



The Region Record

Vol. XIV No. 2 Spring 2001

Chairman's Column

We are coming out of our long winter's nap and the days are getting longer. So, we have more daylight to drive to our favorite caving areas.

Between the last two meetings I wrote a letter, on behalf of the VAR, to inquire about the renewal of Greer Mining's permit to mine around Hellhole. I received a letter back from Greer stating their intentions to protect Hellhole Cave and the several endangered species that inhabit the cave.

The mapping and surveys of Hellhole Cave show the location of the cave passages relative to the quarry operations. Looking at the location of the current Greer Lime Quarry operations. The cave passages are not in close proximity to any of Greer's present or future mining operations under their permit. Also no mapping and survey data has revealed any new cave locations to the west, towards the existing quarry.

Greer Lime has voluntarily instituted a 250 foot buffer zone around the last known cavern close to their operation and an additional 250 foot restricted blasting zone. Greer Lime has also committed to refrain from conducting any mineral removal within the buffer zone, the restricted blasting zone and under Hellhole Cave. It would appear from Greer Lime's letter that they are acting in a responsible manner concerning the protection of Hellhole Cave and the several

endangered species that inhabit the cave.

The quarry permit has been renewed for an additional five year term, their permit will now expire on July 24, 2005.

What more could we, as cavers, ask any landowner than to help protect a cave environment and the endangered species.

Craig

Hope to see all of you at the VAR meeting in SW Virginia.

Spring VAR 2001: What a Deal!

Come to Spring VAR 2001 and we'll throw in two bonus regions! That's right, it's three regions for the price of one!

Pine Mountain Grotto is hosting the very next VAR at beautiful Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, located where Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee meet. That means you can cave on VAR, SERA, and OVR territory from one convenient location.

We'll have led trips in all three states: easy, medium, and hardcore caves; dry, damp, and wet; horizontal and vertical. For multi-sport enthusiasts, there's great mountain biking (easy to epic), hiking, and paddling (class I-III) nearby.

Saturday night we'll offer the usual libations, in addition to a burger bar dinner (with vegetarian options, of course).

For detailed information on this once-in-a-lifetime VAR, contact Thor Bahrman at bplaw@2geton.net.

VPI Grotto Supports Cave Purchase

by Walt Pirie

In early January, it was announced that the WVCC had signed a contract to purchase the property containing the Lightner entrance to McClung's cave; the first successful purchase by the Conservancy, after a valiant but unsuccessful attempt at purchasing Maxwellton Sink.

When the VPI Cave Club heard of the contract, it initiated a fund drive to support the purchase among club members and members of SIVTAC, an informal group of past members and friends of the club. The fund drive formally ended on March 10 with a total of over \$2,350.

I'm writing this partially out of pride in the club. But also to note that although the club treasury, like that of most grottoes, could only send a small donation in support of the purchase, its members and friends will stand up and be counted when something important arises. Perhaps this could be a model for other grottoes in the future.

The *Region Record*

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The *Region Record* is the quarterly publication of the Virginia Region of the National Speleological Society. Any articles, announcements, or other materials of general interest to cavers in the Region are welcome. **Send all material to Bob Hoke (6304 Kaybro St., Laurel, MD 20707 (301)725-5877, E-mail bobhoke@erols.com).** Electronic submissions (email or disk) are encouraged, but any form of input is welcome.

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The *Region Record* is printed by members of the DC Grotto and the Potomac Speleological Club.

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Regional Calendar

- Apr. 13-15 **Grand Caverns cleanup.** This is an annual event and a good way to see the caves on the Grand Caverns property. Contact Andy Reeder at 540-297-3711 for info.
- Apr. 28 **Reconstruction of the Silers Cave gate** (Berkeley County, WV) Help is needed to haul materials for the new gate in this popular cave. See the article in this issue for more info.
- May 4-6 **Spring VAR meeting** at Cumberland Gap Historical Park, VA. See article and flyer in this issue for info.
- July 23-27, 2001 **2001 NSS Convention** in Mt. Vernon, KY (50 miles south of Lexington)
- Aug. 1 Deadline for submitting material for the Fall issue of the *Region Record*.
- Sept. 28-30 **Fall VAR meeting** to be hosted by RASS at their field station in Virginia. More details in the next *Region Record*.

- Nov. 10 **WVCC annual banquet** in Lewisburg, WV. More info later.
- Spring, 2002 **Spring VAR meeting** to be hosted by the WVCC.
- June 24-28, 2002 **2002 NSS convention** in Camden, Maine
- Aug. 4-8, 2003 **2003 NSS Convention** in Porterville, CA

LIST YOUR CLUB EVENTS HERE!

If your club is hosting events of regional interest, send a notice to the *Region Record* editors and have the event added to the next *Record's* calendar. There is no charge for this valuable service.

Virginia Speleological Survey Report

by Phil Lucas, VSS

The following is a Virginia Speleological Survey (VSS) report submitted to the VAR business meeting on Sept 24, 2000:

The total number of Virginia caves is 3853 and the number of surveyed cave passages total 423 miles.

Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation receives projects for review under their Natural Heritage Program. Those projects located within karst areas are sent to the VSS (Phil Lucas) for further review. We have reviewed 278 projects since March to date (9/22/2000). From these, it has been determined that 36 caves could or will be impacted by the proposed projects. Of these 36 caves, three are on the Significant Cave List and two are archaeologically significant. And one is a new candidate for the Significant Cave List.

Atwell Pit and Chimney Rock Caves in Tazewell County have been blasted and collapsed by the owner who is developing the property for commercial businesses. These caves were not completely investigated and only partial inventories were conducted prior to their destruction. It is quite possible that both caves may have been candidates for the Significant Cave List.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is the owner of many caves. There has never been a policy or procedure by VDOT to protect, manage, or to acknowledge that caves are a resource. Most of VDOT activities dealing with caves are to seal shut cave entrances in order to protect the traveling public and to discourage pedestrian traffic on their right of ways. The vast majority of cave entrances on

VDOT right of ways have been sealed. Those remaining are ones where a large cost is involved or ones that they simply do not know about. The VSS has recommended to the Virginia Cave Board to take steps to develop an agreement with VDOT where cave entrances are not sealed and a management plan prepared to utilize and protect the cave resource. A meeting is planned for VSS and Cave Board representatives to meet with VDOT concerning this matter.

Loudon County is located just west of Fairfax County in Northern Virginia east of the Blue Ridge well outside the limestone counties of Virginia! A new cave has been added to the Significant Cave List. Rust Cave #1 in Loudon County. This was determined after a field investigation was conducted following a request for environmental impacts by the Natural Heritage Program. Rust Cave #1 is located in Loudon County, an area not known for caves or karst. This cave is significant in the following categories. Geological: The cave is developed in Limestone clast conglomerate Calico marble also known as the Leesburg member of the Balls Bluff siltstone. No where else in Virginia. Are caves known in this Triassic conglomerate. The cave is over 1200 feet long and for this type of formation, the length is remarkable. Hydrological: The cave is phreatic and reaches down to the water table. Biological: A wide range of terrestrials and aquatics are found in this cave. Some outside their known ranges and perhaps some "firsts". Archeological and Historical significance may also be determined as indicated by anecdotal evidence. Unfortunately, this cave and another smaller cave close by, Rust Cave #2, is located on property where the construction of a school is planned. According to our information, the caves are located where a planned septic field is to be located and the caves will

be blasted and collapsed. Further field investigation is planned. (An update: The construction of the school is no longer being planned for this site and the planning department of Loudon County are aware of these unusual caves and their contents).

Silers Cave Gate Repairs Scheduled for April 28-29!

by Jim McConkey

The long awaited new gate at Silers Cave is finally going in over the weekend of April 28-29. We are opting for a serious heavy metal gate just inside the current entrance which should hopefully foil the vandals for some time to come. We would like to thank the Sligo and Baltimore Grottos for their financial support!

The current plan is for a small handful of welders to prefabricate as many parts as possible on April 21st. On Saturday, April 28th we will meet at the cave at 10:00 AM to begin installing the gate. We will need lots of help to haul the steel and the tools up the hill to the cave, and take the tools back down in the afternoon. We will need several people to belay the steel down the pit and into the cave all day. If we can't finish in one day, we will spend the night locally and finish the job on Sunday the 29th. Caving will not be allowed during the construction, but we plan to have the cave open on Sunday for all helpers.

We plan on having food and drinks for all workers on the 28th. Please bring webbing to help carry the steel. Parking at the cave is limited, so please carpool if possible. You will probably want to bring a chair if you plan to stay a while.

We need the following special equipment:

- Portable gas and electric welders and generators
- 1" electric impact drill
- large water and drink coolers
- portable tables

If you would like to volunteer to help on any or all days, please contact Jim McConkey. Steel haulers, welders, food preparers & servers, traffic directors, entertainers and even armchair supervisors are welcome (well, maybe not the supervisors!).

For the most current information check the Sligo Grotto website at <http://sligogrotto.batcave.net/fixgate.htm>

IMAX Caving Movie Opens in DC

by Bob Hoke

The long-awaited *Amazing Caves* IMAX movie had its Washington DC Premier on March 13 at the Smithsonian Institution. A pre-showing reception was co-hosted by the Smithsonian and the NSS, and was attended by approximately 400 people.

Apparently the reception was primarily intended to allow cavers to meet (and perhaps influence) a long list of politicians and influential Government officials. However, the organizers did not keep a list of the officials who actually attended and it appears that their expectations of a large turnout of dignitaries and press folks did not materialize. The many cavers who attended reported that it was a good event and that everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Reviews of *Amazing Caves* have been somewhat mixed, especially

within the caving community. There is general agreement that the film is visually stunning, but since it is intended for a general audience it does not show the type of caving familiar to most of us.

The movie will be showing at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History on the Mall in Washington. Show times are noon, 2:00, 2:50, and 4:45 daily. The movie will be showing at least through June 14.

Please Tell Us if you Move... and Write Legibly

Evelyn Bradshaw does an outstanding job of maintaining the mailing list for the *Region Record*. However, if you are moving you can make her life a lot easier if you tell her your new address as soon as you know it. In addition, the Region will not have to pay the 60-cent fee to have the *Region Record* forwarded to you (and you will be assured that it does not get lost somewhere in the Post Office). Send address changes to Evelyn Bradshaw, 10826 Leavells Rd., Fredericksburg, VA 22407.

Also, please write legibly when you sign up at a VAR meeting. If we can't read your registration form you won't receive the *Region Record* issues you are entitled to. Three folks (Linda Jackson, Margie Loudermilk, and Jason Meneely) are currently not receiving the *Record* because their addresses were illegible.

Finished Reading Already? We need more *Region Record* material!

Yep, this is a pretty short issue. If you have any material of regional interest please send it to the address shown on page 2.

We don't mind reprinting articles from grotto newsletters. Just send them in. The *Region Record* goes to almost 500 cavers throughout the Region, so it is a great way to tell outsiders what you have done or suck them into your local projects.

The deadline for submitting material for the Summer issue of the *Region Record* is June 1, 2001.

Minutes of the Fall VAR Region Meet

September 24, 2000 8:58 AM
Maxwelton, WV

Pine Mountain Grotto moved to adjourn the April 30 meeting. Independent Bill Nelson seconded - motion passed

The Meeting was called to order at 9:02

Reports

Secretary - Carol Tideman

A motion was made by VPI to accept the minutes as published. DC Grotto seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer - John Fox

A financial report was presented. VPI moved to accept Pine Mountain Grotto seconded. Motion passed

Vice Chair - Judy Fisher

Will be attending the Potomac Highlands Conservancy. A written report will be submitted to the *Region Record*.

Chairman - Craig Hindman

Our tax status with the state is OK.

Conservation Chair - Andy Reeder

There have been rumors about trash around caves in the region. Andy is putting together a conservation report form.

Bowden Cave Cleanup -

Summer - Frederick

Winter - BATS

Spring - DC/Tri-State

Fall BATS Oct. 28

Island Ford Cave Cleanup -

Winter - Front Royal

Spring - New River

Fall - Charlottesville

Easter at Grand Caverns -

formation restoration is planned. The Regional Park Authority is putting up half the money to create a master plan to make it a regional park.

Fletchers was cleaned up by Keltic Cavers

Goodwin's Cave

Blue Ridge Grotto took a cub scout den into Goodwin's on June 3, 2000. The trip was a success. The cave continues to "heal" from the vandalism. The property and cave gates are secure. We have just learned from the neighbors of Goodwin's Cave that a proposed pipeline (natural gas) is to go through the cave and adjoining wet land. There will be an informational meeting in Roanoke Oct. 3

Staunton Cave - Ted Andrus

The new city manager is receptive to working with us in developing a management plan. The city is still questioning if we have liability insurance. We are trying for ownership but probably get an

easement. We are taking the city folks on a trip to the cave in October. An agreement will be in place before we start investing volunteer time in the project. Expect something in writing by spring.

Landowner Recognition Awards-

Don Anderson
Ferrell James, Zitt James JR.
Owner of Ferrell Caves #1-26 were presented the award. The Dore's - Scott Hollow Cave - were nominated.

VAR Outstanding Service Award

- Tom Spina - no report

Landowner Legal Support Committee - Bob Hoke - no news**Region Record** - Bob Hoke

The *Region Record* needs material. Deadlines are Dec. 15 and March 15.

Patch Committee - Ernst Kastning

- no report

VAR List Server - Walt Pirie

There are approximately 10-15 new subscribers - not very active. One change was made - when someone wants a reply the default is to the sender not to all on the list.

VAR Web site - Vitus Eidukevicius

The site up and running. Approximately 30 visits a day.

Cave Bucks - Judy Fisher

Collect, send, spend

VSS - Phil Lucas

Total number of caves 3853. Total number of surveyed cave passages 423 miles. [*Phil Lucas submitted a written report for these minutes, but I persuaded him to update it to be an article in this issue instead. Ed.*]

WVASS - George Dasher

WVASS has produced two publications within the past year, the Spring Creek Dye Tracing monograph, which documented WVACS' dye tracing in the

Culverson, Buckeye, and lower and west Spring Creek basins, and the 2000 NSS Convention Guidebook.

WVASS' annual meeting was at the 2000 OTR, and the minutes were published in the October 2000 *West Virginia Caver*. WVASS has provided input to several agencies and organizations (including the West Virginia Division of Highways and Division of Environment Protection) concerning 12 potential problems, and anyone wanting more information on these should contact George Dasher for a copy of the minutes. George's contact addresses are 63 Valley Drive, Elkview, West Virginia 25071; 304-965-1361; wvcaver@juno.com.

WVASS is continuing to collect information on the State's caves. The coordinators for the various areas are as follows:

J.C. Fisher: Mineral, Morgan, Hampshire, Berkeley, and Jefferson Counties.

Pete Penczer: Hardy County.

George Dasher: Pendleton County, with Gordon Brace for Germany Valley.

Nick Schaar: Mercer County.

Phil Lucas and Bill Balfour: The Culverson Creek Basin.

Jeff Bray: Monroe County east of the Sinks Grove Anticline.

Joseph Caldwell: Ludingtons and McClung's Cave area.

Doug Moore: Moore County [*Dasher said Moore County, but it probably should be Tucker County. Ed.*]

Cliff Lindsay: Renick Peninsula.

Several of these projects have regularly scheduled work weekends. These are:

Taylor Run of Randolph County; the first weekend of each month; contact Devin Kouts at 703-288-0166.

Germany Valley; the second weekend of each month; contact Gordon Brace at 703-288-3889 or braces@iop.com.

Tucker County; the third weekend of each month; contact Doug Moore at 304-592-2610 or doug@karstsports.com.

Mercer County; the fourth weekend of each month; contact Nick Schaefer at 304-369-1749.

At present, WVASS has no Grant County coordinator and is searching for one. Also at present, the State of West Virginia has approximately 3,800 known caves

History of the Region

No further progress. (Mary Sue Socky commented "it's been a busy summer and I do procrastinate"). She has heard rumors that Tom Spina is dropping out of caving, but has not talked to Tom about his lack of caving plans, or plans for the "History Part 2" project.

West Virginia Cave Conservancy

Negotiations are underway to get Maxwellton's. They are pursuing others. Rapps is still closed - pursuing excavation permits for the archeological project - will resurvey the cave

Power Lines - Will Orndorff

No action since the testimony. Bats are being tagged and a bat survey is ongoing. Appalachian Power will be monitoring springs, water supplies and tower sitings.

New Dixie

One more survey trip should wrap up the resurvey. A decision on the I-73 route will be decided in October 2000. (The proposed western route for I-73 would definitely impact New Dixie Cave.) It was noted at the July 15, 2000 survey trip that vandals had tampered with the lock on New Dixie, but were unsuccessful in gaining entry.

Host Grotto Report

WVASS reported approximately 215 people attended.

Old Business

Region Non-Profit Status - Craig Hindman

We are back in good graces

Host for Spring 01 - Pine Mountain - at Cumberland Gap - 1st weekend in May - there will be led trips on Friday and Saturday.

Host for Fall 01 - RASS - no report

Host for Spring 02 - WVCC - possibly at Natural Chimney's

• COG Report - Walt Pirie

- Passed by the BOG - NSS membership will receive priority at the Mammoth Field Camp. The Forest Service provided conservation video's for every grotto.

- 1st item - only NSS members can submit in NSS salon competitions

- 2nd item - restructuring of the assignment of number of votes per group

- 3rd item - cave health insurance

- 4th item - base membership representation on NSS records - failed for lack of motion

- 5th item - Change wording for COG voting from grotto's and sections to Internal Organization - postponed

- John Cole elected Chair

New Business

Host for Fall 2002 - no volunteers

VPI moved to give the officers a discretionary fund of \$50. WVASS seconded

Gene Turner was recognized and thanked for allowing us to have the VAR here and for years of friendship

Grant Requests: NONE

Elections

Pine Mountain Grotto moved to elect the same slate of officers. Blue Ridge seconded - motion passed

Announcements

Project Underground has received 1 year of funding from the state of Virginia. Contact Carol Zokaites if you care to host a workshop

Cheryl Jones - the NPS and the NSS have entered an agreement - The NPS will purchase materials for a cave and karst initiative. 5 NSS & 5 NPS volunteers will be running workshops - there will be a stipend for attending - trained people will give at least 4 presentations to students - ground water module purchased by NPS.

Cheryl Jones reported the IMAX movie is due to be released next spring. The NSS reviewed the first draft, sent input. It is not a high adventure file. It is science oriented

Tri-State has purchased a ground water module and will loan it out

Soil and water districts have ground water modules and will loan them out.

NCRC level 1 and 2 seminars needed

Bill Nelson asked about graffiti removal - JMF remover costs \$70 per gallon - he asked it if was effective in removing paint from popcorn - it was recommended you parge popcorn with mud - the mud removes the paint over time

VSS moved to adjourn at 10:30 Pine Mountain seconded.

Respectfully submitted:
Carol Tiderman

SPRING 2001 VAR MEETING AGENDA

SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2001 9:00 AM

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. DELEGATE REGISTRATION
- III. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA
- IV. CALL FOR INDEPENDENTS
- V. OFFICERS REPORTS:
 - A. SECRETARY - CAROL TIDERMAN
 - 1. Motion to accept Fall 00 minutes
 - 2. Other
 - B. TREASURER - JOHN FOX
 - 1. Current Financial Report
 - 2. Other
 - C. VICE-CHAIR - JUDY FISHER
 - D. CHAIRMAN - CRAIG HINDMAN
- VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - A. CONSERVATION CHAIR - ANDY REEDER
 - 1. Report on activities
 - 2. Call for volunteers
 - Bowden Cave -
 - Summer _____
 - Winter _____
 - Island Ford Cave -
 - Summer _____
 - Winter _____
 - 3. Other
 - B. GOODWIN'S CAVE MANAGEMENT - BLUE RIDGE GROTTO
 - C. STAUNTON CAVE - TED ANDRUS
 - D. LANDOWNER RECOGNITION AWARD - DON ANDERSON
 - E. VAR OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD - TOM SPINA
 - F. LANDOWNER LEGAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE - BOB HOKE
 - G. THE REGION RECORD - BOB HOKE, PAULINE APLING, BARRY CHUTE
 - H. PATCH COMMITTEE - KAREN KASTNING

- I. VAR LIST SERVER - WALT PIRIE
- J. WEB PAGE - VITUS EIDUKEVICIUS
- K. CAVE BUCKS - J.C. FISHER
- L. VSS - PHIL LUCAS
- M. WVSS - GEORGE DASHER
- N. HISTORY OF THE REGION - TOM SPINA, MARY SUE SOCKY
- O. WVCC - DAVE COWAN
- P. POWER LINES - WILL ORNDORFF
- Q. NEW DIXIE - BLUE RIDGE GROTTO
- R. OTHER
- VII. HOST GROTTO REPORT - PINE MOUNTAIN GROTTO
- VIII. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. HOST GROTTO FOR THE FALL 01 MEETING - RASS
 - B. HOST GROTTO FOR THE SPRING 02 MEETING WVCC
 - C. Other
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- IX. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. HOST GROTTO FOR FALL 02 MEETING
 - _____
 - B. OTHER _____
- XI. GRANT REQUESTS - SUBMITTED TO CHAIR
 - A. MAKC - BILLY CLAY PIT
- XII. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- XIII. ADJOURNMENT

SPRING VAR!

May 4-6 2001

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
Hosted by PINE MOUNTAIN GROTTO



Featuring several of the classic caves located in the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park!

Great Camping!
Toilets!!
Hot Showers!!!

CGNHP Campground is located near the border of KY, TN, and VA! Where else could you cave in 3 Regions - all in one central area?

Electrical Hookups available for an additional fee. Come spend an exciting weekend of caving, camping, and partying with your friends from the Pine Mountain Grotto!

Hiking, Mountain Biking, Canoeing, and Whitewater Paddling all nearby!

The park and camping area can be accessed from Virginia by traveling west on Highway 58. For driving directions, call Mike at (859) 792-2462



2001 **SPRING** VAR Pre-Registration

(Please detach or copy and mail to address below)

Primary Registrant _____ NSS # _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ e-mail _____

Phone _____ Grotto/Affiliation _____

Secondary Registrants (from the same household)

Name _____ NSS # _____

Saturday Evening meal will be furnished!

** Vegetarian meal for Primary or Secondary Registrants - Number needed _____

	Cost	Quantity	Amount
Primary	\$20.00	1	\$20.00
Secondary	\$15.00		\$
Total Enclosed:			\$

Please make checks payable to Pine Mountain Grotto and mail by April 30, 2001 to:

Pine Mountain Grotto / P.O. Box 246 / Gray, KY 40734-0246

For Additional information, call **Mike** after 4:00 P.M.: **(859) 792-2462**

National Speleological Society
10826 Leavells Rd.
Fredericksburg, VA 22407-1261

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Spring 2001 Regional News

If you want to continue receiving the *Region Record*, please read this . . .

Individuals may receive the *Region Record*, the newsletter of the Virginia Region of the NSS, either by regularly attending Spring or Fall VAR (regional meetings) and paying registration fees; or through subscription. Subscriptions are \$3.00 per year and may be prepaid for up to three years. Checks should be made payable to VAR and sent to the circulation manager. You do not have to be an NSS member to receive the *Record*.

Complementary copies are sent to grottos in the Region and to other groups with which the Region exchanges newsletters. In addition, newcomers to the Region will receive one or two complementary copies.

Please copy or send this entire page. The address label contains information we need to expedite processing. Thanks.

____ I want to continue receiving the *Region Record*. Enclosed, to maintain my subscription, are dues in the amount of:
(please circle one) \$3.00 for one year \$6.00 for two years \$9.00 for three years

Name _____ NSS Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP (+4) _____

Grotto (or other caving organization that I claim as my primary caving affiliation) _____

Note: Anyone who recently attended a VAR or mailed a membership check to Evelyn Bradshaw but the expiral date is not reflected on the mailing label should check with her about their membership status before making a new payment at this time. Some labels slipped through without that information.

Please make checks payable to VAR and send to:
Evelyn Bradshaw, 10826 Leavells Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22407-1261