "Door Prize” ticket stub you received at registration.

DJ

DJ Tommy Carpenter will be on site to entertain, spinning tunes into the night.

Sunday, May 7

Breakfast

The Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC) will offer a fundraising breakfast at 8:00 on Sunday morning. Tickets are $5 and the menu includes pancakes hot off the griddle, sausage, coffee, and orange juice.

Meeting

PCC meetings beginning at 9:30 a.m.
On-line pre-registration and payment is available at:
https://www.franklincountygrotto.com/fcg-spring-mar-registration/

**Principal Adult**

Registrant: ____________________________  NSS #: ____________________________

Mailing Address: ____________________________

City: ____________________________  State: ________  Zip: ____________________________

Telephone #: ____________________________  Alternate #: ____________________________

Email Address: ____________________________  Primary Grotto Affiliation: ____________________________

**Additional Attendees:** (from same household)

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**EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME AND PHONE #:**

TOTAL ENCLOSED: ____________________________

* Print this form and mail it with your check or money order payable to “Franklin County Grotto” to:
  FCG, c/o Tom Griffin,
  81 Appalachian Dr,
  Carlisle, PA 17015

* OR complete the online registration and payment at:
  https://www.franklincountygrotto.com/fcg-spring-mar-registration/

** Note: Registration must be postmarked on or before April 14, 2023 to qualify for pre-registration prices. We cannot guarantee dinner for those who do not make the Pre-Registration deadline. On-site registration is $40 per adult and $20 per child (5-12 years old).
The MAR Bulletin became the official documentation for the Pennsylvania Cave Survey with the publication of Bulletin 4 in 1958. Over the succeeding 50 years documentation for the caves of the state appeared mostly as county Bulletins. Their dates of publication are shown on the map. What immediately catches the eye is that most of them are out of date, with most Bulletins appearing in the 1970s and 1980s.

Western Pennsylvania was originally published as MAR Bulletin 5 but was updated for the State General Geology Report 67 in 1976. Since then, Kim Metzgar’s magnum opus on Westmoreland County appeared in 1996 but nothing else. There has been consideration of a new Bulletin on Fayette County but the risk of being locked out by the State Game Commission has dampened the enthusiasm. New mapping in the big Vanport maze caves makes GG67 hopelessly out of date.

The Appalachian valleys and ridges of central Pennsylvania have good initial coverage but also suffer from age. A second edition of Centre County is underway. There is much new information on Huntingdon County which has not, thus far, congealed into a Bulletin. Bulletin 22 on the caves of the Middle Susquehanna Valley, published in 2016, seems to be recent, but is misleading because most of the information was collected in the mid-1990s.

The southern Great Valley is most out of date. Bulletin 6 on Franklin, Cumberland, and Dauphin Counties appeared in 1964 and many caves, particularly in Franklin County have been discovered since the Bulletin. The eastern Great Valley is in better shape but Lebanon and Schuylkill County caves do not appear in any Bulletins.

Southeastern Pennsylvania, particularly York and Lancaster Counties were covered in Jay Reich’s General Geology Report 65, published by the State in 1974 and obviously out of date. A new inhibition to publication has developed. Southeastern caves, especially those near Philadelphia, become urban karst and have undergone a change of status from resource to be conserved to land use hazard and legal liability. To call attention to caves is to invite their destruction.

The MAR’s present policy is to maintain the Bulletins as a formal record but keep them low-key. Bulletin orders require an NSS number. Word does leak out but the Bulletins are certainly not waved around in public.
Upcoming Events

NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue (OCR)  ................................................................. April 21–23, 2023
Elkins Fire Department
Elkins, WV
URL: http://www.er-ncrc.org/

2023 VAR Earth Day Restoration (cleaning out 3-4 sinkholes) .......................... April 22, 2023
Apple Horse Farm
Hot Springs, VA
URL: https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/earth-day-restoration

2023 Spring MAR Field Meet .......................................................... May 5-7, 2023
Harper's Memorial Park (Shade Gap Fire Station)
Shade Gap, PA
Hosted by Franklin County Grotto (FCG)
URL: https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm

2023 Spring VAR Field Meet  .................................................. May 19-21, 2023
Location: Thorn Spring Campground
Franklin, WV
Hosted by Battlefield Area Trogloidyte Society (BATS)
URL: https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/spring-var

Speleofest  ..................................................................... May 26-28, 2023
Lone Star Preserve
Bonnieville, KY
52nd Annual
Hosted by Louisville Grotto
URL: www.louisvillegrotto.org/speleofest-registration/

2023 NSS Convention  ............................................................... June 26–30, 2023
Davis and Elkins College
Elkins, WV
URL: https://nss2023.caves.org/

Old Timers Reunion (OTR) .................................................. Aug. 31 - Sept. 4, 2023
OTR Site/Campgrounds
Dailey, WV (Randolph County)
URL: www.otr.org

CaveFest  .................................................................. Sept. 1-4, 2023
Cavers Paradise
Sewanee, TN
Hosted by Sewanee Mt Grotto
URL: https://smg.caves.org/cavefest.html

2023 Fall MAR Field Meet  .................................................. Fall 2023
Location: TBD
Hosted TBD
URL: https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm

2023 Fall VAR Field Meet  .................................................. Fall 2023
Location: TBD
Hosted TBD
URL: https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/fall-var

2023 Bridge Day  ................................................................. October 21, 2023
New River Gorge Bridge
Fayetteville, WV
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2024 MAR Annual Business Meeting  ............................................ February 24, 2024
Mt. Laurel Church of God
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**Effective October 2018**

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