



The Region Record

Vol. XVI No. 3 Summer 2003

Chairman's Column

The spring VAR was an event that will not soon be forgotten. As if the persistent rain was not enough, Mother Nature decided that the campground needed a good flushing while we were using it. Despite being given notice many did not believe the water would rise as fast as it did and they had to scramble to get their gear to higher ground. Everyone got out safely, although there were some items left to be recovered when the waters receded. The float trips in the campground brought back memories of canoe races at an OTR many years ago at Alpine Shores. Everyone took the water event in stride and looked at it as entertainment. The local Volunteer Fire Department came by to render assistance, but all there was for them to do was to remove a few vehicles that could not stay on the road. Doug Moore and his jeep towed several cars out that were stuck in the mud. A big thanks goes to the six brave souls in the inflatable rubber raft who challenged the currents to recover kegs and taps from the pavilion. If you were not at the VAR, the water reached the third road past the Kiddie Corral and reached a depth of 14 inches in the pavilion.

Some folks left the site on Saturday night and many more early Sunday morning. With the warning of another storm with high winds on

the way, I decided to cancel the business meeting. We would have been hard pressed to have a quorum and safety was a higher priority.

One item that was going to be brought up at the meeting was a request to the VAR for a cave survey. The surveying can not start until November and will be scheduled. Carol Tideman will act as the liaison between Grand Caverns and the VAR members interested in working on the project. If you, members of your grotto, or your survey group are interested in mapping Grand Caverns and possibly the other caves on the property and a surface survey, contact Carol with the details. If anyone is interested in being the cartographer for the project, please let Carol know. The VAR will be producing a map for display at the cave and inclusion in the Cave Hill history booklet that is available at the gift shop.

Another item on the agenda was Don Anderson would like to step down from being the chairman of the Landowner Recognition Award Committee. He feels that someone with new ideas might like to take over the position. If anyone is interested, please let me know. I would like to thank Don for his efforts over the past 10 years.

By the Fall VAR we will probably have more new business for the agenda, so make your plans to come to the Fall VAR. Front Royal

Grotto will host the event at Rural Retreat VA. It's a straight shot down Interstate 81.

Craig

Bowden Cave to be Gated in October

by Bob Hoke

There was a major collapse in Bowden Cave in the spring of 2002 that caused the U. S. Forest Service (which owns the majority of the cave) to close their portion to all access. The Forest Service realizes that the cave is a significant recreational resource and they want to reopen the front part, including the Water Course, to visitors.

However, the collapse is unstable and the cave cannot be reopened until a barrier is in place to keep visitors from getting close to the collapse.

The Forest Service now has a contract with an experienced gate builder to construct a barrier between the upstream end of the Water Course and the collapse area. It will be a barrier, not a gate, because there will be no access through it. If the collapse is ever deemed stable the entire barrier will be removed.

(continued on page 3)

The *Region Record*

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 editor@varegion.org)**. Electronic submissions (e-mail or disk) are encouraged, but any form of input is welcome. Non-copyrighted material contained in the *Region Record* may be reprinted by organizations that are affiliated with the VAR or the NSS, provided that proper credit is given to the *Record* and the author. The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, the VAR, the NSS, or their internal organizations.

VAR Officers & Committee Chairs

Chairman: Craig Hindman, 7600 Pindell School Rd., Fulton, MD 20759 (410) 792-0742H, chair@varegion.org
 Vice Chairman: Judy Fisher, (304) 258-4974H, vicechair@varegion.org
 Secretary: Carol Tiderman, (410) 792-0742H, secretary@varegion.org
 Treasurer: John Fox, (540) 831-6468W, treasurer@varegion.org

Conservation: Andy Reeder, 840 Twin Lakes Rd., Green Bay, VA 23492, (434) 392-7452H, (434) 847-1640W
 conservation@varegion.org

Landowner Awards: Don Anderson, P.O. Box 966, Dublin, VA 24084

Region Record Staff

Editors: Bob Hoke, Pauline Apling, Barry Chute
 Proofreader: Meredith Hall Johnson
 Circulation Manager: Meredith Hall Johnson, 8061 Kittiwake Ct., Springfield, VA 22153
 (703) 451-3637H, circulation@varegion.org

Region Record Subscriptions

- New NSS members in the Region receive two complimentary copies of the *Region Record*.
- Current NSS members moving into the Region from elsewhere receive two complimentary copies. Current NSS members who move within the Region get no freebies.
- When a subscription is going to expire the last issue will be stamped "Time to Renew." No renewal notice is sent.
- When a person attends a VAR meeting he/she is automatically added to the list to receive the next four issues. If he/she is already on the list, four additional issues are added to the subscription.
- When multiple people live at the same address only one copy of each issue will be sent to the address unless a box requesting individual issues is checked on the VAR registration form or a request is sent to the Circulation Manager.

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Regional Calendar

- | | |
|--|--|
| Aug. 4-8, 2003 2003 NSS Convention in Porterville, CA. | Oct 10-13 Bowden Cave gating . See article in this issue for info. Contact Bob Hoke at 301-725-5877 or bob@hoke.net for info. |
| Aug. 15 deadline for submitting material for the Fall issue of <i>The Region Record</i> . | Nov. 8 WVCC Annual Banquet at the Brier Inn near Lewisburg, WV. More info later. |
| Aug. 28 - Sep 1 Old Timers Reunion . See information in this issue. | Spring, 2004 Spring VAR meeting hosted by Tri-State Grotto. Date and location to be determined. |
| Aug. 30 WVASS meeting at 7 PM at the OTR site. | July 12-16, 2004 2004 NSS convention in Marquette, Michigan. |
| Sep. 26-28 Fall VAR meeting at Rural Retreat, VA. Sponsored by Front Royal Grotto. See flyer and information in this issue. | |
| Oct. 4 Trout Rock Conser-Vacation . Help clean the NSS-owned Trout Rock caves in Pendleton County, WV. Easy trips suitable for novices. Contact Pauline Apling at 301-604-0764 or papling@erols.com for info. | |

Bowden Gate

(Continued from page 1)

Construction of the barrier will be done over Columbus Day weekend (October 10-13) and lots of caver help will be needed to haul steel, cement, and equipment to the construction site. Hauling will start on Friday, October 10 and continue the next day. Construction will start as soon as sufficient material and supplies are at the site and is expected to be completed by the end of the weekend. Many sherpas will be needed for the project because the collapse site is about 1,200 feet into the cave.

Logistical details (camping, food service, etc.) are still being worked out, but please mark your calendar and plan to come help with this project. Additional details will be sent to grottos in the region, and will be in the next *Region Record*, as soon as the Forest Service works out the final details.

VAR Outstanding Service Awards: Time for Nominations (Again!)

By Meredith Hall Johnson

Please submit your suggestion for the annual VAR Outstanding Service Award. When you nominate someone, please put in a decent paragraph or two as to why that person deserves recognition. Any nomination that comes in without supporting paragraphs will be automatically tossed on the scrap heap. Generally the nominees should be cavers in the Region who have contributed to the Region over the years through cave exploration, survey, administration, whatever.

We have a maximum of three awards to be given out each year.

We already have one well-supported nomination. Thanks to those of you who have already written in. I know that there are many deserving, hard-working VAR cavers out there. Think about the ones you know and take a few minutes to drop me a few lines.

Include your e-mail address along with your suggestion and supporting write-up. Send to me via e-mail at merecaver@wildmail.com, or to my home address, 8061 Kittiwake Ct., Springfield, VA 22153.

The deadline for this year's VAR Award Nominations is July 31, as the Fall VAR is September 26-28, 2003. Thanks.

Spring VAR Meeting was Damp, but Interesting

by Bob Hoke and Barry Chute

The DC Grotto and Potomac Speleological Club hosted the Spring meeting of the Virginia Region at the Old Timers site in Dailey, WV. Despite a poor weather forecast, the event was attended by 319 people, which was far above expectations.

The big feature of the event was a flood that forced everyone out of the lower part of the campground on Saturday night. The good news was that the flood rose slowly and waited until after dinner and the evening program. Everyone was able to get to high ground and the only real damage was to a van that drove into very deep water (it was later dried out and restarted with no long-term damage). The flood also caused cancellation of the VAR Business meeting on Sunday morning (since many people had already left and there seemed to be little interest in having a meeting).

Caving was a bit of a problem since the heavy rains flooded some caves

and made the roads to others impassable. The big conservation project at the VAR was supposed to be a cleanup in Sharps Cave. However, the cave turned out to be in quite good shape so the cleanup ended up being a tourist trip to see the cave's waterfall (which was spectacular due to the wet conditions). Several groups who could not get to other caves also ended up in Sharps, so there was quite a crowd. Fortunately it is a big cave.

Following an outstanding catered dinner on Saturday the evening program was a presentation on West Virginia bats by Craig Stihler. Craig works for the WV Department of Natural Resources and is their expert on bat protection. He kept the large audience interested and attentive with his excellent PowerPoint presentation.

The evening party featured recorded music presented by John Fox, but the main evening activity turned out to be watching the river level rise on a measured stick. By about 10 PM we were getting word that the river was expected to rise another 1-2 feet by 1 AM and that the lower part of the campground would soon be flooded.

The announcement prompted a hurried rush to vacate the flood-prone area and move to higher ground. Fortunately, there was enough time to do so, although the vendors had some problems.

Ultimately the water level in the pavilion was 12-14 inches above the floor. This is not an unusual level for floods at the site, but this is the first time a flood occurred while an event was in progress. A small plaque will be mounted on the utility building wall to mark the high water mark.

The evacuation of the lower part of the campground (where most people were camped) went rather smoothly once people realized that the water was really going to be a problem. However, there were still crowds on the main exit road and the situation would have been

much more serious if the flood had occurred during Old Timers. We suspect that TRA will dust off their established OTR evacuation plan and review it.

The VAR meeting was much better attended than the organizers expected and the event made a \$1,251 profit. The sponsoring organizations have a long-standing policy of not profiting from caving events, so the profits were given away. Fifty percent of the profit went to Pavilion Replacement Fund of The Robertson Association (the sponsors of the Old Timers Reunion and owners of this VAR campground) and the other 50% was split between the Cave Bucks Funds in the two Clubs (and will eventually be donated to purchase or lease caves).

As an aid to future groups considering hosting a VAR meeting, the complete accounting for the Spring VAR meeting is being included in this issue. We strongly encourage all future hosts to publish their financial reports so there is a record of what expenses are "typical" for a VAR meeting. This will make it easier for future event hosts to see what was done in the past.

Building a History of the Squeeze Box

A request from Charles Kahn

For those of you who don't know my name, let me introduce myself in a way that you might recognize. I'm the "really tall guy who sometimes brings a squeeze box to VAR". I designed and built the Potomac Speleological Club's squeeze box which had its debut at a VAR in the mid 90's, and has been copied by several other clubs and grottos. (You know who you are, and it's OK that you copied my design. I copied ideas from several others!)

Most recently, PSC and DC Grotto held the Spring VAR where we introduced the newest twist to the squeeze box genre, the "Guillotine Trough". Unfortunately, we had to cut the evening's trials short for the impromptu entertainment which will go down in regional history as the 2003 VAR Flood!

Since squeeze boxes have become such a significant part of caver entertainment at conventions, regional gatherings, and parties of all sizes, I thought it would be a neat idea to compile a history of its evolution. Most everyone has their favorite story, a squeeze box they

liked the most, or maybe even some classic photographs. I've heard many a story about a plywood "cave" that showed up years ago at an NSS convention. Is there a picture out there? Whatever became of Cleveland Grotto's particle board box? How many people got married after doing "doubles"?

If I can get enough stuff together to make it work, I'd like to print out a brief booklet of interesting facts and anecdotes about squeeze boxes and similar caver entertainment. I'll make it available at a future VAR. I'm not going to make a profit from this, it's just for fun.

So please dig through your scrap book, cull through those old photos, or sit down to write a paragraph of your personal anecdote. Please send your contributions to me, either by e-mail or by snail mail. If you need original materials sent back to you, that's not a problem. Just let me know and give me a return address.

My e-mail address is:
cjkahn62@yahoo.com

My address is: Charles Kahn, 9128 Hardesty Dr., Clinton, MD 20735.

And thanks to everyone, in advance, for your participation!



View of the Spring VAR campground on Sunday morning. The view is from the Kiddie Corral and is looking downstream. The Medical pavilion is out of the photo on the left. Note the temporarily abandoned tarps and picnic tables in the water. There are two porta-potties in the distance. Although one is on its side, all the potties on the site survived. (photo by Barry Chute)



Looking at the main pavilion on Sunday morning. At peak level the water in the pavilion was about 14 inches deep. When this photo was taken it had receded considerably. Fortunately the water rose relatively slowly and was slow moving, so there was no significant damage. (photo by Barry Chute)

The VAR Mailing List

By Meredith Hall Johnson

Hi all. Well, I've been maintaining the VAR Mailing List for a year and a half now. The biggest problem I run into is handwriting worse than my own! PLEASE try to write clearly so that I can read it. If you are in a hurry, slow down. You could pre-register and take your time! It's usually cheaper to pre-register anyhow. After every VAR, when I get the registration forms, there are always some that I plain just can't read. I have to try to guess what they are, or look up a town name through the zip code, if I can figure out what numbers they are supposed to be. That's it, write neat and thanks for reading.

More on A Grotto's Responsibility

By Meredith Hall Johnson

Part Two: Well, last issue I wrote about seeing an ill-prepared group of cavers in a cave. This issue I'd like to talk about conservation. Recently I signed up for a trip during a "caver weekend" and when I arrived, there were 18 people on the trip which originally had a limit of 10. I chose not to go as I thought that was way too many for one cave trip. Not only would the trip leader have a hard time controlling the group and its actions and whereabouts, it is just plain hard on a cave to have that many people tromping through at the same time. Granted, this was a commercial cave they were visiting, but I decided last Fall VAR, when I co-led a trip of 19, that I would not cave with that big a group ever again. Two of our group went ahead on the trip with them.

Later that night, one of my friends who went told me about a disturb-

ing set of occurrences. One was that one of the group, a member of a student grotto, picked up rocks, which were thought to have been "fossil rocks", and put them in his/her cave pack (yes, I am purposefully hiding identifying clues--it does not matter who did any of this, but that it happened). My friend told the person that this was wrong, but the rock-taker ignored him. Another was that the trip leader smoked and peed in the cave.

I have since learned that peeing in cave is an "in transition" thing, depending on where you cave and who you learned with and possibly even how old you are. I've heard that a lot of western cavers pee in caves all the time, as do many VAR cavers in wet caves. The thinking is that as long as you pee in running water, it's okay. That is something I guess you have to decide on for yourself, but when I'm on a long trip, I carry a pee bottle. I have not heard so much about smoking in caves other than it is generally frowned upon.

Anyhow, I am not trying to condemn anyone here. I would like to start a discussion within the Region on what grottos could be doing in the ways of teaching caving safety and caving conservation. Especially student grottos, which, by nature, are going to be introducing new people to caving. A lot of this topic was put out on the VARlist back in April. Only about seven people responded; two of those suggested prosecution.

I don't think this is the answer; education is. Just from my discussions with a variety of cavers, I've learned a lot about different attitudes. My intent here is not to get people to agree with everything I've written or even to "cave my way", but to start thinking about ways we can protect the caves and their inhabitants.

One thing I would like to offer is what one of my grottos does; BATS requires anyone who goes

on an official BATS trip to attend a Caver Orientation which emphasizes safety and conservation. This can be pared down for experienced cavers, but like I've said before, even I learned something! You can find the Orientation outline online at <http://cave.pure.net/~bats/docs/Orientation%20Program%20Outline%206-20-01.pdf>. (this address should be on a single line). This is not necessarily the best outline out there, but it is very extensive and provides a really good starting place for a grotto to begin to educate its members on all aspects of caving, including safety and conservation. Remember, it is a grotto's responsibility to educate cavers; the caves can't speak for themselves.

WVC and WVASS Meetings at OTR

by George Dasher

As always, both *The West Virginia Caver* and the West Virginia Speleological Survey will meet during the 2003 Old Timers Reunion. Both meetings are on Saturday, August 30th, and both are open meetings, meaning that anyone can attend.

The WVC is at noon in the OTR Pavilion, and the WVASS meeting is at 7 PM behind Cooters. Both meetings will discuss the workings of the organization, and the WVASS meeting will include the county coordinators' reports. For more information, contact George Dasher at wvcaver@juno.com or 304-965-1361.

2003 Spring VAR Meeting

May 9-11, 2003

Sponsored by the DC Grotto and the Potomac Speleological Club
at the Old Timers Site, Dailey, West Virginia**Final Financial Report****INCOME:**

Pre-registration (142 people)	2,130
On-site registration (177 people)	3,361

Total Income	\$5,491

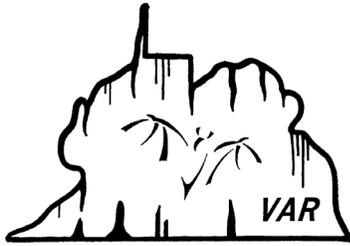
EXPENSES:

Campground rental (\$2/person)	638
Porta-potty rental (4 pots added to 2 on-site already)	260
Porta-potty pumping (one pumping of 6 pots)	58
Trash pick-up (2 dumpster loads)	40
Registration and administration (name tags, etc.)	22
Program printing (275 copies of 24-page booklet)	37
Dinner for 300 people	1,381
Munchies for Saturday party	92
Beer (1 keg Friday, 5 kegs Saturday)	432
Sodas (14 cases assorted)	82
Payment to VAR (\$3 per VAR attendee)	828
Payment to MAR (approx. \$5 per MAR attendee)	362
Plaque to mark flood level in pavilion	8

Total Expenses	\$4,240
Net Event Profit	\$1,251

NOTES AND COMMENTS:

- The Spring MAR meeting was held at the same time as the VAR meeting. The events were really separate, but the MAR used the VAR infrastructure. People could register for the VAR, the MAR, or both (and get both newsletters).
 - 244 people registered only for the VAR (and will receive the *Region Record*)
 - 41 people registered only for the MAR (and will receive the *MAR Breakdown*)
 - 32 people registered for both events (and will receive both publications)
- There were already two porta-potties on the site. We wanted about one potty for each 50 people so we rented 4 additional potties (for a total of 6). These were cleaned during the day on Saturday.
- We had 142 people pre-register. We assumed that half of the attendees would pre-register, so we ordered 300 dinners. However, on-site registration was larger than expected so latecomers got a discounted registration fee and no dinner.
- We had 1 keg of beer on Friday night and 5 kegs on Saturday. We should have had 2 kegs of beer on Friday and 4 on Saturday because we ran out about 10:30 PM on Friday evening. There was left over beer on Saturday due to the flood curtailing the Saturday evening party.
- The DC Grotto and Potomac Speleological Club try to not directly profit from caving events they sponsor. The governing bodies of both clubs voted to distribute the event profit as follows:
 - 50% has been donated to The Robertson Association's Pavilion Fund (to help pay for a replacement pavilion at the OTR site)
 - 25% has been transferred to PSC's Cave Bucks Fund.
 - 25% has been transferred to DC Grotto's Cave Bucks Fund.



Fall VAR 2003
Hosted by Front Royal Grotto
September 26-28

Fall VAR is going to be at the Rural Retreat Lake and Campground in Rural Retreat, Virginia. That's right, Rural Retreat, Virginia. Come on down and join the fun with other fellow cavers from all over the region. Registration opens at 11:00 am on Friday the 26th.

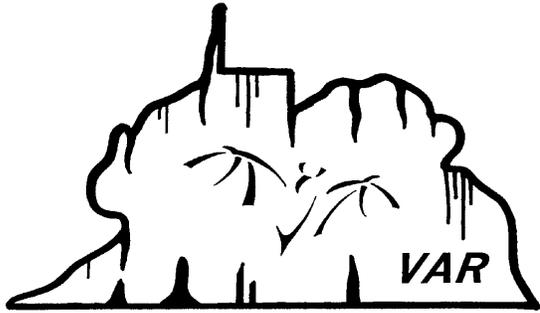
Rural Retreat Lake and Campground has boat rentals (if you don't want to go caving), as well as Trophy Fishing for Muskie, Northern Pike, Bass, and Trout. If you just want to bring a canoe or kayak they have a boat launch. Our reserved camping area is primitive, but there are sites that have electricity for RV's, it would be best to call in advance to check availability for this. The most important item though is that there are flushing toilets and hot showers.

The **Front Royal Grotto** has got a lineup for you! On Friday night there will be an open mike, so bring your musical instrument & tune up your voice. Let the other members of the Caving Community be jealous of the talent you possess. Saturday night will be a festive time. Come in from caving, take a shower, and then enjoy a Mexican Feast. Think of the delights you will have! After dinner enjoy the DJ and a cup or two of brew. And, of course, we'll have a Bonfire to gather around.

What about caves? There are caves in the area that VAR has not visited in quite a long time. Cave trips will be planned.

Come on down to Rural Retreat and help us in making Fall VAR 2003 a memorable time...see you there!!!!





Fall VAR 2003 Pre-Registration Form

Fall VAR is September 26 thru 28, 2003.

Hosted by the Front Royal Grotto

Please mail this form with your check (payable to Front Royal Grotto 'Fall VAR' on memo line) to:

**FRG Fall VAR 2003 Registration
C/o Eric W. Berge
12612 Marsteller Dr
Nokesville, VA. 20181**

Use pre-registration prices only if your form is postmarked before September 12, 2003 or earlier. Thank You

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

21 yrs old or older? Yes/No (please circle) age if under 21 _____

NSS Member? Yes/No (please circle) NSS Number _____

Grotto Affiliations: _____

Do you want a Vegetarian Meal? Yes/No (please Circle)

VAR Fees:

Through September 12,2003 (we'll use the postmark):

(Ages are as of September 26,2003)

Adult (13 + years): \$25.00 X _____ =\$ _____

Children (5-12 years): \$20.00 X _____ =\$ _____

Babies (0-4): Free

VAR meeting only: \$3.00 X _____ =\$ _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Cost after September 12, add \$3.00 to the fees per person.

On site registration, \$28.00 for adults and \$23.00 for children.

Directions

Take I-81, North or South depending on which direction you are coming from. Take the Rural Retreat (VA) exit #60. Turn onto Rt. 90 East and go for approximately 3.3 miles (you'll cross Rt.11 and pass through the Town of Rural Retreat). Turn right onto Rt. 677/Rural Retreat Road and go approximately 1.5 miles. Turn left onto Lake Road, which leads you into the campground area. You have arrived at VAR!!!!!!!!!!!!

OLD TIMERS REUNION -- OTR 2003

Information Update

The 54th annual Old Timers Reunion will be held Thursday August 28, 2003, NOON, till Monday September 1, 2003 at the TRA/OTR site at Dailey, W. Va. To attend OTR you must be a TRA member or the guest of a TRA member.

TRA/OTR website: www.otr.org

Check the website often to stay informed on the upcoming event, including a schedule of work weekends at the site.

2003 THEME -- "The Tradition Lives On"

The idea is to carry on with all the FUN we've been having at OTR all these years. Things like the Doo Dah Parade, dressing up/or in costume for the Saturday night party, the Saturday afternoon party at the river, etc.

TRA Membership --

TRA membership costs \$10 for a lifetime regular membership. To join you must be 18 or over and a CAVER in good standing and be sponsored by a TRA member. For further information go to the OTR website, or contact Tim Brown (TRA membership coordinator) at his email—tim@timcoinc.net or send a SASE to Tim at 57051 Marietta Rd., Byesville, Ohio 43723. You must submit the necessary forms by July 31. TRA memberships are NOT available at OTR.

IMPORTANT!!!! Early Arrival Policy

Unless you are on the list of workers, you will NOT be allowed to enter the OTR site till NOON, Thursday, August 28, 2003. This rule will be enforced.

PET POLICY

NO pets of any kind at OTR period! No exceptions.

2003 OTR Registration Fee Schedule

Arrival Day*	Adult 18+	Junior 12-17	Child 3-11#	Guest
Thursday	\$30	\$27	\$17	Add \$15
Friday	\$28	\$25	\$15	Add \$15
Saturday**	\$25	\$22	\$12	Add \$15
Sunday **	\$20	\$19	\$10	Add \$15

* Day starts at 4:00 am

** Reduced registration staff on duty. Arrive before 6 pm.

Infants under 3 are free

To Volunteer or get your questions answered==go to www.otr.org or Contact Mike Oatney, Chairman at moatney@columbus.rr.com or call 740-746-8337

DAY PASSES —

Passes are good for the day purchased till 6 pm. to visit with caving friends. Passes do not permit the bearer to attend the evening OTR party festivities or to camp on the site. If you'd like to stick around past dusk, purchase a regular registration.

Guests --

Guests are most welcome at OTR when invited and sponsored at registration be a TRA regular member, who then becomes responsible for the guests conduct at OTR. TRA regular members can sponsor up to 2 adult guests. Guests of all ages, except infants, pay the regular registration fee PLUS a \$15 guest surcharge. Family companions 18 and over are considered guests. TRA members should choose their guests carefully—invite only cavers!

Children of TRA members-----

Accompanying children of TRA regular members up to the age of 17 are not considered guests and thus do not pay the surcharge. Caving children may apply for junior membership (\$10). Parents are RESPONSIBLE for their children's behavior at OTR. If you choose to party hearty at OTR, give the kids a break and leave them home, or bring a responsible adult to watch over them at OTR. Misbehaving children at OTR are treated the same as anyone else at OTR and therefore are subject to immediate removal if circumstances warrant.

Family Companions --

Avoid the guest surcharge — join TRA before OTR.

Registration — 21 and over—Bring a photo ID

Registration is open 24 hours from noon Thursday, with reduced staffing after 6 pm Saturday night, reopening 8 am Sunday and then closing at 6 pm on Sunday night for OTR 2003.

OTR accepts checks written in U.S. funds and on U.S. banks. OTR charges \$15 for any returned check. Of course OTR welcomes good old US greenbacks anytime.

We realize you have traveled a distance to attend OTR and will be anxious to locate your friends as soon as you arrive. Check the campground map at registration, where, if your buddies marked it, you will find your Grotto campsite. Please be kind to the staff, they are CAVERS, just like you, volunteering to make OTR better.

The legal drinking age in West Virginia is 21---a valid photo ID must be presented when you register, even if you are older than dirt. If you choose to drink OTR alcoholic beverages, don't share with persons under 21---you and the person under 21 could be tossed out of OTR.

If you plan to drink OTR beverages on Saturday or Sunday nights, you must arrive before registration closes at 6 pm.

You will be charged registration fees from the time of arrival.

Overflow Camping --

The overflow camping area in the SE quadrant is designed to welcome OTR's later arrivals. It opens in three stages that will be clearly marked on the signs at the entrances to the camping areas. The lower parameter opens at 5 pm Thursday. The interior area opens next, at noon Friday. The upper area next to the public road opens last, at 5 pm Friday. If you're camping in these areas, plan your arrival times accordingly.

No Reserved Camping Space --

Space cannot be reserved or marked off at OTR. Markings and tape will be removed.

OTR Events --

Each OTR brings a host of new ideas, although the time honored Doo Dah Parade, Speleo-Olympics, Yard Sale, Speleo-Auction, and other traditional OTR activities are planned as well. Schedule your arrival on Thursday for the gathering of ROOTS and COOTS at the bonfire to meet and greet each other, tell some tall tales, and maybe win some prizes (like for oldest, youngest ROOT or COOT, etc.)

Speleo-Olympics --

contests begin Friday at noon, and end Sunday at noon. Depending on participation, contests will include: Vertical 30m Mechanical and 30m Knots, 10m youth Mechanical climb, ladder climb, Speleo-Obstacle course, Beer and beverage drinking contest, Cave Quiz, Survey course, Lamp Assembly, Sleeping Bag, Fun Run, and Poster contests. We'll also have the 3rd Annual Bob Lutz Tug -A-Rope-A-Rama and the orienteering course.

Kiddie Activities --

A host of activities for the younger set is planned for Friday And Saturday mornings. This is NOT a babysitting service--parents are encouraged to join in the fun

Entertainment --

There will be the traditional movie night on Thursday — Blazing Saddles, Monty Python, and of course the Rocky Horror Picture Show. There will be bands on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and of course DJs after the band on Sunday. We will revive the old tradition of dressing for the party on Saturday night. Costume or dress up, or whatever you like.

There is a stage at the Sauna Area for those who enjoy acoustic entertainment. No set times, just bring your instruments and come on over.

Yard Sale --

Time to get rid of that old caving gear or boots or camping equipment that you no longer use. The proceeds are yours to keep. Starts at 9 am on Sunday in the pavilion.

Speleo-Auction --

Artifacts of all ages and descriptions will be accepted for Saturday's auction. OTR and consignee share proceeds of all sales.

Vendors and Vendors Row --

Space is available by reservation only for cave related vendors along vendors row. Wednesday is setup day for registered vendors. Food concessions are already prearranged and must have appropriate health permits. Contact Kelley Deem at 304-725-9812 for information. Stock up on your caving need at OTR from the most knowledgeable and equipped speleo vendors in the business.

Postering the Porta Potties -- Fair warning!!!!

NO can do. The porta Pot vendor thanks us for not putting posters or other graffiti in the porta pots. They do us a very good job of cleaning these pots and we don't want to make them mad. Post your signs on the kiosk in front of the pavilion.

Volunteers Needed --

OTR doesn't run by itself—it takes a lot of volunteers to put it all together. Do your part—volunteer a few hours of your time to help. It's your OTR; give back a little for all the fun you get. Get your Grotto involved, and have FUN.

Work Weekends --

Dig out your hammer, grab some of your caving buddies, and come down to the site on work weekends to help get the place ready for OTR. We need volunteers to do lots of things. The work weekends for 2003 are == June 7/8, July 19/20, and Sept. 27/28. Check the website for more information and a list of jobs to be done. Call Kelley Deem at 304-725-9812 to let him know you are coming, or email him at kldeem@earthlink.net

TRA Elections — Elections will be held for two TRA members at large positions on the TRA board. Have your views heard — vote for the candidate of your choice, or run for the position yourself. Toss your name in the hat and run for an elected TRA position.

TRA Open Meeting -- There will be an open meeting at 1 pm on Sunday in the main pavilion where you can make comments or suggestions about the operation of OTR. Everyone is welcome.

Staff Contacts ---

Contact information is posted at the OTR website at www.otr.org, or if you have questions contact the 2003 chairman, Mike Oatney at moatney@columbus.rr.com or call 740-746-8337 and leave a message, he'll return your call ASAP.

Help keep OTR a Cavers event, bring only guests who are cavers.

Please disseminate this information at your grotto meetings.

See you at OTR!

Yep, this is a blank page.

The *Region Record* needs more material. If you or your grotto have done something that might be of interest to other cavers in the Region, please write a brief article and send it to the address on page 2. If you are planning an event and want some cheap publicity you can hype it in the *Region Record*.

National Speleological Society
6304 Kaybro St.
Laurel, MD 20707-2621

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Summer 2003 Regional News

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