



# BREAKDOWN

Volume 40, Number 2, August 2025

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> 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.

## MAR Mailing Address-

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# *Fall MAR Field Meet 2025*

*Hosted by Nittany Grotto*



## **Ye Old MAR Field Meet 2025**

Sep

26

Sep 26 at 5:00 PM

to Sep 28 at 12:00 PM



**7703 William Penn Hwy**

Huntingdon, PA 16652, USA

Here ye here ye! Please join us for a renaissance-style celebration of all things subterranean, held in the forests above Lincoln Caverns.

Gather round the bonfire, explore some local caves, and fraternize with our merry band of cavers!

Doan's Bones will provide their on-site pizza oven and bbq Saturday night.

Pre-registration continues until 10 days before the event and then the price increases.

## ***Additional Information for 2025 Fall MAR at Lincoln Caverns:***

### ***Costs:***

***\$30 for adults (\$35 Onsite Registration) – You must preregister to ensure you get the Saturday evening meal!***

***\$15 for children***

***6 and under free!***

***Pre-registration continues until 10 days before the event and then the price increases.***

### ***Registration Link:***

***<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/ye-old-mar-field-meet--2025-2>***

### ***Theme is Ren Faire!***

***Costumes encouraged! but not required. Think Ren Faire, Medieval, camping in the forest.***

***There will be Friday blacklight tours of Lincoln Caverns and discounted commercial tours into Lincoln and Whisper Rocks.***

***Saturday will also have led cave trips to local wild caves.***

### ***Camping:***

***There is a massive campground, so plenty of room. This is primitive camping, so there are no shower facilities, no running water, no electricity. Be prepared to pack in everything you may need for the weekend.***

### ***Food:***

***Saturday Dinner*** is catered by Doan's Bones including their wood fired pizza oven!

***Sunday Breakfast:*** PCC will be hosting their breakfast fundraiser Sunday morning - for \$5 you get a warm breakfast of pancakes, sausage, and orange juice/coffee.

### ***Any questions?***

***Feel free to email Paul Winter (pawwinter@gmail.com)!***



# *Earth Day Cleanup – Alexander Caverns*

*By Karen Bange*

Rick Smith, of Bald Eagle Grotto, coordinated an Earth Day Cleanup at Alexander Caverns. The cleanup occurred on Saturday April 26th and was well attended by members of the Mid Appalachian Region and the Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy. The meet-up time was early, 8:30 am, so many cavers were on the road by 7 am. The turnout was impressive as the weather was dismal - pouring rain. At least it wasn't a cold rain. By 8:45 the 20 plus participants had arrived at the appointed truck stop in Milroy. The convoy of cavers then headed out from the truck stop to the cave.

A local landscape business, Wrays Landscaping, brought a trailer out to the cave. The trailer was used to collect the trash brought out from the sinkhole. Wrays Landscaping donated the trailer and hauling of the trash. Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy covered the cost of the disposal. Once the group was at the cleanup site, garbage bags were handed out, people donned heavy work gloves and got to work. Getting down into the sinkhole was a bit treacherous with the slick conditions. The first big item to be hauled out of the sinkhole was a chest freezer. Fortunately, Jesse Young's Jeep was outfitted with a winch. Boy, did that come in handy! The winch hauled the freezer up lickety-split!



*Hauling large items out of the sink hole using Jesse's Jeep and winch  
(photo by Karen Bange)*



*Floating the corrugated pipe upstream to the haul location (photo by Karen Bange)*

The next big item to be hauled out of the sink hole was a 15-foot-long corrugated pipe. First the pipe had to be removed from the insurgence. Then the pipe was floated down Honey Creek to an area that the pipe could be hauled up out of the sinkhole. Again, Jesse's winch came to the rescue and the pipe was up the steep 20-foot bank to the road quickly. Once cleared of the embankment, the pipe was attached to the back of Jesse's Jeep and hauled back to the trash pickup area. The landowner has plans to reuse the pipe.

As all this was going on, others canvased the sinkhole picking up trash that was scattered along the road and down the embankment. The final haul in the trailer was four tires, twelve bags of trash and the corrugated pipe.

The great accomplishment of the sinkhole cleanup was celebrated with complimentary pizza from Joe's OIP in Lewistown. Everyone enjoyed the well-earned pizza lunch. Thanks to Rick for coordinating such a successful cleanup. And a BIG thanks to all those who showed up on a rainy Saturday. Ironically, as the group was cleaning up the parking area after lunch, the rain stopped.



# Alexander Cavern Writeup

By Rick Smith

*(Editor's note: this is same cleanup event as the previous article, but from a different perspective. Also, another excellent example of a cave conservation report!)*

Date: April 26, 2025

Time: 8:30am - 11:30am

General Attendance: Over 20 people

The day started out very wet with showers expected to remain throughout the morning. Everyone met up at the Rutters in Milroy at 8:30am. We had many people from Franklin, Greater Allentown, 7 Valleys, York and Bald Eagle Grottos and also many representatives from MAR and PCC.

After everyone set up at Rutters, we all headed out to the site and parked along the road. Many people came prepared for the weather and three canopies were set up along the road, close to the sinkhole location.



Hauling the culvert pipe up the steep slope using Jesse's winch (photo by Karen Bange)

Water was stationed at each canopy along with tools and gloves. Garbage bags were handed out and everyone got to work and started to collect garbage.

Wrays Landscaping arrived right on schedule at 9a with their 2-ton trailer. The person who delivered the truck also stayed to help and was amazed at the number of people who showed up.



Hauling the pipe away (photo by Karen Bange)

Ryan Maurer assisted with setting up rigging for rope to help people not only get down into the sink but to also haul up garbage. Jesse Young assisted by setting up his Jeep with its winch and we were able to connect the ropes that Ryan had set up.

With the rigging setup and the winch in

working order, the hard work of hauling garbage commenced. Four tires were hauled out initially along with a chest freezer and a portion of a child plastic bed or possible toy chest. Bags of garbage flowed next with over 12 bags being passed up to the top of the sink.

At the top of the sink, more bags of garbage were collected and a half-decomposed couch was also loaded into the trailer.

During the cleanup, and with the permission of the Hostetler family, a couple of cavers went to the mouth of the cave and retrieved tires from the creek. At least 4 tires were pulled from the creek and 4 more were located within the brush around the banks of the creek. It was then decided that due to the largeness of the tires we would leave them out of the watering and retrieve them at a later date.

Another group decided they would try to get a corrugated pipe out of the water that was deep in the mud. Many people got in the water and managed to wiggle the pipe out

and then also took the time to float it down the stream and clean the mud out of it. Jesse then used his Jeep winch to haul out the pipe from the water.

Once the pipe was placed for Henry, Hope arrived with pizza and soda from Joe's Original Italian Pizza. Everyone feasted and only about half a pizza was leftover which was scooped up and taken by less than hungry cavers.



Enjoying pizza with fellow cavers after a job well done! (photo by Karen Bange)

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### ***Tell the NSS about your Cave Conservation Efforts!***

Tom Griffin is serving as the MAR point of contact to collect cave conservation reports for the NSS Cave Conservation Committee Chair. Tom encourages all grottos and cavers in the MAR region to report cave conservation efforts to him ([caver182@gmail.com](mailto:caver182@gmail.com)) for inclusion in the annual MAR conservation report to the NSS. Tom is collecting data on any conservation activity that any individual or group takes part in throughout the year. Some examples include trash/graffiti cleanup in or around caves, cave gate installation/repair, constructing fence for landowner, providing karst education at events, leading scouts or school groups on field trips, etc. Don't be shy! Tell the NSS about your good cave deeds!

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### ***Host Needed for the 2026 Fall MAR***

As of August 2025 there is no grotto, or individual, slated to host the 2026 Fall MAR Field Meet. If you are interested in hosting an 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 an event? If there are no volunteers there will be no field meet. If you're interested in hosting an event, please contact a MAR officer.



## *Upcoming Events*

<b>Old Timers Reunion (OTR)</b> .....	Aug. 28 - Sept. 1, 2025
OTR Site/Campgrounds Dailey, WV (Randolph County) URL: <a href="http://www.otr.org">www.otr.org</a>	
<b>2025 Fall MAR Field Meet</b> .....	September 26-28, 2025
Location: Lincoln Caverns and Whisper Rocks Hosted by Nittany Grotto URL: <a href="https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm">https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm</a>	
<b>Cave Fest</b> .....	October 10-12, 2025
Location: The Caverns Pelham, TN (Grundy County) Hosted By: Sewanee Mountain Grotto 4th Annual URL: <a href="https://www.thecaverns.com/">https://www.thecaverns.com/</a>	
<b>2025 Fall VAR Field Meet</b> .....	October 17-19, 2025
Location: RASS Field Station Millboro, VA (Bath County) Hosted By: VAR URL: <a href="https://var.caves.org">https://var.caves.org</a>	
<b>2025 Bridge Day</b> .....	October 18, 2025
New River Gorge Bridge Fayetteville, WV URL: <a href="http://www.officialbridgeday.com">www.officialbridgeday.com</a> -or- <a href="https://www.nps.gov/neri/">https://www.nps.gov/neri/</a>	
<b>2026 MAR Annual Business Meeting</b> .....	February 28, 2026
Mt. Laurel Church of God 1295 Piketown Road, Linglestown, PA URL: <a href="https://mar.caves.org/busnmtg.htm">https://mar.caves.org/busnmtg.htm</a>	
<b>2026 Spring MAR Field Meet</b> .....	Spring 2026
Location: TBD Hosted by Bald Eagle Grotto (BEG) URL: <a href="https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm">https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm</a>	
<b>2026 Spring VAR Field Meet</b> .....	Spring 2026
Location: TBD Hosted by TBD URL: <a href="https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/spring-var">https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/spring-var</a>	
<b>2026 NSS Convention</b> .....	July 6-10, 2026
<i>Hundreds of Caves, Hundreds of Miles</i> Harrison County Fairgrounds Corydon, Indiana (Harrison County) 83rd Anniversary <a href="https://caves.org/convention/">https://caves.org/convention/</a>	
<b>Old Timers Reunion (OTR)</b> .....	Sept 3-7, 2026
Lone Star Preserve Bonnieville, KY Hosted by Louisville Grotto URL: <a href="http://www.louisvillegrotto.org/speleofest-registration/">www.louisvillegrotto.org/speleofest-registration/</a>	

# NSS MEMBER PRICE LIST

Effective October 2018

## MID-APPALACHIAN REGION BULLETINS (including reprinted Bulletins)

1-4	Bulletins Caves of Shippensburg Area #1-4	<b>REPRINT</b>	7.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
5	Caves of Western PA:	<b>REPRINT</b> 29 caves, 19 maps	8.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
6	Caves of S. Cumberland Valley	<b>REPRINT</b> 93 caves 69 maps+6 large maps	17.00 + postage	<b>B</b>
7	Caves of Fulton Co., PA	<b>Revised/Corrected</b> 4 caves, 4 maps	5.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
8	Caves of Blair Co., PA	<b>REPRINT</b> 89 caves, 40 maps	7.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
9	Caves of Huntingdon Co., PA	<b>REPRINT</b> 94 caves, 36 maps	10.00 + postage	<b>B</b>
10	Caves of Snyder Co., PA	20 caves, 14 maps	6.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
11	Caves of Centre Co., PA	71 caves, 56 maps+1 large map	10.00 + postage	<b>B</b>
12	Caves of Mifflin Co., PA	47 caves, 31 maps+5 large maps	10.00 + postage	<b>B</b>
13	Caves of Perry Co., PA	13 caves, 6 maps	10.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
14	Caves of Bucks Co., PA	<b>REPRINT</b> 24 caves, 6 maps	5.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
15	Caves of Lehigh Co., PA	<b>REPRINT</b> 25 caves, 13 maps	6.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
16	Caves of Northampton Co., PA	24 caves, 13 maps+1 large map	6.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
17	Caves of Northumberland Co., PA	20 caves, 10 maps	5.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
18	Caves of Berks Co., PA	64 caves, 32 maps	10.00 + postage	<b>B</b>
19	Caves of Bedford Co., PA	54 caves, 33 maps	7.00 + postage	<b>A</b>
20	Caves of Westmoreland Co., PA	337 caves, 187 maps/10 large maps	29.50 + postage	<b>C</b>
21	Karst of Sinking Valley and Kookan Cave Huntingdon and Blair Counties	103 pages with <b>color photos</b> , 4 fold-out maps, 2 large maps	27.50 + postage	<b>B</b>
22	Caves of Middle Susquehanna Valley	140 pages with <b>color photos</b>	16.00 + postage	<b>D</b>

U.S. Postage:

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

**B** \$2.50 postage first copy; \$0.50 each additional to same address.

**C** \$3.00 postage for each bulletin #20.

**D** \$3.50 postage for each bulletin #22

**MAR Bulletin Orders: Please make checks payable to MAR**

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**NOTE:** All checks must be payable in U.S. dollars on U.S. bank or U.S. money order

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\*\*\* New MAR Bulletin Order Coordinator - **Olivia McAllister**, NSS 69461 \*\*\*

Info on ordering is available at <https://mar.caves.org/bulletins.htm>

Send bulletin orders to: MAR Bulletins  
% Olivia McAllister  
1208 W Pine Grove Road  
Penn. Furnace, PA 16865