

VAR/FYI

JANUARY 1982

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EDITORS:

Bob & Sue Custard

VAR SPRING MEETING

Annie Whittemore has written to tell us that despite rumors to the contrary a date and site has not yet been selected for the Spring VAR to be hosted jointly by Holston Valley and Mountain Empire Grottos. Dates now under consideration are the first and fourth weekends in April and possibly the last weekend in March. Stay tuned for further information on when and where in the next VAR/FYI.

PENDLETON COUNTY TOURIST CAVES

The recent closings of numerous popular tourist caves in Pendleton County, WV have caused rising concern about the potential impact of the diversion of tourist-cavers to less traveled and more vulnerable caves in the area. To address this issue, an ad hoc committee consisting of two representatives from the Potomac Speleological Club, Germany Valley Grotto, D.C. Grotto, West Virginia Speleological Survey, and James Madison University Student Grotto was formed at the Fall VAR meeting to recommend caves to which tourist caver traffic could be diverted with the least adverse impact. VAR Chairman Jerry Redder requests that whoever is chairman of this ad hoc committee please send him a list of committee members.

CAVE CONSERVANCY ELECTS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

At its annual meeting on Oct. 25 the membership of the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias elected eight persons to its board of directors. Seven incumbent directors' terms (noted with an asterisk below) did not expire. Subsequently the new board of directors reelected John Wilson as President, Bob Custard as Vice President, Evelyn Bradshaw as Secretary, and Patsy Stevens as Treasurer. The new board of directors is listed below with each member listed under the year their term expires:

<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>
*Bob Anderson	*Ted Graves	Evelyn Bradshaw
Linda Baker	*Phil Lucas	Joey Fagan
*Bob Custard	Roy Powers	Fred Grady
*Ginny Tipton	Janet Queisser	John Holsinger
*John Wilson	*Patsy Stevens	Charlie Maus

RASS BIDS ON CAVE PROPERTY

The Richmond Area Speleological Society (RASS) has made a cash offer of \$25,000 to the owner of Trout, New Trout, and Hamilton Caves in Pendleton County, WV for the 50 acre parcel of land including the entrances to these three caves.

CAVE ORIENTATION COURSE FOR RESCUE SQUADS

A cave orientation course designed by the National Cave Rescue Commission now available for rescue squads. So that training is consistent throughout Virginia, Bob Amunson is coordinating requests for this course with the various cave rescue personnel in the Region. If a rescue squad contacts your grotto about cave rescue training, please contact Bob (3802 Highwood Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24012).

CRCN HYPOTHERMIA PRESENTATION--SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

A presentation of hypothermia sponsored by CRCN and the UVa Grotto, will be held on Saturday, February 6 at 7 p.m. in the South Meeting Room of Newcomb Hall on the University of Virginia campus. Dr. Durand of the University of Virginia Medical Center will be the featured speaker. All CRCN medical personnel and other interested parties are urged to attend. For more information write CRCN, P.O. Box 3063, Charlottesville, VA 22903 or call Dave Hubbard, (804) 293-5121 (days) or (804) (evenings).

PLEASE PUT VSS ON YOUR MAILING LIST

Phil Lucas, director of the Virginia Speleological Survey, asks that all grottos include the VSS on their newsletter mailing list. Maps, survey progress reports, and trip reports gleaned from grotto newsletters are an important part of the VSS's record of cave exploration in our area. Send newsletters to: VSS, c/o Phil Lucas, 302 Crestfield Court, Charlottesville, VA 22901.

SIGNIFICANT CAVE LIST BEING REVISED

Significant published by the Virginia Cave Commission in 1980 is now being revised to correct inaccuracies and omissions in the first edition and to reflect new data developed since the original publication. If you would like to nominate a cave or karst area for inclusion on the list or have data to further document the significance of caves or karst areas already listed, please contact Dr. John Holsinger (Dept. of Biological Sciences, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA 23508) before March 15, 1982.

CAVE GATES REPLACED

On October 31st and November 1st, 1981, new, stronger gates were installed at Madison's Saltpetre Cave and Fountain Cave in Augusta County, VA under the auspices of the Virginia Cave Commission, the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias, and the Cave Conservation Institute. The new gates replace the often penetrated efforts of an earlier era. Region cavers participating in the project included:

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|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Greg Baumgarner | John Holsinger | Betty Moss |
| Harold Chrimess | Dave Hubbard | Roy Powers |
| Bob Custard | Greg Kramer | Roseanne Prestipino |
| Bryan Dandridge | Phil Lucas | Kent Seavers |
| Dave Derowitsch | Dana McCarron | Butler Stringfield |
| Joey Fagan | Tony McGee | Ginny Tipton |
| Lynn Ferguson | Sharon McGrath | Jim Washington |
| Dave Foster | Bill McSpadden | Stan Widener |
| Greg Hill | Dave Morrow | John Wilson |

Formal plans for the ongoing management of these two caves are now being drafted by the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias in conjunction with the caves' owners. If you would like to have input into the development of the management plans for these caves, contact Janet Queisser (Rt. 3, Box 105, Salem, VA 24153).

CAVE CONSERVANCY JOINS VAR

On Sunday, December 6, 1981, the board of directors of the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias voted to accept VAR's invitation to join VAR as a cooperating member organization. Their mailing address is: P.O. Box 7017, Richmond, VA 23221.

CAVE VANDALS BEAT THE RAP

The four teenaged college students charged with vandalizing and stealing speleothems from Fountain Cave in Grand Caverns Regional Park have apparently beaten the rap. When the first two of them came to trial in Augusta County General District Court, their lawyer argued that the Cave Protection Act was obscure and that the vandals were actually collecting scientific specimens. Although the four students had all ratted on each other and there were three eye witnesses to the crime, the judge agreed to dismiss the case in six months if the defendants stayed out of trouble and performed some sort of service to disseminate information about the cave law. In light of this ruling, the Augusta County Commonwealth's Attorney dropped his case against the other two vandals. The culprits are now contemplating publication of an article on the Cave Protection Act in the James Madison University student paper as their service project. Hopefully the judge reads the JMU student paper; he might learn something.

NSS LOGO TO STAY ON SINNETT CAVE SIGN

At the Fall VAR meeting the regional council voted to ask the NSS to seek removal of the NSS logo from the sign in front of Sinnett Cave. This action was taken because the NSS was being blamed for the year-round closure of the cave by the owner. When the cave was originally gated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it was thought that the cave would only be closed from April 1 to September 15 to protect the maternity colony of Virginia big-eared bats. At the fall meeting of the NSS Board of Directors in Baltimore a motion to follow the recommendation of VAR and request that USF&WS remove the NSS logo from the sign failed. Instead the BOG suggested that VAR seek other means of improving the image of the NSS with non-affiliated cavers.

HOFFMAN SCHOOL CAVE BROKEN INTO

On Saturday, October 24, while attending the Fall VAR, Miles Drake, Fred Grady, Dick Sanford, and Stephanie Zuk of the Potomac Speleological Club visited Hoffman's School Cave in Pendleton County, WV. There they discovered that the gate recently installed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect a nursery colony of Virginia big-eared bats had been breached. Apparently some hacksaw-wielding vandal cut through one of the 3/4" bars in two places in order to gain entrance to the cave.

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