



The Region Record

Vol. XXIII No. 4

Fall 2010

Chairman's Column

The Virginia Region needs host groups for upcoming VAR meetings.

We have been here before, I just don't remember a time when there was not a group stepping forward to host an event. I have to ask what has changed? Is it because "The Few" who volunteer for most things are tired, or has the make-up of the group changed so much that we no longer volunteer for anything? At one time it was said that our volunteers were our strongest asset, it's what made us different from any other group. Does this now make us like every other group out there?

What will happen if no group steps up? We will still call meetings in the fall and spring and meet somewhere to hold the business meetings, but that will be all. Drive in for the meeting, then drive home. At some point in time there will not be enough funds to support producing the *Region Record* because we don't charge for coming to the meeting only. Our close-knit community could start to unravel.

On a new front, we received a letter from Gordon Birkhimer, NSS President, saying the NSS has been approached to steward Crystal Cave at Hupp's Hill (near Strasburg, Virginia) in a partnership with Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation (CCBF). CCBF will lease the property for 10 years and wants the NSS to manage the cave. This would mean we have the keys and use of

the facility over the cave for grotto meetings, special events, a possible VAR site, public outreach, school groups, education, and other things.

The NSS wants to see if the VAR would support this action. What is meant by support? All the details have not been worked out. With any luck we should have something by the meeting. So talk it up, debate it, but come to the meeting with ideas to support or it or not. If you, or your grotto, can't come to the meeting, send me or one of the officers an e-mail, we need to hear from you. Will VAR support this partnership? This will take long-term volunteer support from the Region, not just a few grottos.

Craig

Fall MAR/VAR Update

by Jim McConkey

This year's fall joint MAR/VAR will be held October 1-3, 2010, at Friars Hole Cave Preserve in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Friars Hole, the longest cave in West Virginia, sits right beneath you with at least two entrances less than a 2-minute walk from camp. With over 46 miles of passage to choose from, there is something for everyone. Tourist trips for the family; vertical trips for the experienced and well-equipped; sloppy, wet,

muddy crawls; and even a marathon crawlathon to visit the cave's most impressive room, Monster Cavern. This 230-foot-long room, complete with waterfall, is ironically only several hundred feet from camp, but you can't get there from here (directly, at least).

There will be a number of led caving trips both on and off site. A led, skin-scraping Bone-Norman through-trip will be offered for the masochists. Trips are also being planned to Poor Farm, Culverson Creek, Snedegars, and other local caves. We welcome volunteers to lead other trips. For the project cavers, there will be an off-site sink-hole cleanup during the day on Saturday, with lunch provided. An on-site tutorial course in surveying is being planned, and Sandy and Brian Preaux plan to demonstrate their new cave radio communication system for anyone interested in seeing how these work.

Numerous above-ground attractions abound in the area, including Bear Town State Park, the Cranberry Glades, the triple Falls of Hills Creek, Droop Mountain Battlefield, geocaching, biking on the Greenbrier Trail, and kayaking (bring your own boat).

After the Saturday evening dinner of salad, bratwurst sausages, potatoes, baked beans, and corn, Sandy and Brian Preaux will present a video on the exploration of the lower end of the Friars Hole system set to cave ballads. Mike and

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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.

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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

Sep. 21 Deadline for getting the preregistration discount for the Fall MAR/VAR meeting.

Oct. 1-3 **Fall MAR/VAR meeting** at the Friars Hole Cave Preserve in Pocahontas County, W. Va. See more info in this issue.

Nov. 13 **WV Cave Conservancy banquet** in Lewisburg, W. Va. See www.wvcc.net for details.

Dec. 15 **Deadline** for submitting material for the Winter issue of the *Region Record*.

List Your Event Here

If you have a caving event that is of regional interest please send information to the Editors listed above so it can be included in the calendar.

MAR/VAR

(continued from page 1)

Andrea Futrell will also speak about the integration of GIS data in cave exploration and particularly in the VSS archives.

DJ John Fox will spin all your favorite dance tunes while you enjoy the usual cave beverages into the night. The largest entrance in the Friars Hole system lies just off the campground, and will be open for chilling (or warming, maybe) during the party. Midnight cave bocci, anyone?

See you in the heart of cave country the first weekend in October! Fall colors should be close to peak. Preregistration is only \$30 and only those who preregister will receive guidebooks. While we will endeavor to feed everyone who comes, we will only guarantee food for those who preregister. Preregistration has been extended until September 21st. More information and preregistration forms from <http://varegion.org/var/events/FallVAR/FallVAR.shtml>.

MAR/VAR pre-registration forms (and money) can also be left at the WVCC booth or the Baltimore Grotto camp at OTR.

Minutes of the Spring VAR Region Meet May 23, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 9:12 am.

Secretary: Carol Tideman - A motion was made by Bubble Cave to accept the minutes as published in the *Region Record*. BATS seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer: John Fox - A financial report was presented. A motion

was made by Charleston Grotto to accept the financial report. Pine Mountain Grotto seconded. Motion passed.

Vice Chair: Judy Fisher - Nothing to report.

Chairman: Craig Hindman - Attended the May 15, 2010, Virginia Cave Board Meeting in Grottoes. There was a discussion on the proposed protocols for WNS. These should allow caving to continue in affected areas with clean gear. If entering non-WNS areas you should not go caving if you have been caving in WNS areas. If you must cave in these areas, you should have different gear and decontaminate between trips.

Conservation Co-Chair: Meredith Hall Weberg - The Easter Cleanup was held at Grand. Gravel was hauled and spread in Grand. Also algae abatement was done. A roof was repaired that had been damaged by a falling rock - the expenses were paid by Bubble Cave. Formation repair was done in Fountain. There were about 40 people present.

The sinkhole cleanup at VAR was canceled due to the conditions of the farmers field.

Island Ford was cleaned up during this VAR.

VAR Outstanding Service

Award: Meredith Hall Weberg - Nominate folks who help the Region. E-mail a reason for the award or use the form online.

Landowner Recognition

Awards: Janet Tinkham - Nominate folks who help the Region. E-mail a reason for the award or use the form online.

Landowner Legal Support Committee: No new is good news.

Region Record: Send articles and pictures. Deadline for next issue is June 15.

VAR List Server: Walt Pirie - No report.

VAR Web Site: Jim McConkey - Contacts need to be updated for grottos.

Cave Bucks: J.C. Fisher - Alive and well. Tri-State is closing in on \$5K. Send the funds out, don't sit on them

Virginia Speleological Survey:

Rick Lambert - One more cave than West Virginia. There is a proposal to establish a regional library for Virginia and West Virginia. Request VAR and grottos consider the need for this library and to provide ideas for building plans. 1½ acres have been offered in Highland County. We need to know how much space is needed. We are looking for partners and ideas. The NSS also is looking into regional libraries and outreach centers - it might be possible to share the facilities.

West Virginia Speleological Survey:

Bob Gulden - There are plans to have two bulletins out by OTR and two more by the 2012 Convention. There are more bulletins in the works.

West Virginia Cave Conservancy:

John Pearson - We have one new cave. It came at a small cost - the price of a survey and appraisal. We now own the Wild Cat Entrance to Culverson Creek Cave.

Virginia Karst Program:

Joey Fagan - The government has cut the program. We have lost all funding. We hope the funding will be reinstated. The program is running in a very reduced capacity.

Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.:

John Pearson - Consider Loberia Saltpetre Cave closed

Grand Caverns/Cave Hill Survey:

Jim McConkey - The project continues. The dig in Fountain Cave continues. We took city employees into Fountain and exited the cave via candlelight. The Forest Service did filming in Grand using

some of the project caverns. Sweetbrier students came to the cave for a caver tour and to do conservation work in Grand.

Virginia Cave Board: Dave Socky - There was a meeting on May 15th to discuss WNS and the policy for Virginia. Virginia Cave Week was successful.

Virginia Karst Trail: Meredith Hall Weberg - Crystal Caverns at Hupps Hill - the karst trail is finished and permanent signs have been installed. Ongoing projects at Skyline Caverns and in Salem, Virginia.

Cave Conservancy of the Virginias: Joey Fagan - The economic downturn has impacted income and the ability to make donations. We are still a strong organization, but cannot make grants at this time. Advise us if you have a major need.

Spring Survey Project: Joey Fagan - Continuing with monitoring. Chemicals are available.

Youth Group Liaison: Joey Fagan - Joey is the coordinator for Virginia and West Virginia. He said it's time to take scouts, etc., out caving again.

Host Report: BUBBLE CAVE - 330 in attendance -there were 19 led conservation/recreational trips. 141 people used the decon center that was paid for by BUBBLE CAVE.

Old Business

VAR Hosts:

Fall 2010: No volunteers.

Spring 2011: No volunteers.

Fall 2011: No volunteers.

White-Nose Syndrome: Covered elsewhere

Bailout Fund: Baltimore moved that a fund be created for groups who lost funds hosting a VAR due to no fault of their own. The fund cap would be \$600. The VAR fee would be raised 25 cents to fund it. The Executive Committee could approve the bailout after a review of the budget. Bubble seconded.

Tri-State moved to amend to raise the cap to \$3,000. Pine Mountain seconded. Amendment passed.

Blue Ridge moved to amend the increase from 25 cents to \$1. Pine Mountain seconded. Motion to amend passed.

Dingo moved to amend that the entire directorate could be petitioned to approve the bailout. Tri-State seconded.

Pine Mountain called for the vote. BATS seconded. Motion passed with 1 abstention.

The committee has been dissolved and was thanked for their efforts.

New Business

Bubble moves to raise the VAR fee to \$5 per attendee. DC seconded. Motion passed

This can be readdressed if it affects attendance

Grant Requests: No requests.

Announcements

The 2012 NSS convention will be at this site

Thanks to the host group.

Talk to Joey re Youth Trips.

Adjournment

Tri-State moved to adjourn, DINGO seconded.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:11 am.

Respectfully submitted:
Carol Tideman

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If this page is marked "TIME TO RENEW" it means that your *Region Record* subscription has run out and this is the last issue you will receive. Subscriptions are automatically extended when you attend a Spring or Fall VAR meeting, or you can subscribe to the *Region Record*. The last issue you will receive (Volume-Number) is indicated on the top line of your mailing label. More detailed information about subscriptions is listed in the box on page 2.

If you wish to renew your subscription, please copy or send this entire page. The address label contains information we need to expedite processing. Also, *please print legibly*. Thanks.

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Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

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

Please make checks payable to VAR and send to: Meredith Hall Weberg, 8061 Kittiwake Ct., Springfield VA 22153

FALL 2010 VAR MEETING AGENDA

Sunday, October 3, 2010 9:00 am

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Delegate Registration**
- III. **Distribution of Agenda**
- IV. **Call for Independents**
- V. **Officer Reports:**
 - a. **Secretary:** Carol Tiderman
 - 1. Motion to accept Spring 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:** Andy Reeder/Meredith Hall Weberg
 - 1. Report on activities
 - 2. Other
 - b. **VAR Outstanding Service Award:** Meredith Hall Weberg
 - c. **Landowner Recognition Award:** Janet Tinkham
 - d. **Landowner Legal Support Committee:** Bob Hoke
 - e. **Region Record:** Bob Hoke, Pauline Apling
 - f. **VAR List Server:** Walt Pirie
 - g. **VAR Web Site:** Jim McConkey
 - h. **Cave Bucks:** J.C. Fisher
 - i. **Virginia Speleological Survey (VSS):** Rick Lambert
 - j. **West Virginia Speleological Survey (WVASS):** George Dasher
 - k. **West Virginia Cave Conservancy (WVCC):** Frank Abbato
 - l. **Virginia Karst Program:** Joey Fagan
 - m. **Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (SCCi):** Walt Pirie
 - n. **Grand Caverns / Cave Hill:** Jim McConkey
 - o. **Virginia Cave Board:** Tom Lera
 - p. **Virginia Karst Trail:** Andy Reeder
 - q. **Cave Conservancy of the Virginias (CCV):**
 - r. **Spring Survey Project:** Charlie Maus
 - s. **Other** _____
- VII. **Host Grotto Report:** DC & Baltimore
- VIII. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Host Grotto for the Spring 2011 Meeting:** _____
 - b. **Host Grotto for the Fall 2011 Meeting:** _____
 - c. **Host Grotto for the Spring 2012 Meeting:** _____
 - d. **WNS**
 - e. **Other**
 - f. _____
 - g. _____
- IX. **New Business:**
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
- X. **Grant Requests Submitted to the Chair**
- XI. **Elections**
- XII. **Announcements**
- XIII. **Adjournment**

New Information!



FALL MAR/VAR

October 1-3, 2010

Lower Campground at Friars Hole Cave Preserve
Pocahontas County, West Virginia



The D.C. Grotto and Baltimore Grotto invite you to attend the Fall 2010 joint meeting of the Mid-Appalachian Region (MAR) and the Virginia Region (VAR) of the NSS. The event will be held at the Friars Hole Cave Preserve in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, during the weekend of October 1–3, 2010

Camping and Facilities: Camping will be in a mowed field near the Snedegars Entrance to the Friars Hole Cave System. **Camping will be primitive.** Port-a-pots will be provided, but there will be no showers. Sorry, the landowner has requested that no pets come because this is a working farm. Please plan to remove any trash your camp generates. The closest restaurants and grocery stores are a significant drive from the site so please bring everything you will need. Individual fires will not be permitted, but there will be a communal bonfire, weather permitting. The campground will be open from Noon Friday until 3 p.m. Sunday.

Friday and Saturday Nights: After dinner on Saturday, Sandy and Brian Preaux will present a video on the exploration of the lower end of the Friars Hole system set to cave ballads. They will be joined by Mike and Andrea Futrell, who will speak about the use of GIS data in cave exploration. Following the presentations John Fox will spin tunes while you enjoy your favorite cave beverage Beer, soda, and water will be available both Friday and Saturday evenings.

Cave Trips and Surface Activities: The campground sits on top of 46+ miles of cave, with two entrances within spitting distance of camp. There will be a led skin-scraping Bone-Norman through-trip for the masochists, and we are planning trips to Poor Farm, Culverson Creek, Snedegars, and possibly other local caves. We welcome volunteers to lead other trips. For the project cavers, there will be an off-site sinkhole cleanup during the day on Saturday, with lunch provided. An on-site tutorial course in surveying is being planned, and a new cave communication radio will be demonstrated on Saturday.

Numerous above-ground attractions abound in the area, including Bear Town State Park, the Cranberry Glades, the Falls of Hills Creek, Droop Mountain Battlefield, geocaching, and kayaking (bring your own).

Saturday Night Feed: Dinner will be provided Saturday evening, consisting of bratwurst sausages or vegetarian option, with salad, baked beans (with bacon and vegetarian), corn, and potatoes. Soda and water will be available during dinner, but you are welcome to bring other beverages if you wish. Vegetarians must preregister to ensure we have enough vegetarian meals.

Pre-Registration Deadline: The preregistration deadline has been extended until **September 21** and pre-registration is highly encouraged. Only those who preregister will get a Guidebook. Although we will endeavor to feed everyone, only those who preregister are guaranteed a meal. Pre-registration costs \$30 for VAR or MAR, \$35 for combined VAR and MAR, \$23 for children (5–16), and free for children under 5. On-site registration will cost \$5 more.

Directions: From I-81, take I-64 West to Exit 169 in West Virginia, Lewisburg exit. Go north on Route 219 for 24 miles (passing through Maxwelton, Frankford, and Renick) up to the top of Droop Mountain and turn left on Lobelia Road. This is a one-and-a-half-lane road with some hairpin turns. Follow it to a “T” at Jacox Road (Jacob on Google maps and many GPS units) and turn left. You will pass a church on the right and a graveyard on the left. Turn left into the first gravel driveway (labeled Boggs Run Road on GPS units). Follow the driveway, passing over the cattle guard, to a clearing with a cabin (registration). There will be signs at key intersections.

Questions or Comments: – E-mail Jim McConkey, mcjames@comcast.net

Registration Form

FALL MAR/VAR 2010 – October 1-3

Lower Campgrounds at Friars Hole Cave Preserve,

Pocohontas County, WV

Pre-Registration Deadline is September 21

	price	number	total
Pre-Register – ADULT	VAR = \$30 x	_____	= _____

(Includes Guidebook)	MAR = \$30 x	_____	= _____
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	MAR/VAR = \$35 x	_____	= _____
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Pre-Register – CHILD (under 16) no dues or book	= \$23 x	_____	= _____
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Children under 5 are free. on site +\$5 _____

VEGETARIAN MEAL? If yes, how many? _____

Name(s): _____

Name(s): _____

Grotto(es): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Make Checks payable to: **Baltimore Grotto of the NSS**

Mail to: Kim Fleischmann
115 Stoneleigh Rd.
Bel Air, MD 21014

Any other questions, comments, concerns E-mail Jim McConkey at mcjames@comcast.net