

Madison University
Student Grotto
Quarterly Journal



a
dedication
to
Bob Carts

January, 1982
volume 1, number 4.

STATEMENT OF THE GROTTO ADDRESS

A new year of caving and rock-climbing, fellowship, and socializing and the third one of these damn things I've written since being elected Chairman in the winter of 1981!

Things are looking up for our club. We now have more than 40 people regularly attending meetings (parties!) and most of them are active cavers. New officers were elected with lots of new ideas and the Executive Board held it's first meeting (2 hrs long!). Meetings are being held on campus now and soon we will be recognized by JMU (we hope).

Some exploration and mapping projects will swing into full scale this semester, most notably Roppel and Better Forgotten. Rock-climbing will take off like a bat out of hell this spring with many new climbers testing their muscles and balance. Many hard-core, long trips will be taken also. Simmons-Mingo may see action. Also, some intense safety and training and conservation will be began.

If you're interested, get in on these activities and our grotto. It's gonna be a great year.

- Mike Artz, Chairman 1982-83
MUSG #10

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CALENDER OF EVENTS

- February 6: CRCN Hypothermia Presentation at UVA
20: VA TECH CLUB TRIP - All weekend
28: Sunday afternoon vertical training at Hone Quarry
- March 6-13: either Roppel, Kentucky or Seneca Rocks, Virginia
- April 6: Equipment Sale- Caving Club and Outing Club
17,24(?) Butler Cave Expedition, Spring Fling, Spring VAR
No definite dates yet?

A DEDICATION TO BOB CARTS

Being the editor of this journal I pretty much have the freedom to do what I want and I feel that dedicating something to someone while they're still around makes good sense. So, therefore I want to dedicate this Journal to Bob. He has been a friend for what seems like years and has taught me a lot about caving and rock-climbing. How can you thank someone for all the good times and knowledge they have given you?

I had the pleasure of knowing the Outing Club before Bob changed everything. They were boring! They didn't have the time or enthusiasm to go caving in the style I liked. It was to be 2 years before I had another contact with them. By this time, Bob had literally taken over. There was a caving club around now that did a lot of caving and I liked that.

When I met Bob I felt he had a sinister and somewhat devious personality. But after one cave trip and a few parties, I began to like this asshole. Eventually he took me in my first vertical cave--Hell Hole. I still remember telling Jaime at the bottom of the drop, "This is my first vertical cave." Hell, Jaime thought I knew what I was doing! So did Bob. He thought I was the coolest dude because I had a set of ascenders,

Bob took me to my first VAR that fall and I'll never forget the memories of that trip. Simmons-Mingo was an epic adventure and there were also some memorable trips to VPI and some outstanding climbing at Seneca.

The meetings were run pretty loosely back then. 10 minutes of meeting, then 3 hours of partying! Hell, just today, the Executive Board met for 2 hours! Bob never had visions that the club would be this big. Back then, at the beginning, there were about 8 people, last year about 15-20, and this year 40-50. Bob has always had one motto for this club--Never forget caving! But, it won't be the same without him. We miss you Bob!

P.S. He might be back?, for his masters, cant we get rid of him?

--Mike Artz
MUSG #10

OFFICIAL TRIP REPORT - HELSLEY'S CAVE

(to be read in your best Joe Friday [Dragnet] voice)

The City. Harrisonburg. In the heart of the Shenandoah valley, a valley literally filled with caves--caves representing potential for fun, beauty, adventure--and danger. One such cave is Helsley's Cave. Our mission was to explore it. My partners were Patti Barnes, Mike Balenger, Kelley Price, Stephanie Swanner, and Matt Theado. My name's Beard; I'm a caver.

3pm. Tuesday, Jan. 12, 1982 ... Our ETD (Estimated Time of Departure) ... Everyone is supposed to be at Wilson Parking Lot. They aren't. I know that, because I'm not there. I'm at my place of residence, getting ready.

3:15pm. I receive a phone call from Caver Price. Everyone is there but me. They'll pick me up.

3:25pm. Caver Balenger reaches my place of residence.

3:26pm. I enter Caver Balenger's vehicle. With him are Cavers Barnes, Swanner, and Theado. We speed to Chairman Artz's place of residence to acquire extra equipment necessary for the safe and successful completion of our mission and go to Z-lot to rendezvous with the second vehicle, driven by Caver Barry and carrying Cavers Liddle, Price, and Deland.

3:35pm. We arrive at the rendezvous point. The second vehicle has not arrived. Morale is high.

3:45pm. The second vehicle has still not arrived. Morale is still high.

3:55pm. The second vehicle has still not arrived. Morale is low.

4:01pm. We leave the rendezvous point, looking for the mysteriously missing second vehicle.

4:03pm. We spot Caver Price outside of the WCC--on foot. We hail her.

4:04pm. We interrogate Caver Price. The second vehicle has malfunctioned, causing its passengers to abort the mission. We will have to continue on with just one vehicle. The eager and exemplary Caver Price offers to join us despite her knowledge that it will make the car trip less comfortable for all of us. We are moved by her sense of duty.

4:10pm. We leave Harrisonburg, meticulously and faithfully following the map provided by our brave and fearless leader, Cave Commander Artz.

4:43pm. We arrive at Pleasant View Cave (Hensley's) and examine the entrance, a tight squeeze chimney of indeterminate length. Caver Balenger, calling upon his vast reservoirs of knowledge and experience, assures us that it is only 20 feet deep.

4:50pm. We reboard the Balenger vehicle and follow the map to Hensley's. We should be within ten minutes of the cave. Morale is high.

5:50pm. We are no longer following Cave Commander Artz's map. We have not found Hensley's, Conicsville, or the Superette. We have however, found every cow and crossroads other than Conicsville (and Conicsville cows) within an eight-mile radius of Mt. Jackson. Morale is low. There is even mutinous talk of assassinating Cave Commander Artz.

5:51pm. Caver Price, sensing the potential danger of the increasingly volatile conversation, suggests a P-180 (a 180° turn for the purpose of procuring pizza.).

5:52pm. We abort the mission, return to Harrisonburg.

Later. We arrive at Luigi's.

Still Later. We eat pizza. Morale is again high.

(Remember your Friday voice) Our mission was a failure. But on Saturday, January 16, 1981, a group of seven Cavers (Cavers Barnes, Balenger, Beard, Deland, Kline, Price, and Sherfy and one civilian (Paul Wilder) successfully found and explored Hensley's Cave. The success of this later venture is largely accountable to the fact that Caver Kline had already been to Hensley's and did not have a map drawn by Cave Commander Artz.

The preceding incident is true. Since noone in the Cave Club is innocent, I didn't bother to change any names. 10-4!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Cavers Barry, Liddle, Deland, and Hall plus Cave Commander Artz had a secret mission of their own to accomplish and this is the reason Caver Barry's car malfunctioned. Their mission was to invade Massanutten Ski Resort and secure the slopes for a future mission on Monday, Jan. 18, 1982 where 22 Cave Club Stormtroopers were trained for trips to Thorn Mountain Cave (They slid down the mountain on their butts all night).

- Bruce Beard, MUSG #18

CAVE RESCUE: WHATTA DRAG

On Sunday, January 24, 1982, I had the dubious distinction of organizing and leading a Cave Rescue. I hope I never have to do it again. The rescue was not, frankly, very dramatic. No one did anything extremely heroic and no one was injured or killed. On the other hand, the rescue was probably the most significant event in MUSG history since its inception. It was a sobering experience and can and should be a valuable lesson for all of us. For your own sakes, I hope each of you will read on carefully.

Saturday, January 23, at 7:30 p.m., Dave Deland, Kris Kline, Kelley Price, and Susan Shaw left for a combined camping/caving trip at Just Cave near Valley Head, West Virginia. They camped out at the pull-off by the entrance and entered the cave (a 40-foot drop through a three-foot wide crevice) at 11 a.m. Sunday morning. They had one rope and one set of prussik gear between them. The entrance was covered with ice and dripping water. They rapped in.

Five hours later, they returned to the entrance to find the rope soaking wet and starting to ice over. Kris and Susan managed to prussik up, but by the time Dave tried it, the prussik knots would no longer grip the icy rope. Dave tried to climb out (on belay), but the walls were wet and icy and Dave is an inexperienced climber. He couldn't make it. Kelley, a more experienced climber, thought she could make it, but did not even try, electing to wait with Dave. Meanwhile, Kris and Susan, wet after climbing up through the dripping crack, were getting cold. They decided they needed help.

Returning to the car, they collected warm, dry clothes, sleeping bags, and food and passed them down to Dave and Kelley. Then they changed into warm, dry clothing themselves and drove to a nearby house. They tried to call the CRCN, then Mike, then me.

At 5:40 pm., I got a collect call at my house. From Kris

Kris: We have two people stuck in Just Cave.

Bruce: Who?

K: Dave and Kelley.

B: Stuck or lost?

K: Neither. They are at the base on the entrance drop and they can't get out because the rope is iced over.

B: Do they have all your warm, dry clothes, food, sleeping bags, and enough light? Are they back away from the entrance, where it is warmer?

K: Yes.

B: How'd you and Susan get out?

K: Before the rope was totally iced over.

B: O.K. Look, I'm not sure I'll be able to get someone who's been to the cave before need directions.

K: (gives me directions to the Ashland gas station in nearby Valley Head, W.V. and proposes to meet me there).

B: O.K. I'll see who I can get and organize things from this end.
You go back and tell Kelley and Dave what is going on, then drive to the gas station and call me from there. I'll know what's going on by then.
K: O.K. but it will take me about 45 minutes to get there. Call my mother and tell her I'll be late.
B: Yeah. O.K.

We hang up. I stop to think for a second. I need: a) a car; b) a rope; and c) a Gibb's ascending rig. I start making phone calls. First I call Kris' mother. Then I call Mike and Paul, Bob-Bob, Gary, Blaise, Eddie, Mike Balenger, Patti, Meredith, Brooks, and Cindy. Cindy is the only one home. She has no rope, no vertical gear and no idea of where to find these things other than with people I've already called. I don't have Jaime's number. On a long shot, I call Katy. Jerry is there, and he is just leaving for a party Jaime is at. I explain the situation to him and he promises to have Jaime call me. It is now 6 p.m.

6:06pm. Jaime calls. He has a car and vertical gear, but no rope. He is on his way over. Progress at last. Jaime is calm and vertically trained. Just the man I want. But I still need a rope. More phone calls.

6:17pm. I reach Paul Clifford at home. He has a rope. I fill him in on the details and promise to call him back.

6:18pm. Jaime arrives. We discuss plans. We will need to go to Staunton to get Jaime's gear, but it is pretty much on the way anyway. We try and think of ways Kris can handle it from his end. For example, why can't he pull up the rope, thaw it out with his van's heater, and lower it down again? He probably just didn't think of it. I decide to suggest it to him when he calls at 6:30.

6:23pm. Jaime leaves for Paul's to pick up the rope. I sit by the phone.

6:55pm. Kris still hasn't called. I call Paul. Jaime is on his way back.

7:00pm. Jaime gets here after stopping to fill the gas tank. Still waiting for a call, I make a list of instructions for Lynn Zacharias (who is visiting and volunteers to man the phone) to give to Kris, I also give her Paul's phone number.

7:15pm. Jaime and I leave for Jaime's. Jaime and Paul had both suggested we recruit a third person for the rescue, but at this point I was afraid Kris and Susan were crunched or stuck and we would have to all drive home in Jaime's compact car. Six seemed like enough, over the mountains. Nor did I want to lose any more time. (In retrospect, however, I now think I was wrong. I should

have recruited a third person while waiting for Jaime to get back. We might have needed him, and, if necessary, we could have spent the night in a motel in Elkins.)

7:50pm. We arrive at Jaime's. We get his vettical gear, cave gear, food, drink and extra warm, dry clothing. We call Paul and Lynn, but Kris and Susan still haven't checked in. They are now one hour and twenty minutes overdue. Paul and I try not to sound worried.

8:05pm. We leave Jaime's. On icy, mountain roads, we aren't making good time. But we don't try to hurry. If we have an accident, there will be two (or perhaps three, depending on where Kris and Susan are) groups of people to rescue and Dave and Kelley will be even longer in Just Cave.

9:00pm. We arrive at Monterrey, VA. We call Paul. Still no word. They are now two and a half hours late calling. I tell Paul I'll call again at Valley Head and we leave again. (It was around this time that Paul first notified CRCN and told them we might need them later--a good idea.)

10:50pm. We arrive at Valley Head. Kris and Susan are there waiting for us. They didn't call because they forgot they were suppose to. Jaime and I can't call because there is no outside phone. There hasn't been one since Monterrey. But there is nothing we can do about it. We drive to the cave. Because of road conditions, we have to take a longer than normal route.

11:35pm. We arrive at the cave parking lot, walk to the cave, and call down to Dave and Kelley. They are OK, but bored. We rig the drop. Kris says he feels fine and wants to go down. Jaime and I don't want to, so we let him. One of us has to, because Kelley and Dave don't know how to rig an ascending system. We remind Kris how to do it.

12:00am. Kris rappels back down. It takes two hours for the three of them to get back out. Dave comes first, but Kris (despite directions from Jaime and I) forgets to tie a chest harness on him, so he wastes time and energy holding himself to the rope and has trouble negotiating the lip because he fears he may flip upside down. I have to help him over the lip.

Then Jaime and I untie his gear (he is too tired and his hands are too wet) and Jaime walks Dave and Susan (who is acting a bit strange and may, we fear, be getting hypothermic) back to Jaime's car to heat up (Kris' heater works inadequately. Whether or not it is strong enough to heat the interior to 33°F, warm enough to dethaw a rope, is still a subject of debate between us). I lower the gear back down to Kris and tell him to make damn certain Kelley gets a chest/harness.

She does, but one of her foot Gibbs is attached improperly and comes off when she is part way up the drop. Her light is out, so she has to finish on one foot. She takes even longer than Dave and I have to practically drag her over the lip. Jaime and I take her gear off and I walk her to the car, leaving her with the other two to change clothes and warm up.

I haul the gear from below and then Kris comes up. He walks back and Jaime and I carry the gear back to the car. It is now 2 a.m. (About this time, Paul updated CRCN on our lack of communication and they started getting ready--just in case.)
2:20am. With everyone in warm clothes, Kelley, Jaime and I drive back in Jaime's car, followed by Kris, Dave and Susan in the van.
4:25am. We arrive at Monterey and call Paul. It is the first time he has heard from us in over seven hours. Relieved, he calls CRCN, who was just about to come after us, and Gretchen, Katy, and Mrs. Kline so that they can stop worrying.
5:30am. We arrive at Jaime's.
6:20am. Kris drops me, the last one, off at my house, twelve hours and forty minutes after he first called me.

These are the facts. But what can we learn from them? How can we be certain future rescue operations are conducted more efficiently? Better yet, how can we prevent our ever needing to run another rescue operation?

First of all I think we should analyze this weekend's rescue. What was done correctly? What was done incorrectly? What could have been done better? When we need to develop a set of guidelines to help us in the future. If, in the course of this discussion, I seem to be picking on the party involved, I'm sorry about that. I mean to use them only as an example. The Cave Club has been slack about safety and training this year. Kris, Kelley, Dave and Susan just happened to be the people it caught up with. But it could just as easily have been someone else. And it could have been much worse. It's like Russian Roulette. Chances are, you won't blow your head off; but if enough people play it often enough, eventually somebody ends up with their brains on the floor.

First of all, the party involved was not properly equipped. They had only one rope and only one set of prussik gear for the four of them. Ideally, each member would have his or her own Gibb's system. As a minimum, they should have had three prussik systems and one set of Gibbs. An extra rope would have been a bit elaborate, but, if one was available, they would have been correct to take it.

Secondly, the party was inadequately trained. Kris had been on vertical trips but had never led one. He did not know how to use a chest harness when ascending. Susan and Kelley had been vertically caving before, but Kelley had never used prussiks and Dave had never been vertically caving or trained.

In addition to this, weather and cave conditions were poor. They should have aborted when they saw the entrance. Ice, snow and winter made the area around the pit slippery and huge blocks of ice hung above and part way into the crevice. Had one of these ice blocks broken off, it could have crushed a caver or cut through the rope. One large block did fall while they were in the cave; fortunately, no one was under it. Instead, the dripping

and then refreezing iced over the rope. Fortunately Kris and Susan were able to get out before the rope became climbable. If the rope had iced over more quickly, and all four of them had been trapped in the cave, it is doubtful a rescue operation would have been started until morning. Instead of Kelley and Dave spending seven hours waiting in warm, dry clothing with sleeping bags and food, all four of them might have spent twenty to thirty hours waiting in wet clothes. If that had been the case, we would probably have needed to haul them out with a pulley. (Worse yet, if one of them had been injured during the trip and then they found out they were stuck, the injured person could easily have died of exposure).

Which brings us to a last point, they had not set a specific check-in time, after which, if we had not heard from them, we would know to look for them.

At any rate, they had no business being in the cave in the first place. But what about their actions once half of them were out of the cave and they realized their predicament?

They were correct to leave Kelley in the cave with Dave, for psychological reasons. They could keep one another warm, comfort one another, and, if necessary, take care of one another. They were correct to drop in lots of warm, dry clothes, sleeping bags and food. If they'd had a stove, that would have gone in too. Kelley and Dave needed to be kept as warm and comfortable as possible. For that reason, they were correct to retreat deeper into the cave, where there was more warmth and less wind.

They were also correct to call me and to report back to Dave and Kelley the results of our conversation. But they made a serious mistake when they didn't call back. Even if I hadn't suggested it, they should have called back. With three way communication between JMU (Paul), the rescuers (Jaime and I) and Kris, ideas could have been passed back and forth, time schedules set up and amended and problems dealt with more efficiently. If no public phone was available, then they should have paid or promised money to get access to a private phone.

Jaime and I were correct to keep in touch with Paul (until it became impossible) and correct to drive carefully despite losing time. Once we reached the cave, however, we made a mistake letting Kris go back down. He claimed to be all right but he was physically and mentally below par and he had only a limited knowledge of Gibbs ascending systems. A member of the rescue team will invariably be in better shape than someone in the original party and should be sent down to supervise the rigging and derigging. Had Jaime or I gone down, we would not have had the problem with the chest harness and poorly-tied Gibbs.

It is unfortunate that we could not find a phone between Monterey and Just Cave, but there was nothing we could do about it. However, Paul was correct to call CROW when we failed to check back in after a number of hours. Indeed, I think Paul handled himself perfectly throughout the incident. And he really had the toughest job, psychologically. Jaime and I were in action; Paul

had to sit and wait. I'd like to thank him, Lynn Zacharias, Jerry, and especially Jaime, for their help in the rescue operation.

Well, what have we gained from this? Jaime, Paul and I now have rescue experience, but I sincerely hope we never have to use it. It is sort of like being a doctor--an ounce of prevention and all that. What we need to do, to avoid incidents like and more serious than this one (which, in the end, only cost us the relatively cheap money and sleep), is to set up and abide by a set of safety guidelines.

I'm not suggesting we all stop caving in winter, only vertical cave after six months of training, or take a doctor on every trip; but we certainly need to take more precautions than we have.

First of all, we need to reestablish last year's policy of having member's sign-out each time they leave on a trip (caving, climbing or whatever). Club members should know who is going on the trip, where they are going, and when they anticipate getting back. They should sign back in when they return. That way, if a group doesn't return, we'll know who to be looking for and where to look for them.

Obviously, we can't afford to be organizing rescue expeditions every time someone is five minutes late, but if parties give themselves scheduling leeway and call in when they know they are running late, we can make it work.

Secondly, we should have an inventory of rescue and vertical equipment available on campus. We should know what is in use each weekend and what is available if we need to mount a rescue operation.

In addition to needing to know where to get hold of equipment, we need to know where to get hold of people. Experienced cavers who are remaining on campus for a weekend should try and leave phone numbers of the places they can best be reached at. Not necessarily every experienced caver, every weekend, but at least two or three. I was just barely able to get one set of vertical gear, one rope, and two experienced cavers. Most of the vertical cave gear and vertical cavers were on the trip to Sites. At least one set of gear and one rope should always be left on campus for emergency use.

Finally, no one should go on a trip they haven't been properly trained or are inadequately equipped for. If you want to go on vertical trips, get vertically trained. And take along a vertical rig you are familiar with. You should be capable of rigging yourself in in the dark. (Vertical trips with just one vertically experienced caver are stupid. If he gets hurt, then what? And passing one set of gear up and down the line is equally cretinous. If some one gets stuck or hurt on the rope, no one can get to him.) If you want to go on very long, very wet, or very hard trips, work up to them gradually and make sure you have the gear you need or might need, including a first aid kit.

If you go on a trip and run into something you didn't expect and weren't prepared for, abort the trip. Better you should waste your own weekend than that of half the Cave Club.

There is no reason why we can't continue to cave and have fun doing it. But we owe it to both ourselves and those who care for us to make our trips as safe as possible. All we need to do is take a few basic precautions. From now on, when you go caving, hope for the best, but be prepared for the worst.

Bruce Beard

MUSG #18

AN INTRODUCTION TO JMU CAVING MYTHOLOGY: THE HEROES AND GODS

There is some dispute among scholars as to the origins of Madison caving gods and the legends that surround them. Some scholars say that the legends are true and that these gods walk among us. Others hold that the gods do not exist at all, but are just a myth started by primitive JMU cavers who were attempting to give shape and meaning to the phenomena that surrounded them. A third school believes that the gods were actual men, whose deeds and exploits have slowly been exaggerated over the years until they attained their present mythic proportions. The controversy rages on.

By the time I joined the Cave Club (a year ago), the legends were already well-established. I am now well-acquainted with most of them. But some of you new-comers may be unfamiliar with the gods or confused by jumbled oral accounts of their exploits, so I shall herein attempt to set the record straight.

The oldest and probably the most important of the gods is Bob Carts. Bob is God of the Underworld and his symbol is the most potent in caving mythology, the Mole. Legend has it that Bob's father was the Cave Titan Stan, who was actually in a cave when Bob was born. During the first years of his life, Bob is reported to have returned often to his mother's womb, not for comforting, but to push the few remaining leads he had neglected during his fetal stage. Bob spent his youth in closets and under beds, where he searched through layers of sedimentary dirty clothes for his virgin sneakers until, as a full-fledged god, he came to Madison and established the JMU student grotto. The other gods and heroes followed him as he fearlessly and flawlessly led them deep into the bowels of the earth in a seemingly endless series of spectacular subterranean quests. But then he seemed to fade out of the picture. Recently, a man claiming to be the god Bob has appeared at Cave Club meetings and parties, but he hasn't done anything divine and some doubt the validity of his claims.

The second most important cave god is Mike Artz (rural scholars argue that Mike is as great as Bob, but they are generally scoffed at by the more sophisticated and numerous urban scholars). Mike is the God of the Mountains and his symbol is the Goat. Mike is said to have been born on a farm in Woodstock, VA, where, legend has it, he amused himself by climbing the sheer walls of the grain silo and then rappelled into it while his parents did all the chores. After rainstorms, Mike climbs the overhanging undersides of rainbows; and once, it is rumoured, he climbed so high he touched the sky. A caver/climber who claims to be the god Mike is now President of the Madison student grotto. He says he can lead 5.9 and goes on 28-hour survey trips to virgin caves, but these exploits invariably and unaccountably take place in the Gunks in New York or Roppel Cave in Kentucky, far away places no one has ever heard of or been to. Some skeptics say they exist only in "Mike's" head. They point out that three mortal grotto climbers climb as well as "Mike," which would not be possible were he a true god.

A lesser-known and less powerful god is the god Paul Clifford. Paul is the God of Passion and his sign is that of the Horse. He resides with the two major gods at Squire Hill and it is said that a bevy of beautiful bouncing broads with big boobs and bountiful buns follow him everywhere, attending his every need. It is said that long ago, before he reached puberty and became distracted, he too went on long cave trips.

Another of the lesser gods is Bob-Bob Ebaugh. Bob-Bob is the god of Cave Gear. He is a great collector and his sign is the Pack Rat. Bob-Bob was once a great caver, one of the Fearless Five who endured the rigors of the epic 24-hour bivouac trip in Simmons-Mingo, where these great ones proved their manhood by penetrating almost half as deep into the cave as Kelley Price managed to go in nine hours on her fourth trip. But then Bob-Bob fell in love with the beautiful nymph Elaine and gave up caving.



The last of the cave gods is the god Jaime. Jaime is the God of Darkness and his sign is the Bat. Jaime is never seen in the light of day and only the fortunate can catch glimpses of him at night. He is entirely nocturnal. This is because, like the bat itself, Jaime spends his days hanging upside down in a cave. (Some skeptics say that one never sees Jaime during the day because he stays up so late and gets so drunk that he always passes out and sleeps until dusk, but this claim is ridiculous. Not even a god could get drunk every night.)

These five gods share the divine rank with two goddesses. These are the goddesses Katy Kahle, and Barb Hoffman. They are the goddesses of Beauty and Generosity and share the sign of the Fox. Scholars disagree as to which is which and most agree that both of them have both these and other virtues.

There are two other legendary deities--the heroes Gary Rodgers and Blaise Barry. Half god and half man, these heroes are reputed to be incredibly strong. Gary, the largest and strongest of the legendary figures, is said to resemble a great cave bear. Lately he's been hibernating. Blaise, another pillar of strength, is said to be able to enlarge tight passages by flexing his legendary muscles and it is said that, while climbing, he creates his own holds by punching holds in the rockface. But none have seen him cave or climb in a long time.

That is JMU Caving Mythology as I learned it. Perhaps it is true; perhaps. Perhaps someday these legendary figures may once again walk among us and lead us on long caving and intense climbing trips. Perhaps new gods will rise to take their place. And perhaps not. Only time will tell.

- Bruce Beard. MUSG #18

S&M AT SIMMONS-MINGO

Wednesday afternoon, October 14, Mike Aron, Kelley Price and I were sitting in the CSC office debating whether or not Kelley had any business accompanying Mike and I on our Halloween sojourn to Roppel Cave (See Roppel Revisited, p. 94). Kelley wanted to go and was convinced she could handle it; Mike wanted to let her try. I thought they were both dreaming. I envisioned a trip in which Kelley went fifteen hours, got exhausted and ended up sick and Mike and I accomplished no surveying, saw no virgin passage and had to drag her out of the cave. It would be a miserable waste of time, money, and energy for all three of us. Kelley had never surveyed, never ascended, had never gone on a hard solo, and didn't have enough gear.

"OK," said Kelley, "Give me a list of the gear I'll need and I'll buy or borrow it. Give me a vertical training session and take me on a long trip. I'll learn to survey in Roppel."

"It's not that easy," I tried to explain. But she refused to get discouraged. And the more I pointed out the inadequacies of her training, the more she took it personally. It was obvious that she
(continued page 98)

SNOWY SITES

Bob Ebaugh, Blaise Barry, and Gary Rodgers decided to go to Sites Cave on Sat., Jan. 23, 1982. We planned to go until about 11:00 Friday night. I was drinking some beers and getting my equipment together when Bob called and said there was a major storm warning in effect. Well, I flipped on the tube and across the bottom of the TV in white letters they were saying that the area was going to have a blanket of snow dumped on it, then macro amounts of freezing water. We decided to go on Sunday rather than on Saturday because of the weather.

We decided to leave on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. By 10:00 a.m. Sunday we were on the road (and damn proud of it because we left on time). [Editors Note: This truly is an event unprecedented in MUSG history. BB] We got there and weren't sure where to park. The reason for this is that the cave owner doesn't like cavers and has about 5 No Trespassing and No Hunting signs posted. We decided since it was the middle of winter--cold, snowy, and a Sunday--the owner wouldn't object because he wouldn't come out there to find us.

We dressed, then crunched through the snow and found our way to the entrance. Then we rigged the 190-foot drop and went in. Once down at the bottom, Blaise thought there was another drop somewhere in the cave; so we brought along one set of Gibbs and a 60 foot section of Bluewater. We then went down and signed the sign-in book. I found out that the first time I went into the cave was on my fourth cave trip. I liked the cave then and still like it now. Blaise thought the drop might be to the left so we headed left into a big room. We found some pretty formations in that room. Some of the formations were nice enough to pose for me while I took their pictures. I thought that was real friendly of them. Off to the sides we found some leads, but none of them went too far. One of them got Blaise and I all muddy, but that's part of the sport of caving. Another lead went into a fairly large room that about 5 people could stand up in. It was a muddy tight fit to get out of that room. There was a pretty strip of bacon across the ceiling that glistened when you shined your light on it. We saw a bat in the room and then decided to leave. After we all came out, Bob thought he had left one of his packs in the room. Bob and I looked around and Blaise looked too. There wasn't anywhere it could have gone but we still looked about 15 minutes. We decided the only place it could be was back in the room, so Bob went back into the room and then Blaise came down to change carbide. I asked him where he got that pack from and he said from up where I was sitting. Well, that pack was Bob's and he had to go through the tube, sideways and into the room for nothing. There was a lack of communication between Blaise, myself, and Bob. When Bob was descending out of the hole, I think he was mad; but he was laughing as he got over it pretty quick.

After that we went back to the large entrance room and got a drink of water. Then we went to explore the right side of the cave. We climbed around and saw some beautiful formations, but mainly it was made of breakdown (rock that falls from the ceiling and breaks). There were some leads and we pursued everyone we saw, but they all lead to dead ends.

Time was gaining on us and we decided to start on our way out. I wanted to get pictures of Bob and Blaise, so I went out first. On my way out I started thinking about the rope I was on. This was Bob Carts' PMI that he has had since he was a freshman. That's 4 1/2 years and a hell of a lot of caving. Now I can't say anything bad about the rope because I learned on it and it has always got me where I wanted to go. Then I started thinking only 100 feet more to go; the rope is in good shape, but crank Gary crank and get off it as soon as you can. We all made it out, coiled up the rope, and then the most fun part of the trip came--sliding down the mountain.

The rain had frozen over the snow making it like a toboggan run. So what did the three of us do? We pretended to be the U.S. toboggan team and we slid down the mountain until we hit a tree. Then we would sight out another tree or group of bushes and aim for it, then go until we smashed into it. That was the best time I ever had coming down any mountain on my feet even though I put a 5-inch gash in the snowmobile suit I had on. After that, we went to the car and drove home.

P.S. We made the traditional stop at Thompson's on the way home.

-Gary S. Rodgers
MUSG #15

THE AFFAIR AT JUST CAVE

This trip report is for all the "cocky" people in the JMU Cave Club--the people who think they can do anything with the idea that "nothing will happen to me." Even after they read this report, they'll still think "accidents only happen to other people." I, too once felt that way. After a few successful trips risking daring moves, I felt as if I was capable of anything. I learned the hard way, by waiting thirteen hours in Just Cave for a rescue team to aid Dave DeLand and I, that I am not as self-sufficient as I once believed.

Kris Kline, Susan Shaw, Dave DeLand, and I entered Just Cave at 11:00am. on Sunday, January 24. In order to explore, we had to rappel down a forty-foot drop. Kris went first and checked it out and then yelled for us to join him. After an hour of preparing sit harnesses and gathering nerve to step off the side, we all found ourselves in a small, wet room. We explored passages for three hours, until the last one ended in a small stream crawl.

We didn't relish getting wet so we decided to leave. Susan and I had almost reached the rope when we heard a loud crashing sound. It turned out to be a large piece of ice that had broken off and fallen into the entrance room. At that point, Kris and I knew we needed to exit as quickly as possible.

Kris prussiked up and re-regged the rope to a relatively dry and ice-free part of the cave. Susan then set up her rig and moved swiftly to the top. By the time Dave began preparing for his ascent, the rope was too iced-up to be effective; he abandoned the prussik system and began to climb with Kris belaying from the top. But, due to inexperience and slippery walls, Dave found that climbing wasn't the answer either.

Kris called down to tell us that he was going for help. Before he left, he and Susan thoughtfully passed down dry clothes, coats, Granola bars, and carbide. Neither Dave nor I felt comfortable until we received sleeping bags and an Ensolite pad. They left, and Dave and I began to arrange our waiting room, a small relatively dry alcove far enough from the entrance to increase warmth and decrease windchill, but within earshot of the top, into something resembling comfort.

Our spirits were high with hope, so we sang such songs as "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall," "99 Cups of Tea on the Wall," "Do Your Ears Hang Low?" and "Mountain Dew." Our voices inspired us into planning a recording session and a future album. Our other activities included telling bad jokes, answering nature's call, and adjusting our position from sitting on one sharp rock to leading against an even sharper one. The activity that probably kept us the busiest was shivering. I started because shivering burns 500 calories an hour. Dave thought it was a good idea, so he decided to start shivering too.

It must have been a hundred times that I heard Susan, Kris, Bruce Beard, and Mike Artz (I don't know how she heard me talking cause I wasn't even on the rescue trip! Mike A.) talking from above. Each time I was fooled by that damn babbling brook. Finally, I did hear Kris's voice. He called out "We're here!" and both Dave and I answered with a hearty "Yeah!" Soon Kris rappelled into the wet room, carrying Jaime's Gibbs Ascenders, that he and Bruce Beard had brought. A wet and cold Kris prepared Dave for ascending and his rig wasn't set up properly due to Kris's inexperience with a Gibbs system and my inability to recall how to use the Gibbs system.

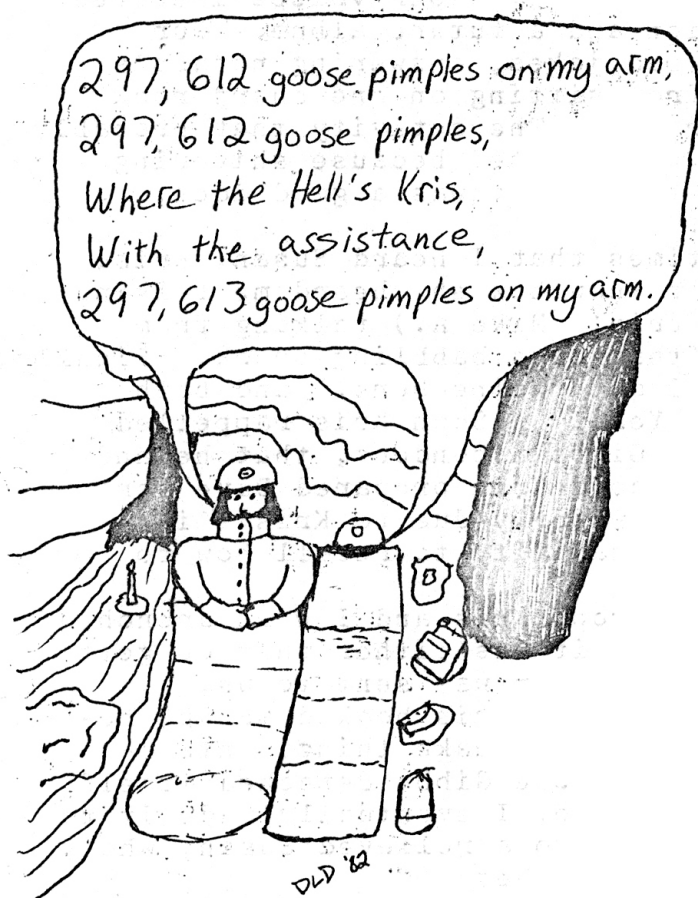
By the time Dave made it to the top, Kris and I were drenched from belaying him beneath a waterfall; it was either that or getting hit by falling ice. So when the system was sent to us, neither Kris nor I were thinking clearly. Kris hooked me up, because I couldn't do anything but watch. To make things interesting, when I was 20 feet from the top, one Gibbs detached itself from my right foot. With help from Bruce, I eventually made it to the top. He led my stumbling body back to a relieved Susan, who was waiting with a heated car and dry clothes.

A half hour later, Kris entered the car with uncontrollable shivers. Thanks to Jaime's resources, everyone soon got warm. We all headed home about 2 a.m.

As I was riding back, I realized how stupid we had all been. Our first mistake was rappelling into the cave in the first place. We didn't think about our lack of ascending gear, our inexperience in tying knots, and our lack of caving experience in general. The only two things we can commend ourselves for is keeping our heads in that situation and that Susan and Kris showed foresight in lowering adequate gear to Dave and I. Although Bruce or Jaime probably should have rappelled down to help us with the Gibbs system, our fatigue wasn't obvious and they let Kris come down. Unfortunately, both he and I were too cold and tired to fix the system properly. At any rate, Dave and I made it out after spending 15 hours in the cave. I'd like to thank Bruce and Jaime for coming to our rescue. I've definitely learned from this trip to adhere to proper caving techniques and to encourage all who read this report to think ahead next time they go caving.

Kelley Price

[NOTE: Spending 7 hours alone with Kelley in tight quarters is really an interesting experience but I'd rather not do it again (unless we were outside of a cave). DD]



PIG HOLE

Deep and dark, cold cave.
Sitting on a rock, waiting.
Hypothermia.

-Meredith Hall
MUSG #9

A RETURN TO HELL

(-sley's)

At 9 a.m., January 16 (a Saturday), nine of us were to meet at Wilson Parking Lot and leave to explore Helsley's Cave near Conicsville, Virginia. At about 9:20 a.m., returnees Mike Balenger, Patti Barnes, Dave DeLand, Kelly Price, and I, along with Kris Kline, Jan Sherfy, and Paul Wilder departed and headed north on 42. (Yes. I can count. That is only eight. Well, ask Lisa about it. If she's awake yet.) Twenty minutes tardiness isn't much for an 8-person trip. According to Bob Carts, groups invariably leave 15 minutes late for each person in the group. He calls this the Carts-factor. I find that this only holds true for trips that include Bob. Other trips are usually quicker. I don't know why this is; ask Bob. It's his theory.

By the time we'd driven to Conicsville, asked permission from Mrs. Dexter Mumaw, driven to the cave, dressed and entered, it was almost 11 a.m.

The cave entrance is at the bottom of a small sinkhole. It slopes downwards and immediately forks, dividing naturally into two distinct sections. So we divided into two groups. Kris, Kelley, Mike, and Patti headed right, into the more difficult part of the cave; and Dave, Paul, Jan, and I went into the easy section. It consisted of one huge room surrounded by short leads that went nowhere. There was no water on the cave floor, but the ceiling oozed and dripped regularly, so it was clean with nice (when unvandalized) formations and the floor was muddy. There was one large rock which was shaped like a diving pterodactyl (which I bravely mounted and rode) and a primitive Indian drawing of indeterminable age and dubious authenticity. We looked around a bit, ate a few Starbursts, turned out our lamps to give Jan and Paul their first taste of total darkness (unfortunately they were wearing luminescent Outing Club helmets) and headed back to the entrance (after turning our lamps back on, that is.)

We waited patiently for the other group to rejoin us--for about five minutes. Then we started thinking of punitive measures to curb their tardiness. We decided on snowballs. (Actually it was my idea. I have a talent for malicious, devious, nastiness that is scarcely paralleled anywhere in the free world. If you don't believe me, ask one of my students.) We hurried outside to make and stockpile them above the sinkhole so that we could bombard the other group from a distinct height advantage as they stumbled up the slope. We even took the precaution of hiding the snowballs under leaves. Just to warmup, I hit Dave in the head with one. He thought it was Jan. Then we headed back into the right-hand section of the cave, trying to find our way back to the good part without directions or a guide, even though Kris had warned us it was difficult and obscure.

Thirty minutes later we were again sitting and resting, preparing to explore the most promising, and, incidently, the wrong, lead, when we heard the other party coming from the

opposite direction. We turned off our lights, turned down the noise and listened to the sounds of a well-organized group exiting a cave.

Patti: "I'm stuck."

Kelley: "Where are you?"

P: "I'm down here."

K: "How'd you get there?"

P: "I went through a hole back there."

K: "That little one there?"

P: "Yeah. Where's Mike."

Mike: "I'm over here."

P: "Over where."

M: "Here."

K: "Where's here?"

M: "Where's Kris?"

Kris: "I'm back here."

P: "Would you get up here? We can't find the way out."

K2: "Where are you?"

P: "Up here. Above Kelley." (How Patti got from being lost and stuck below Kelley to lost and stuck above Kelley in 45 seconds I'll never know. But apparently it happened.)

K2: "I'll have to crawl over you to get by."

We had a helluva time keeping from laughing, but eventually a light appeared in a hole sloping down from where the floor and the far wall met. As soon as I had enough light to negotiate the breakdown-covered floor, I crept silently over to the hole, hoping to ambush Kris. Jan and Paul hid their glowing helmets and we all stopped whispering.

The light grew brighter. A helmet and lamp, held carefully in one hand, were placed on the floor beside me. I leaned forward and reached out my right hand just as Kris's head appeared from below. I had hoped to grab his head before he saw me. As it turned out, my hand was about three quarters of an inch from his face when he saw me. His eyes grew wide, he gasped, "Oh shit!" rather squeakily and jerked his head back quickly. Everyone laughed, except for Kris, who had banged his helmetless head into the wall. He cursed. He wasn't really hurt, so his cursing just made us laugh the harder.

Eventually, Kris calmed down enough to give us directions and we split up again. The crawlways got tight and Dave had to turn back and rejoin the other group, but Paul, Jan and I continued on to the back of the cave and explored around a bit. Then we ate a couple more Starbursts and headed back to the entrance. Once again, we arrived ahead of the other group. But fifteen minutes later they joined us, fresh from an epic mud fight. They were thoroughly coated and resembled nothing more than chocolate Easter bunnies that had been left out in the hot sun. They were filthy.

So Paul, Jan, and I rushed up the hill and proceeded to try to clean them off with hurled snowballs. But it was hopeless. Even a thorough plastering hardly cleaned them at all. So we gave up (being out of snowballs) and headed back to the car. Then we drove home, giving filthy looks to passing motorists, showered, and headed out to Ciro's for a course of three pizzas. We had all enjoyed ourselves and learned a valuable caving lesson:

*With the right amount of immaturity and lots of pizza,
you can milk a mediocre cave for a helluva a lot of fun.*

-Bruce Beard, MUSG #18

WALKING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

Upon completing a grueling final semester and five final exams I was ready to get out of Harrisonburg and do some stomping around in the mountains of West Virginia. My plan of action was to rapidly switch from severe mental stress to physical stress by undertaking a two night backpacking trip in dubious weather conditions. Three other individuals, Eddie Begoon, Becky Sasser, and Eric Anderson, proved gullible enough to be persuaded into what turned out to be the lowest temperature trip in my life.

Eric arrived from VA Tech on Friday night to join Eddie, Becky and I and other assorted temporarily homeless dormitory rejects in my apartment for a massive consumption of alcohol, guitar music, and good vibes. Early the next morning, at about 11:00 a.m., we headed out for Wild, Wonderful, West Virginia.

It began to snow heavily on the way into Germany Valley. Near the PSC field house we encountered about half a dozen cars full of cavers all parked in the middle of the road in various preparatory stages of going caving, skiing, and hiking. It was snowing like crazy, so we stayed and talked a few minutes and then left for the top of North Fork Mountain.

Eddie and Becky were to start at Seneca Rocks, hike up North Fork Ridge, and then hike South until they reached my car. Eric and I were supposed to do the same trip in reverse with a possible side trip further along the ridge. As it turned out Eddie and Becky didn't realize they had a five mile, 2000 foot vertical descent in two foot snow drifts.

My car barely made it to the top of the mountain in the snow, but we were soon walking north on the ridge. The snow obscured our view and made walking difficult. It was around 15°-20°F so we didn't have any problem with dampness. At one point we stopped for a few minutes to rest and eat gorp. Within moments we both became chilled and Eric's hands turn a gross blue color. We both agreed that rest stops should be short.

We plodded along for about seven miles and decided it was time to look for a suitable camping site. As soon as we made the decision, the only spots available were on steep ground and exposed to a killer wind howling over the top of the ridge. After another mile we found a great site.

From our experience on our first rest stop we both knew that we had to set up really fast to retain the use of our hands. The tent was set up in minutes using available rocks and trees to tie the peg straps to. Eric started the stove and I erected the tent fly. We made it a practice to count backwards from 10 everytime the other person removed their gloves. This was how long it took before they went numb.

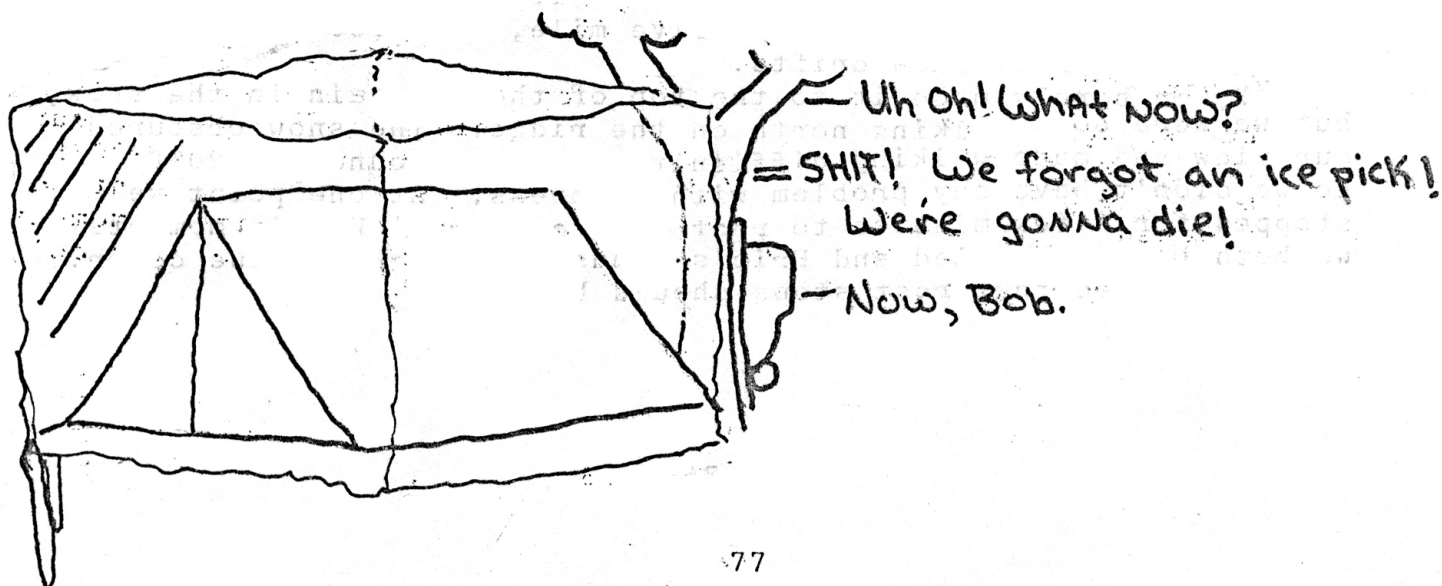
Eric gave me some helpful hints to prevent possible disaster. The first was to warm alcoholic beverages to above 32°F or else you could freeze your esophagus (Ouch!). The second hint was to keep your boots in your sleeping bag. I ignored this hint and paid for it the next morning when I put my feet into my boots/ice cubes.

After consuming a gourmet dinner of various slop components we began a comfortable, 15-hour hibernation. The temperature had dipped down to nearly 0°F during the night. The next morning was beautiful. I got up first and ran around taking pictures of the area, and brushing the fresh snow off of everything.

We ate a great breakfast of granola, honey, tea, and coffee. While we were packing up I asked Eric if he really wanted to spend another night in these conditions. He refrained from calling me a wimp and agreed that going down to the PSC fieldhouse and getting messed up was a coercive idea.

After about five more miles of walking it was decided that Eddie and Becky were not going to finish the hike because they did not have enough time to make it out in one day. Rather than ascend the final hill to reach the pipeline that wound down to Seneca Rocks, I decided to bushwack down to the valley via a tortuous series of hillsides.

We finally arrived at the Gendarme and found my car. We took pictures and congratulated ourselves for accomplishing our daring feat. Upon arriving at the fieldhouse Eddie related their story. He and Becky had encountered deep snow and a very



steep trail. They had made it about two thirds of the way to the ridge by dark and were forced to camp in a high, perched, windy spot. A long, very cold, windy night had prompted them to return the next day to the car. Well, I said they were gullible people!

- Bob Carts
MUSG #1

JUST CAVE: THE PITS

Fear. We have all heard or read about it, but how many of us have actually felt or experienced it?

My first experience in dealing with true fear was in Just Cave on January 24, 1982. Kelley Price, Dave Deland, Kris Kline, and I entered the cave thinking, "just another trip to add to our record." We were wrong. This trip would become an adventure--and not a good one at that.

After rappelling forty feet into the wet, icy cave, we explored for three hours. But when what sounded like a ton of ice fell almost on top of us, we knew that it was time to exit, and fast. Kris went first, carefully prussiking--foot, hand, foot, hand--until he was up. He re-rigged the rope, returned the webbing, and I went next. Even the work required to ascend could not compete with the blistering cold. After reaching the top, I leaned against a rock, shivered, and thought: soon Dave and Kelley will be out and we'll all get to go home. I could already picture a hot shower and warm bed. But when I realized that Dave might not make it to the top, my hopes of warmth began to fade into realizations of extreme cold.

"Come on, Dave," I called encouragingly, "You can do it." I was wrong. The rope was frozen, the prussik knots wouldn't grip, and the cold grew colder.

"How about climbing?" Kris shouted. Damn, more time to wait, more thought to consider, more cold to bear.

The belay system was finally ready and Dave began to climb. I could see the extra rope: "Seven, eight, nine, ten feet! Alright! He may just make it!" I thought gleefully. Disappointment struck again though, for he cried, "There're no handholds and too much ice! There's nowhere to move!" No place for him to go but down. That once bountiful ten feet of rope disappeared, slowly, one foot at a time until he was once again at the bottom. My thoughts of seeing Dave climb swiftly out were gone; the walls were just too icy.

And all the while, the temperature kept dropping.

Suddenly, I was warm. I stopped trembling, closed my eyes, and relaxed.

No, Susan, logic says you're cold: YOU ARE COLD.

But I was comfortable. Wait, I thought. Isn't this a sign of hypothermia or even freezing to death?

No, Susan. You've just been reading too much of that damn "Man Against-Nature" literature. Don't be silly...

I opened my eyes and felt dizzy. "Kris," I said, "We've got to get out of here and get some help." I told him that I would go across the ice to the exit. He sharply reprimanded me with a "No! Stay where you are!" and he was right. I could have easily taken a forty-foot fall.

Although Kris was wet, weak, and shaking, he thought and acted logically and methodically; he was amazingly sensible. He tied the still-frozen rope across the icy path and we safely arrived at the exit. We lowered supplies to the stranded Kelley and Dave, and proceeded to get help.

After passing four uninhabited trailers and a herd of sheep, we found a house with a phone and called for rescue aid. Harrisonburg was on its way. We returned to the cave to leave more supplies and tell of the wait. Then we knew it was time for a cup of coffee.

When Bruce Beard and Jamie Reep arrived, we were sure glad. They had Gibbs ascending gear which Kris, feeling better now, brought down to Dave and Kelley. With the help of Bruce and Jamie, he got them and himself out of the cave. The afterjoy was Jamie's car, complete with food, dry clothes, and, above all, heat.

-Susan Shaw

SURVEYING A CAVE IN A MUDDY PASSAGE
(with apologies to Robert Frost)

Whose cave this is I think I know.
His house is in the village though:
He will not see me stopping here
To trace the passages far below.

My caving pack must think it queer
To cave without a partner near
Between the walls, on sloping floor,
It sure is getting dark in here.

My carbide light is getting low
The water in it just won't flow.
My only other source of light's
The flashlight I lost hours ago.

This cave is lonely, dark and damp,
But I have passages to map,
And miles to go before I nap,
And miles to go before I nap.

-Bruce Beard
MUSG #18

CAVING ACTIVITY OCTOBER 9 - JANUARY 17

<u>CAVE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMMENTS (including Members)</u>
Helsley's	October 10	Bob Ebaugh, Ron Howard, Bret Howard, Anita Kozlowski, Elaine Dinstt and Mark Murphey. Three hours. Large rooms for Shenandoah County.
Simmons-Mingo	October 15	Mike Artz, Kelly Price, Bruce Beard, Nine hours, overnight, no sleep. Made RP2 but not base camp.
Devil's Hole	October 16	Mike Artz, Meredith Hall, Gary Rodgers, Bob Ebaugh. Two hours. Vertical training.
Key Cave	October 18	Lynn Benkleman, Mike Artz, Meredith Hall. Survey trip; 217 feet in four hours.
3-D Maze	October 20	Meredith Hall, Gary Rodgers, Bob Ebaugh, Jim Wulff, Jan Sherfy, Jeff Laushey, Tammy Cassel, John, Jeff, Barbara, Paula. 7 beginners and 4 experienced cavers. 2 1/2 hours. Went left to creek, then wandered around.
Hone Quarry	October 21	Kris Kline, Jan Sherfy. Did a good friction climb--wing-ding route, lots of wasps.
Seneca Rocks	October 31	Kris Kline, Eddie Begoon, Bob Carts. Rescued a guy that fell 80 feet (no belay); did Green Wall 5.6, first part of Ecstasy 5.4, Triple S 5.8, worked on Sunshine, Fieldhouse party. Wild!
Seneca Rocks	November 7	Bruce Beard, Kris Kline, Kelly Price Kris looked great topropping Sunshine--his first 5.10. Also led Frosted Flake 5.8+.
Seneca Rocks	Nov. 7-8	Eric Anderson, Bob Carts, Bill Friend. Candy Corner, Skyline Variation 5.6, Neck Press 5.7.

<u>CAVE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Buzzard Rocks	November 8	10 MUSG"s. Vertical training.
3-D Maze	November 11	Jan Sherfy, Susan Shaw, Kelly Price Three hours. Good trip. Susan ripped her pants.
Buzzard Rocks	November 13	Kelly Price, Kris Kline, Bruce Beard. Climbed Nibbog (B), Chris Roof (K,B), Bruce's Face (K,B,KP)
Better Forgotten	November 14	A killer cave--tight, very verticle with lots of rowdy bats. Better remember not to forget how mis- erable it is! See article, page
Carderock	November 14	Kelly Price, Kris Kline, Bruce Beard. Kelly did Beginner's Face & Nubbly Face 5.4. Kris did the Diamond, The X, Layback, and But- terfly 5.9. Bruce did Impossible 5.9, The X, Guillotine, & Layback.
Clover Hollow	November 14	Vicki Liddle and VPI cavers. Vicki's first vertical cave. There is a real nice "library" there. Be sure to try the Thistle Tube.
Northwest Branch	November 15	Kelly Price, Bruce Beard, Kris Kline Kris did The Blank Face, New Mex- ico, Oklahoma, Double Crack, Sa- turn Five and The Buttress 5.9. Bruce did all those plus five others but he had the homecourt advantage.
Calamorette	November 19	Stephanie, Tod, Mike. Did a 5+7 climb up the left face.
Nutt	November 19	Tom Allin, Jeff Laushey, Susan Shaw.
Seneca Rocks	November 20	Kris Kline, Robert Wolfe. Did Neck Press and Westpohl. Got back to car at 8:00. Sunset at 4:45.
School House	November 21	Kelly Price, Becky Sasser, Lee Sattler, Bob Carts, Dave Thorpe, Dave's friend. Please ask owner for permission. Did Grand Rappel.

Quarry Rocks, WV	Nov. 21	Becky Sasser, Lee Sattler, Bob Carts, Hairy solo climb in the snow and dark.
Judy Gap Rocks	Nov. 22	Same as above with Kelly Price. Hiked up rocks and checked out some great routes for this spring (winter?).
Nutt	Nov. 23	Bob Ebaugh, Kris Kline. Went the wrong way. Found roots downstream.
3-D Maze	Nov. 23	Vicki Liddle led her first trip with the help of Mike Artz. Took 8 beginners and Roger Sprath. 2 1/2 hours.
North Fork Ridge	Dec. 19-20	Eric Anderson, Bob Carts, Eddie Begoon, and Becky Sasser. see article page
Schoolhouse	Dec. 20	Mike Artz, Bob Ebaugh, Gary Rodgers, Blaise Barry, Stan Carts, Cynthia, and Carlos. Went to Jumping-Off Place. 1 hour.
Nelson Gap	Dec. 21	Alpine climbing on loose rock during snowstorm at night. Bob Carts, Eric Anderson, Eddie Begoon.
Big Devil's Stairs	Dec 26	Bob Carts, Jon Whiz, Carlos Scheel. Hiking at Big Devil's Stairs.
Hone Quarry	Dec 24- Jan 5	Mike Artz, Kris Kline, Kris Hiveley, and Eddie Begoon. Climbed at rocks below Hone Quarry. Worked on a 5.10 called Sunny Afternoon. Never did make it!
Calamorette	Dec 24	Mike Artz, Kris Kline, and Kris Hiveley. Tried to put up some routes but all were too hard and we were repelled. A few 5.9's and 5.10's.
Dolly Sods	Jan. 1-2	Cross Country Skiing on Dolly Sods. Mike Pumphrey and Bob Carts.
Judy Gap	Jan. 3	Bob Carts and Eddie Begoon. Climbed a wet 5.7 at Judy Gap.

Harpers	Jan. 2	Mike Artz, Mike Pumphrey, and Tod Whitehurst. 80 foot rappel into nice wet cave. Pretty slack cave trip. 1 hour.
Roppel	Jan. 2/3	Bruce Beard, Pete Crecilius, Chris Welsh. 27 hours. Connected O-survey to DL-survey. Surveyed 40 stations and 1100 ft., half of it virgin. Still a lot of cave back there. See article, page
Carderock	Jan. 7	Bruce Beard, Mark Stone. Top-roped some 5.6's and 5.9's. Found out how out-of-shape we were.
Northwest Branch	Jan. 8	Bruce Beard. Boulderered about for half an hour. Still out of shape and sore. Got disgusted and quit falling off a 5.8.
Helsley's	Jan. 12	Patti Barnes, Bruce Beard, Mike Balenger, Kelley Price, Stephanie Swanner and Matt Theado. Drove around a lot. Found Pleasant View Cave but it is temporarily closed. Couldn't find Helsley's. Saw a lot of cows and aborted the trip.
Sites	Jan. 16	Vicki Liddle, Susan Shaw, Eddie Begoon, and Mike Artz. Great 200 ft. rappel. Camped out at the fieldhouse. It got so cold that the alcohol froze!
Nutt	Jan 16	Tom Allin, Jeff Laushe, Lynn Riser, Tina Cook, Garland Doe. Beginner trip about 4 hours long. We pushed back to a room but ran out of time.
Helsley's	Jan. 16	Patti Barnes, Bruce Beard, Mike Balenger, Dave Deland, Kris Kline, Kelley Price, Jan Sherfy, and Paul Wilder. On a four hour trip we saw such nice formations. Had a mud fight inside, a snowball fight outside and scared the piss out of Kris.

Helsley's	Jan. 17	Brian Bencic, Lee Sattler, Blaise Barry, Vicki Liddle. A lot of belly-crawls, and careful climbing. Wet, muddy, fun as hell. Great mud slide.
Lyles Pit	Jan. 20	Tom Allin, Jeff Laushey. Nasty cave with a 60 foot pit. My seat sling ripped.

BANES SPRING

Sometime after midnight on Friday, January 8, at a great party in Blacksburg, I was informed that I had to get up at 7:00 a.m. and partake in what might be a 30-hour cave trip. I should have immediately become super-intoxicated in order to produce the classic "God-I'm hungover-as-shit" excuse, but being the intrepid caver I am (or was), I coerced my partners into departing for a couple of hours of sleep.

After a good breakfast and a few minor setbacks, Dave Coakley, Eric Anderson, Frank Gibson, Mike Artz and myself took off for Skydusky Hollow. We entered the cave at 11:00 a.m. Frank mentioned the water entering the cave from the Bane's Spring was unusually high.

The first two hours of the cave consists of crawling, squeezing, and more crawling. The torturous passage-ways reminded me of the worst parts of other caves I've been to. Because we were relatively fresh we made good time. We passed the sight of the dig that doubled the size of the cave two years ago(?). I chose the hole that was dug open by a somewhat larger individual than the original diggers. After a semi-water crawl the cave finally began to open up. There was actually quite a lot of walking passage.

I sensed that we were at the beginning of the "Chasm of Doom" area because of the airy black holes we were traversing. At one point we boosted Mike up a crumbly mud wall to an upper section with several hundred feet of unsurveyed passage. Finally, we arrived at the top of Whistling Wells. Frank told us that Dave and he had done the drop a few weeks earlier, and that he was convinced the drop was deeper than the 200-foot Triple Wells in nearby Newberry-Bane Cave. Because a nearby water fall was roaring we were unable to hear the legendary whistling sound as we dropped rocks over the edge.

The first order of business, now that we had reached the cache of ropes laborously brought in earlier, was to rig and explore a virgin pit of unknown depth. Eric, Dave, and myself set our minds on this task as Mike and Frank ran off deeper into the cave armed with ropes and ladders.

We found the edge of the pit after an interesting traverse across a waterfall chamber. There were no accessible rigging points around so Eric and Dave tied off several big chalkstones in the upper passage. Dave took about two hours getting ready, he was taking no chances. As he began his descent, he looked pretty well-equipped. He had a set of Gibbs ascenders all ready hooked up, a full set of prussiks, a plastic bag in case of water, two cave packs, and an additional 180-foot rope. We watched him disappear around a corner.

He yelled "Off-rope" and Eric and I zipped down the now de-virginized drop. I estimated it was about 125 feet deep. At the base Dave asked me to check a high lead while Eric and him checked a low lead. I reached one of those classic I-know-I-can-get-down-but-I-don't-know-about-back-up places. Virgin passage is intoxicating, so I jumped down onto a platform. I looked down a crack, more black air! I yelled back for the others. Again as a result of no good rigging points we rigged off the first rope and another loose boulder. I tied a knot in the end of the rope, tied in my foot Gibbs, and went over the edge in the middle of a huge room. The drop was a little over 100 feet. Once on the bottom I found a survey mark. Well, I had rediscovered the bottom of Whistling Wells.

We toured the massive hall where the drops intersected and then quickly ascended the ropes. In the upper passage we encountered Mike and Frank, who had explored in the area of the Clatterpits. We accompanied them further into the cave and soon came upon a tight ladder drop. The drop extended further than the end of the ladder, making it necessary to swing sideways to a ledge.

Beyond this point the cave is a maze of multilevel passages with much vertical relief. We reached the Clatterpit (one of many) after several detours including a short exposed mud traverse. My better judgement and exhaustion prompted me to try and fall asleep as the others continued.

They returned after about five hours with reports of difficult climbs, a lot of surveyed passage, and no apparent end of the cave. Having tried unsuccessfully to stay warm for the past two hours, I was ready to get out of the cave.

We left the ropes and made rapid progress back to the ladder. Here Frank and Dave decided to stay and attempt the waterfall drop. (They ended up not doing the entire drop due to the very high volume of water). Mike, Eric, and I headed for the entrance. The trip out was worst than any I can recall. We experienced a barrage of difficulties. Lamp problems, pack problems, hamburger knee syndrome, and claustrophobia. Several times my collapsed body blocked further crawling progress for my companions. Eventually, after 22 hours, we felt cold air. At the entrance I was greeted by a missing down jacket and a temperature of -10°F accompanied by at least 30mph winds. It became obvious in my mind why the cave still has virgin sections!

Bob Carts, MUSG #1

BETTER FORGOTTEN? NEVER COMPLETELY!

The cave was dark, nasty, and damp. Tom had forgotten to get a helmet but luckily Nevin had one he could borrow. I was very hot after entering the cave and deposited my trusty turtle-neck at the bottom of the 40-foot entrance drop. My emotions were fighting each other--should I leave it and risk being cold or sweat the whole trip? Heat won the fight and, anyway, I was also wearing a wool sweater. The main passage below the entrance drop beckoned to us in the darkness. Somewhere a few hundred feet horizontally and several dozen feet vertically were Bob and his crew. They had entered before us with the purpose of rigging the drops. Many questions were going through my mind. Had they made it down the big drop? Did they have any problems? Which way did they go? How tight was this cave, really?

I like caving with two people. Tom hadn't done much caving and wasn't use to the pleasures of caving in a small group. There are so many advantages--and disadvantages. Yet ahead loomed a T-junction and a change in the passage characteristics and my concentration refocused on the caving. There was a very small stream flowing on the floor and yet there was barely enough room to keep out of it. The sound of a waterfall indicated that a drop loomed ahead somewhere. Sure enough, after a few more feet a 20-foot drop appeared. I thought of how easy it is to rappel on Bluewater as I descended under a small waterfall and touched down into a pool of water. As of yet, my pack hadn't given me any trouble. Not that it should have, it's just that on my first trip into a new cave I try to be prepared. It was big and bulging and I was apprehensive about carrying a big pack through a supposedly nasty cave. And why not? Dave (Thorpe) had left his at the bottom of the 100 foot drop. Why did he do that? In Dr. Halliday's Depth's of the Earth, the author mentioned that Ike Nicholson had left 400 feet of manila rope at the same place for the simple reason that he wasn't sure he could regain the entrance. Oh well, if I could get my pack through the S-survey in Roppel, I could get it out of Better Forgotten.

Abruptly the cave changed again and took on more of the vertical characteristics it is well known for. The passage sloped gently downward with rimstone pools filling the passage from wall to wall. They weren't big, just wet. The tight passage soon opened into a very nice-sized room and, at the far end, a hands-and-knees crawl began--supposedly the beginning of "the real cave".

The passage was very interesting to me. If I had been mapping, I would loved to have drawn a cross-section. Imagine a crevice about 15 feet high with a stream in it, insert an oval tube near the middle of it and then imagine trying to cram your body in without slipping down and only wedging yourself tighter than you already are and you will have some idea of what it was like. It took me a few minutes to decide whether to crawl in the stream or

wedge myself in the tube. The choice was not obvious, but after some reassurances by Eddie, whom we had caught up with, I slithered on through the tube, dropped my feet down into the stream and sasheyed through the narrow but slightly larger canyon to a comfortable-sized room where Eddie was uncoiling 200 feet of PMI to rig the 100 foot drop with. Tom, being thinner than I, crawled through the stream and joined Eddie and I within a few minutes.

Tom and I, not being ladened down with rope, had literally ran through the cave. Bob's group had entered first to rig the ropes and also had the unenviable task of carrying them in. But we had the even more unenviable task of hauling them back out and everybody in Bob's group said it was no pleasure bringing them in! Ahead of us, Bob and Scott had already crawled through the extremely tight spot before the drop. Bob had had to take off his jacket to get through and was already complaining about getting back thru. Needless to say, pits are always bottlenecks; and while waiting to rappel, there was time to sit and reflect.

Dave Thorpe and Bob Carts had been there before. Earlier this summer they had stopped by the farm to ask me if I wanted to join them. Stupid question! Of course I did, but there was hay to be baled and grain to be harvested and I had to tend to these duties before running off on some venture. Anyway, they had only spent about 4 hours in the cave and made it to the start of the horizontal crawl. Dave had been back the weekend before our trip and had made it down the 100 foot drop. Mike Reep, who had been with him, had to go through the squeeze before the pit about two or three times trying to rig the rope and by the time they were ready to rappel, Mike was too tired! So after Dave yo-yoed the drop, they exited the cave. Now Bob had been there and I was itchin' to do some hard-core caving before Thanksgiving, so we organized a trip at the next cave club meeting. Eddie Begoon, Scott Muxworthy, and Tom Allin were interested. Saturday morning came early after some late night party-hopping; and after Bob and I had a big breakfast, Tom showed up and we picked up Scott and Eddie and were on our way. It was developing into a beautiful fall day. The sky was blue and the temperature was comfortable. Upon arriving at the parking place, Tom announced he didn't have a helmet. Pandemonium broke out! Some other MUSG'ers were at Breathing Cave and we were hoping they had an extra helmet-but no such luck. Tom and I went and searched for Nevin Davis to see if he had one we could borrow. He didn't, but his wife did, and after a few words we left Nevin and were soon starting up the mountain to the cave.

I tried a different approach than Eddie. The squeeze was tight but I had been through worse before (Bob's Microhole). Feet first and on my stomach, it worked very well. Perhaps it is the tightest spot in the whole cave. The 100 foot rappel was very welcome in comparison to all the tight stuff we had been through. Actually this was the easiest forward progress made in the cave!

At the bottom of the drop was a black blob that appeared to be rope. It was the 400 feet of manila rope that Ike Nicholson had left. It was black, appeared to be braided, and was mushy to the touch.

Around the next corner was the vertical crawlway. At the beginning was a tight spot but it soon opened up. At this point our group decided to split. Bob didn't want to come thru the hole. (I still argue that he could have made it.) Eddie didn't want to even try if Bob couldn't make it, and Scott really wasn't psyched to go further either. Tom and I still felt good so we went further. Scott did help us carry rope a little further, then he turned around and Tom and I rigged the rope above an ominous-looking hole with no obvious footholds below it. I rappelled into the hole with little difficulty, and down into a tight crevice. Darkness was all I could see through a 4 inch crack. Was this the trunk passage? Below me, the crack became tighter and took a 90 degree turn to the horizontal. This combination has always turned out to be extremely difficult. After Tom agreed to join me, I got off rope, crammed myself into the crack and started talking to myself.

"Slide onto your right side, keep your right arm below you, you don't want to wedge into the crack! Slip your legs into the horizontal passage. Oh no, my light went out, my feet can't feel anything but air, calm down, you're sufficiently jammed. Light your lamp and see what you have to support yourself. Nothing. Keep at it, there is a ledge down lower. Ah, made it, now pull your hat and lamp through. Wow, what a nice-sized room, the biggest yet! Come on down Tom."

Soon the two of us had chimneyed down the crack beneath us to the floor of the room. Tom had to recharge his lamp and I was eager to explore. This wasn't the trunk passage! But the passage continued on the other side of the room larger than what we had come through. A 10 or 15-foot drop loomed ahead. I chimneyed down the wall to find a large coil of Goldline. Whose was it and how long had it been here? It was in good condition and didn't look used. Was there another drop ahead? Not that I could tell! The passage continued lower but it was time to turn back. Tom was ready to head out so I recharged and Tom lead the way.

Tom had a real bitch of a time getting through the tight spot. It was as hard as it looked! After about 10 minutes I made it through and we chimneyed through that ominous hole with ease. The rope was soon coiled and we were soon moving again. After a wrong turn we were soon at the bottom of the 100-foot drop.

Tom had been trained well. It was only his first ascent in a cave, but he put all his gear on and ascended with no problems. I soon followed and shortly afterwards we were coiling the PMI. Two ropes now, one that weighed a thousand pounds and one that weighed 500. Tom took the 500 pounder and I the 1000 pounder and

we were soon floundering in the tight canyon tube. Get out, that's all we could think. I . . . want . . . to . . . get . . . out . . . of . . . this . . . damn . . . cave! We shortly reached the nice-sized room and were levitating our bodies above pools of water. Another drop ahead. Twenty-five feet that could be climbed free but was easier to ascend. Another rope, this one 250 pounds. Tom crammed it into his pack. We were close to the entrance. We could barely feel the colder air. The passage was a stoopway, and ended almost immediately in a moderately-sized room that neither one of us recognized. Which way? I don't know. BaaaaahhhhhB. Where are you? Tom was becoming frantic. A systematic check of the leads ahead led nowhere but back to where Tom was. So we backtracked and I found it almost immediately. It was under a ledge and unless you knew where to look you could easily miss it. The passage was now recognizably well-travelled. There was the rope hanging down from the entrance. BaaahhhB!

Tom went up first and I followed immediately. I was already on rope before Tom had completely derigged! The cold air woke me up like a snap and we were soon running down the mountain to the car.

After returning the helmet to Nevin and talking with him about future mapping trips (it needs to be remapped badly!), we decided that after the 10 or 15 foot drop I was less than 50 feet from the trunk passage. What a bitch. Someday I'll be back to the cave with a compass, 2 or 3 ropes instead of 4 and a better knowledge of the cave. Yes sir, the return of the Sport-cave has finally arrived. Ha!

-Mike Artz

MUSG #10

A DEDICATION TO BOB

Thank you Bob Carts for showing me how to find myself and show more confidence in me than I had in myself. You are an individual who cares for people's safety more than your own. As someone said one time;

Snow falls on mountains because there is no other way to go but down

Men climb up mountains because there is no other way to go but up

- anonymout

- Paul Clifford

MUSG #11

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The First Annual Semi-formal Christmas Banquet was held on Saturday, December 5, 1981 at the Chandler Dining Facilities on the JMU campus. It was a huge success with better than 50 cavers in attendance. An excellent slide show of the history, development and future of exploration by the Central Kentucky Karst Coalition in Roppel Cave, Kentucky (Toohey Ridge Cave System) was presented by Jim Borden, the guest speaker. A buffet-style dinner including top round of beef was served and after the presentation, the dancing began. With plenty of beer to keep the crowd satisfied, they rocked and rolled till midnight; when the party was moved to Katy Kahle's house where all sense of time was lost with more beer and rocking. To be sure, it was a definite surprise to see so many grungy cavers decked out in 3-piece suits and evening dresses. Next year's banquet will have to be fantastic to beat this year's!

* * * * *

A major revision of our Constitution has taken place in order to become recognized by the University. Many changes were necessary and others will contribute to the success of MUSG as a long-standing organization. The biggest changes added 3 new types of membership, established an executive board, and established a new committee. The new constitution will be brought before the club sometime this semester.

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Jaime Reep, a graduate of JMU, is back with us. He will be a Madison Student again, but he will be working for his internship at the Hospital in Staunton, Va.

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This issue of the Journal marks the completion of the 1st volume of the MUSG Journal. Incredibly, we have more than 90 pages in 4 publications. Keep up the good work!

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Don't forget upcoming events this Spring. A joint club trip between VPI and MUSG to Warm River Cave is being planned. Spring VAR will occur in April and Spring Fling at Aqua Campground will also be held sometime in April. All winter there will be plenty of caving and Alpine climbing trips. Don't miss out.

Over the Christmas vacation, a lot of trips went into Roppel Cave in Kentucky. Unfortunately, one trip ended in a temporary closing of the Weller Entrance. Dave Weller, in an attempt to make a certain part of the passage larger, miscalculated and blasted it shut. An estimate of time till it's opened again? About two months...

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Congrats to Linda Baker, Bob Chiasson, Ed Ricketts, and Fred Grady for being elected to the positions of directors of the PSC!

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MUSG has been asked to serve on an adhoc committee to determine the potential impact or diversion of tourist cavers to less traveled and more vulnerable caves in the area of Pendleton County, WV. This is in response to the gating of a handful of caves in that area, significantly Sinnit Cave, which previously received heavy traffic. It will be our responsibility along with PSC, DCG, and Germany Valley Grottoes to recommend caves to which tourist caver traffic could be diverted with the least adverse impact.

* * * * *

The four JMU students who were caught vandalizing Fountain Cave in Grand Caverns Regional Park have been let go almost completely free. They will have to disseminate information about the cave law under which they were charged. Tentatively they may be planning to run an article in "The Breeze," the school's newspaper. Perhaps our C & PR committee would be able to help them with their article. It would be very helpful and beneficial to the cave law and to our club's existence.

* * * * *

One dilemma of caving is where to find clothes that can be trashed. The wealthy caver can purchase brand new clothes. The not-so-wealthy caver can use old clothes but you only have so many clothes. A cheap place to acquire decent caving clothes is your local Salvation Army or Clothes Closet or some store of an identical nature. Most of the items will cost you less than \$5 a piece. Check it out.

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Be prepared for winter caving this year. Don't get caught without proper clothing. A dry change of clothes near the entrance of the cave and a heavy coat, gloves and hat is preferable. Remember, it's your ass that will get frostbit if you're not properly dressed.

PUSHING THE LIMITS IN BOB'S MICROHOLE
OR LET'S GET SMALL

I came up to VAR on Saturday morning with only one thought in mind: I had one day and I wanted to make the most of it--one long trip in a big difficult cave. As things turned out, the cave that we went into was hard enough but by no stretch of the imagination could it be called large.

Saturday morning, a group consisting of Gary, Mike, Kelley*, Dave, and myself set out for Just Cave in Randolph County, West Virginia. Another, larger group was going to My Cave which is located nearby. When we all finally arrived, Bob Carts asked if anyone wanted to take a look at a cave that he had found several years earlier. Of course, we all trooped up. It didn't take us long to realize that 20 people could not even fit into the Microhole, so the My Cave group left for their cave while the Just Cave group stayed to clear rocks from the first corner. This accomplished, Kelley and Mike went on down to see what they could see. Kelley, the smaller of the two, was soon jammed into a small stream passage through which she couldn't quite fit. After about 45 minutes, a very muddy Mike returned with something out of a "swampy" horror movie (turned out to be Kelley). Meanwhile, the second pair of cavers (Dave and I) prepared to descend. As the smallest caver, I was supposed to push the lead, which was ~~just wide enough for my body~~. I took a quick look and decided it was impossible. Dave and I switched places (since he had a wet suit) and he started excavations which widened the crevice by about 2 inches. We switched off again and I found that by breathing out I could slide forward slightly. I kept at it and finally broke through (soggy of course) into a colossal chamber that actually permitted a person to stand upright! Ten more minutes of struggling and Dave was standing beside me. Some more digging by Dave opened another lead that, after much swearing and struggling, still proved to be beyond my ability.

The trip out was fairly easy. Dave's passage through the pinch had enlarged it to the point where both Dave and I were outside within 10 minutes. Kelley, Mike, and Gary (may the hair on their goes grow ever longer) had started a fire. Dave and I sat and dried our clothes while Gary, Mike, and Kelley went in. They all passed the pinch to the Pit Stop Room successfully. Kelley and Mike both tried to pass the Keyhole that had stopped me, but without success. By the time they came out it was getting dark.

Just Cave? I never even saw it. Writing this now, I have to ask myself if it was worth it to drive a total of 6 hours for about 2 hours in a little, wet, soggy, cold cave. Answer? HELL YES!

* Outing Club members will fondly remember Kelley's oral trip report of the Microhole excursion.

- Kris Kline

CAVE CLUB ERRATA
THE FALL SEMESTER IN RETROSPECT

Another semester of caving in lieu of studying is behind us and I thought I'd try to give shape, meaning, and the pretension of validity to it so that we won't all feel guilty about our GPA's.

I realize that this is suppose to be the issue we all get on our knees and sing Hosanna's to Bob, but I haven't been caving with him all semester and I've only seen him lead one pitch in my life, so someone else will have to do the major praising. I can only point out that he started the Club with six members and it has grown to a membership of over fifty. Bob and Mike deserve most of the credit for that.

We got off to a rolling start in September with good turnouts at OTR, the Pig Roast at Mike's farm, Fall Ball at Seneca Rocks, and a couple of beginner's cave trips to Glade and 3D-Maze.

Since then, we've had climbing trips to Buzzard Rocks, Hone Quarry, Chimney Rocks, Seneca Rocks, and Carderock, as well as cave trips all throughout the Valley, into West Virginia, and even as far as Roppel Cave in Kentucky. The Banquet was a tremendous success. I wore the best clothes I own and looked like a slob compared to most of you. Kelley, Paul, and Mike did a helluva job organizing it and I think we should have one every semester.

While I'm in a grateful frame of mind, I think we all ought to thank Paul, Mike, Bob, Jeff, Katie, Barb, and Jerry for letting us use their places for our meetings. I think we should all start making a conscious effort to bring as much of our own food and drink as possible and help clean up when the partying is over. No more freeloading.

And while we're discussing freeloading, it is about time people started paying their dues. We need that money--both for Cave Rescue equipment and to help subsidize parties and events such as Pig Roast and the Banquet. You're sure to get your money's worth and paying will assuage your conscious.

The best thing about this semester is we've gotten a whole lot of new people involved. Lee Sattler and Mike Pumphrey showed a lot of promise climbing at Seneca, Jan impressed me at Buzzard Rocks and Kelley evolved into a hard-core caver in just five weeks. Vicki and Kelley both held down offices this semester and we had some good programs on Mammoth Cave and the like.

I'd like to see people start doing more climbing and more serious cave trips. Three hour cave trips and top-roping 5.4 is fun, but I don't think you really start reaping the benefits of climbing until you start leading and the best caving involves 24-hour survey trips into virgin cave. Most of the top climbers and cavers here are about to graduate and/or have mellowed out in their old age. Parties are fine, but caving and climbing are what this club is all about.

ROPPEL REVISITED

Part One: Kelly Kaves in Kentucky

At about 9pm. (EST) Thursday, Oct. 29, Mike Artz, Kelly Price, and I climbed into the Artz-mobile to return to the tortuous tunnels of Roppel Cave. (As an English teacher, I feel obligated to digress here to point out the carefully constructed and undeniably beautiful example of alliteration in the previous sentence). On the surface, we were cheerful and excited, but beneath this external eagerness our party was beset by doubts and split by controversy. (All right, so I'm exaggerating. This journal needs a little spicing up anyway.)

The question was whether or not Kelly was ready for the type of trip (24 hours plus) Mike and I wanted to take. Kelly thought she could handle anything. Mike figured the only way to find out was to let her go for it. I had my doubts. And I had been quite vocal about them. Kelly had only been caving for five weeks; she had only been in four caves. She had not even been underground a total of 24 hours and she had never been vertical caving. Nor had she seen anything to rival the S-survey.

But she was more prepared than she would have been had I not vocalized my doubts. They had helped galvanize her into activity-shopping for gear, a vertical training session, and a nine hour trip in Simmons Mingo. (I tried to get her to crawl to and from classes one day to get her ready for the S-survey, but she wouldn't do it). And she was psychologically prepared in that she was mad as hell and wanted to prove to me that I had seriously underestimated her. I hoped I had.

The first eight hours of the trip were uneventful. But at 5am., just outside Winchester, Ky., our alternator died. Mike and I ran up the hill to the Holiday Inn and called a number of "all-night" towing services. We found that in Winchester a 24-hour towing service means you can call 24 hours a day, but they won't tow you until 8am. So we slept for three hours, until a truck arrived and towed us to a greasy little garage in beautiful downtown Winchester, where a mechanic named Stump worked on the Artz-mobile while Kelly and I ate breakfast at the local diner. My flannel shirt was acceptable, but I had neglected to grease my hair or don my boots and baseball cap announcing my favorite brand of snuff. So I ate my greasy pancakes and eliminated Winchester from my list of potential honeymoon spots.

By 10:30 we were again on the road and we arrived at the fieldhouse at about 2:00pm. We went down to the dig (where the Roppel die-hards had spent over half a year trying to open a second entrance, which would be: a) closer to the more remote parts of the cave; b) large enough to accomodate the biggest cavers and, in the event of a rescue, stretchers; and c) bypass the vertical drops and the S-survey) and tried to convince Pete Crecelius to go

with us, but he was still recovering from a broken ankle. So we went into Cave City and bought our cave food and then returned to the fieldhouse to nap.

That evening, another violent debate threatened to destroy our group's cohesion (dramatic, isn't it?). I wanted to enter the cave that night, so as to exit Saturday night and be able to get a good night's sleep before undertaking the twelve hour drive home Sunday. Mike wanted to delay our entry until Saturday morning. He claimed he needed more sleep. I thought (and still do think) that he wanted to hang around and socialize with the various and sundry cavers who were starting to arrive. Kelly vacillated for a while and finally cast her lot with Mike.

Enraged, I stole Mike's car and drove back to Harrisonburg, stranding them in Kentucky. Well, I thought about it anyway, as Kelly and I crawled into our respective beds to try to sleep over the noise Mike was making as he socialized with various and sundry cavers who were starting to arrive.

At any rate, we entered the cave at 10am. on Halloween. Kelly was impressed by the seventy foot rappel into Coalition Chasm, which is almost, but not quite, as dramatic as its name. Then we started through the S-survey. I was dragging two packs in. The extra pack contained extra food and clothing for Kelly and I. She wanted to carry it half the time, but so far I was feeling chivalrous. I hauled it through most of the S-survey, but just before the tightest section (S-64 to S-81; Boundary Dome). I sadistically gave her the pack. Innocently, she accepted it.

"Don't you think you should keep in until Boundary Dome?" Mike queried. I gave him a dirty look. "No". The way I had it figured, she was the smallest person, so she could lug the damn pack through the tightest part. I certainly didn't want to. So she lugged it through and then I took it back and hauled it through the stooping and crawling of the Hobbit trail (where she again had the advantage, being shorter). After a brief rest stop at Arlie Way, we headed out to the Ping-Pong Crawl, which Jim Borden had suggested as a dry, easy survey. We took our time getting there, as it was a part of the cave Mike and I had never seen before and we all wanted to look it over. It was an interesting journey, highlighted by the drama of a rope-swing pendulum over a fifteen-foot wide, seemingly bottomless, canyon and the spectacular beauty of the formations of Yahoo Avenue, which would do credit to any tourist cave, yet are all the more lovely by virtue of not being in one. We ate a meal in the loveliest spot we could find.

When at last we reached the Ping-Pong Crawl, we found that its dryness was its one redeeming feature. Though it ranged from 10 to 15 feet in width, it was only 1-3 feet in height and just as muddy as it could be. But we started surveying anyway. Kelly ran tape and set points, I took instrument readings and Mike sketched and recorded. Progress was slow by nature of the passage

and we made it worse by our own stupidity. Kelly set the top half of her lamp down in the mud and totally gummed up the water drip. I kept forgetting to move my lamp away while blowing the dust off the compass and succeeded in blowing out my lamp four or five times. Indeed, the entire survey was characterized by the type of careful, intelligent action that caused me to try to pour carbide in the top half of my lamp and wonder why the hole seemed so small. Obviously, the extra sleep Mike had argued for hadn't done us much good. After surveying a paltry 295 feet, we aborted the trip, fixed Kelly's lamp, and headed out.

When we got to I-10, we found that the rock cairn we had built on the way in was still up. That meant, according to our agreement with Jim Bordon, that Jim had successfully dug out the new entrance and we could leave the cave that way. He had also promised to mark the way. We headed that way. It turned out to be a waste of three and a half hours and quite a bit of well-needed energy. We could find neither the entrance nor any of Jim's trail markers. We merely got cold, wet, tired, and disillusioned. Mike and Kelly gave up first and took a nap. I kept looking for another hour, but at last gave up and returned to them.

We started out for the old entrance. Mike and Kelly, after a 45 minute nap, were cold and wanted to move fast. But I had just been trotting up and down canyons for the last hour and was exhausted. Each six-inch high piece of breakdown looked like Mt. Everest to me and I was so tired I was stumbling on bits of dust and the like. Meanwhile, Mike kept saying things like, "Boy, I feel good. My second wind is coming on. I can't wait to get out and eat a steak." I think he was trying to encourage me, but if I'd had enough energy I would have strangled him. But I didn't have the strength, so I stumbled into Arlie Way, past the cairn which had so cruelly lifted our hopes and on to the start of the Hobbit Trail, where I rolled out an Insulite pad that was stashed there, lay down on it and blew out my lamp.

"Are you going to sleep?" Mike asked intelligently.

"Yes." I answered, and wondered whether or not I'd have the energy to strangle him when I woke up.

They shook me awake an hour later (the first time I had slept for more than about a minute in a cave) and announced that it was time to go. Their scheduling seemed somewhat arbitrary to me, but I needed to take a leak, so I stumbled up and did so. By the time I had finished, Kelly was heading out, so I followed her, still dog-tired and only half awake.

But I couldn't catch up to her. She kept pulling ahead. And she was supposed to be the exhausted novice. But she had slept more than me, she was still shorter than me (funny how that worked out), and I still had two packs. I decided to give her one--if I could catch her. I finally did--at Boundary Dome--and made her carry it through the tightest part on the way out

as well as on the way in. Nor did I take it back at S-64. Indeed, it wasn't until about S-30 that I felt guilty enough to take it back. As soon as I did, she crawled off and left me behind again. She didn't gas until she was ascending the seventy-foot pit. Then, in a last burst of energy, I soloed up the 35-foot pit, hauled up all the packs at once, and belayed Kelly up while Mike soloed behind her. It was 12:30 Sunday afternoon. We had been in the cave for 26½ hours. Still, it was the shortest of the three trips I had been on in Roppel. While we hadn't accomplished much surveying, Kelly had more than doubled her underground time, gained her first surveying and vertical experience, and demonstrated to both herself and others that she is reasonably hard-core.

We headed back to the fieldhouse, cursed Borden for not marking the trail better, ate lunch, and drove home, arriving at JMU at approximately 2 a.m.

PART TWO: Kave Klub Kreeps Out in Kentucky - Returns One to Roppel

When Mike Artz and I were recruiting cavers for our Halloween trip to Roppel, a number of people said they couldn't make it then, but wanted to go over Christmas. All through December, especially after the Banquet, we heard people talking about going to Roppel. Mike made arrangements with his father to borrow a van. He expected to need one, to take all the people who were going to Roppel. But over the twenty-three days of X-mas break, only one JMU caver made it to Kentucky. Mike and Jeff Laushey wanted to go, but when everyone else backed out, they couldn't afford the gas and had to abort. This promising to go and then backing out did two things. First, it made us look like a bunch of bombastic nerds to Jim Borden. And second, it screwed over Mike and Jeff.

Some of the people who backed out undoubtedly had good reasons. They had intended to go but something important and unavoidable came up. But others backed out because they never had any intention of going. They were just mouthing off because they felt it made them look more hard-core to be talking about going to Roppel. These people are the ones who really screwed over Mike and Jeff. I regret that we have such people in the Cave Club.

But I had a good trip. I drove down, Jan. 1, with Chris Welsh and Diane Donaldson and went on a 27-hour trip Jan. 2-3 with Chris and Pete Crecelius. We set over 40 stations, surveyed over 1100 feet (about half of it virgin) and made one important tie-in deep in the cave.

I have now logged over 200 hours underground. More than half of that total (108 hours) has come in Roppel. And that is on a total of just four trips! Roppel, by the way, is now over 32 1/2 miles long, the tenth longest cave in the world, and growing fast. Any of you who are serious about serious caving should give serious thought to a trip down there over Spring Break.

- Bruce Beard

was getting mad and I could see by the grim set on her face that she was resolving to show me--prove that I was wrong and underestimating her. I admired her spirit, but marvelled at her innocence. I was convinced she had no idea what she was getting into. She wanted to go on a long trip as soon as possible to show me just how wrong I was.

"Fine," I told her. "Mike and I will take you to Simmons-Mingo. We'll go about 10 hours at our own pace. We won't slow up for you, we won't help you up climbs, and we won't fix any of your gear. If you can't keep up, you can't go to Roppel."

"OK," she agreed immediately. "How about tomorrow?"
"Tomorrow?" I whimpered. "I've got to drive home Friday."

"So what?" said Mike. "I can leave by 11:30 a.m. It's a three hour drive down, we'll spend ten hours in the cave and then drive back. We'll be back here by 4 a.m. Friday and you'll get three hours sleep before you have to teach class."

"What's wrong?" Kelley asked sarcastically. "Wimping out?"

That decided it. Male ego won out over common sense. I agreed. That afternoon, Kelley and I went shopping. She bought the things I had listed for her and I bought my first pair of panty hose.

We left at 1:30 p.m. instead of 11:30 a.m. The fault was entirely Mike's. The drive down was pleasant enough, although Kelley was still a bit bitter towards me. I felt like something of a bastard and knew I deserved it, but honestly felt I was doing it for her own good.

By the time we had reached the entrance, changed and entered it was 5 p.m. So much for my three hours of sleep.

Mike moved through the cave quickly. His goal was to reach Base Camp. But first we had to get to RP1 (resting place) and then to RP2, which Mike, Bob, Gary, Paul, Blaise, or Bob-Bob had never reached in their two bivouac trips (24 and 32 hours, respectively). We were going to have to make good time.

Simmons-Mingo, part of the large, five-cave (SM, Simmons Pot, Oil Drum Falls, My Cave, Dreen Cave) system we are thinking about surveying over the next few years, starts out with a series of tight crawls and then started us down a walking canyon. In a surprisingly short time, we passed the point of deepest penetration of the previous JMU parties and continued on towards RP2.

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Simmons-Mingo has a rather impressive vertical relief. While there are no drops requiring ascending gear (these do exist in the other two sections of the cave complex), there are a lot of short climbs, a couple of short rappels and one cable ladder climb. (I fulfilled one of my life-long "macho" dreams by French-Arming on one of the rappels--about 15 feet). We also had to wade through a calf-deep stream, but at last we reached RP2 just in time for dinner.

I was tired and ready to turn back, but I didn't want to admit it so I asked Kelley if she wanted to go back. She said she felt great. That made me feel even worse.

After dinner, we pushed on through a three dimensional maze, following the telephone wire that had been left in the cave by the same group that established the Base Camp and RP stations. By the time we reached RP2, we had spent over half of our allotted 10 hours and needed to turn back if I was going to make it home in time to teach my 8 a.m. class.

So we turned and headed out--at an Artz-pace. We reemerged at 2 a.m., after a fast paced nine-hours of fairly tough caving. Kelley was definitely showing the effects of it the last 45 minutes or so, but so were Mike and I. Indeed, Mike and I were so sleepy that Kelley had to do most of the driving home while the "hard-asses" sacked out. We got back to campus at 5:30 a.m. and I didn't get to sleep until that afternoon at home in Maryland.

It was a good trip for all three of us; Kelley's first hard trip ever and the first one Mike and I had had since July. Kelley had proven that her self-confidence was justified and went on to reprove it in Roppel. I had learned that just because it took me three and a half years to be ready for hardcore-caving, didn't mean someone with more inherent toughness couldn't do it in three weeks.

-Bruce Beard

MUSG #18

SUBTERRANEAN SOAP

BY MIKE BRIZ & BRUCE BEARD

WHEN WE LAST LEFT LEFT OUR HEROES,
THEY WERE STUCK IN A COLLAPSED CAVE.
THE LOYAL HOTDOG WAS ATTEMPTING TO
DIG THEM OUT!

THIS'LL NEVER WORK. I'VE
GOT TO GO FOR HELP.
THAT'S WHAT LASSIE WOULD
DO -- THAT FOX!



THE HOURS PASS. MANLY HAS EATEN ALL THE
GORP. COLD, HUNGRY, AND TIRED, OUR HEROES
CONTEMPLATE THEIR EVER-DIMINISHING
PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE.

SO HOTDOG DEPARTS FOR HELP. BUT DOES HE
KNOW THE CIRC NUMBER? BETTER YET, DOES
HE HAVE FIFTEEN CENTS?

SUDDENLY OUR HEROES HEAR A DISTANT RUMBLING,
WHICH GROWS IN FORCE AS IT NEARS THEM..

WHERE'S HOTDOG?
DO YOU THINK HE
DESERTED US?

HOW LONG
IS IT?

HOTDOG WOULDN'T
DO THAT, HE'LL BE
BACK!

THAT'S A
RATHER
PERSONAL
QUESTION!

HE MEANT
HOW LONG
HAVE WE BEEN
IN HERE.

JUST ABOUT
SEVEN
HOURS
OVER-
DOE.

I THINK
WE SHOULD
SHHH! WHAT'S
THAT?

I DON'T
KNOW!
QUIET
EVERYONE.

RUMBLE
RUMBLE

WHAT IS THAT RUMBLING NOISE? ARE
RESCUERS ON THE WAY? IS IT AN AVALANCHE?
IS BOZO FARTING?

HI, ARE YOU'LL ALL RIGHT?
FOLLOW ME, THIS TUNNEL IS
SAFE AND LEADS
RIGHT TO THE
SURFACE.

FAR
OUT.

THANKS
BUDDY!

WHAT A
HUNK!

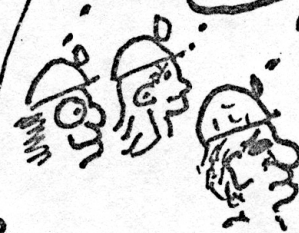


SHOCKED AND RELIEVED, OUR HEROES FOLLOW THEIR
SAGIOR TO THE SURFACE. BUT BEFORE THEY CAN
ASK HIM ANY OF THE QUESTIONS ON THEIR MIND,
HE DIVES INTO THE GROUND AND TUNNELS OFF
AT SUPERHUMAN SPEED.

HEY MAN
DIG
THAT!

WHO WAS
THAT MASKED
CAVER?

SIGH!



I DON'T
KNOW BU
HE LEFT
THIS SILVER
TIP CLEANER