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Greg McCarty

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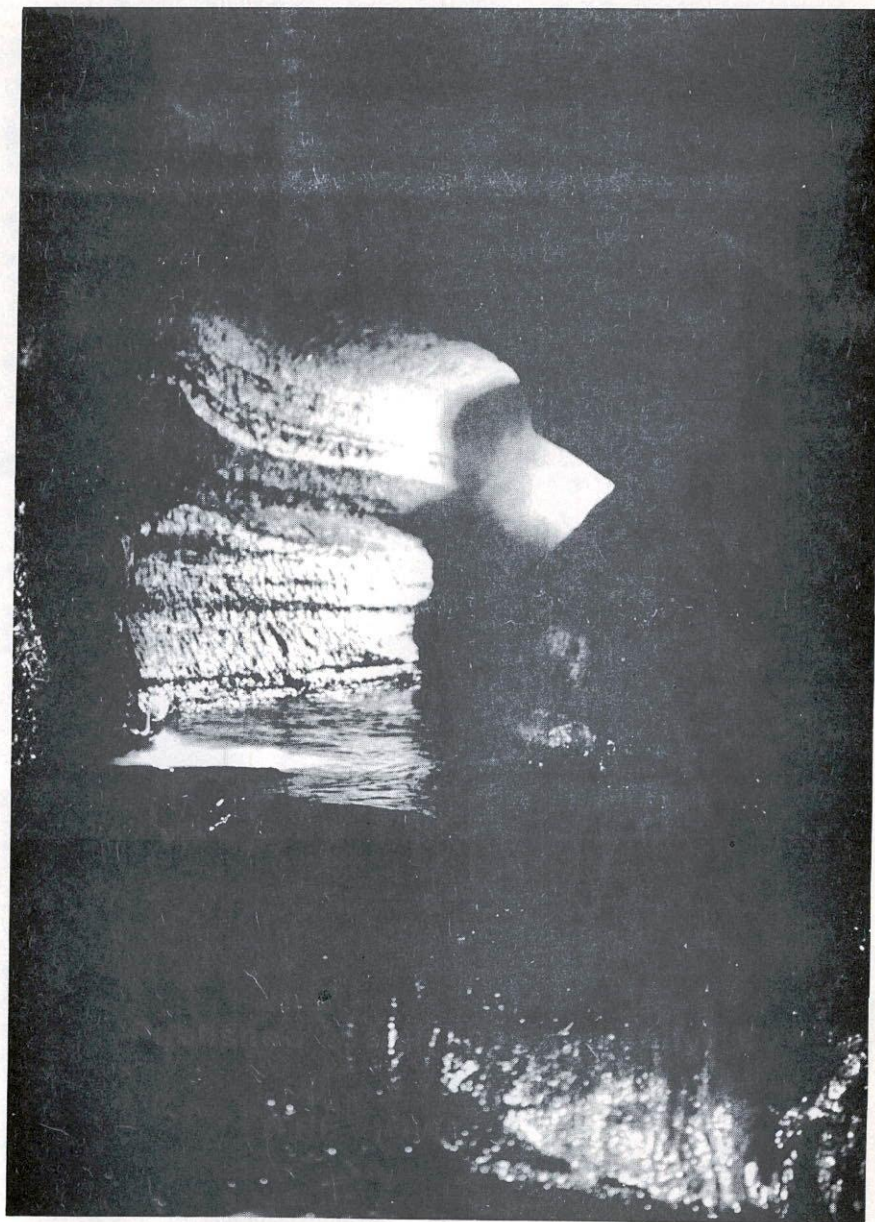
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Published Semi-spasmodically By

THE IOWA GROTTO

National Speleological Society

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Volume XVI Issue 5

September — October 1980

IOWA GROTTO *INTERCOM*
P. O. Box 228
Iowa City, Iowa 52244

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COVER PICTURE: Downstream Passage of Coldwater Cave

Photo by Mike Bounk

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IOWA GROTTO
National Speleological Society
P. O. Box 228
Iowa City, Iowa 52244

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GROTTO MINUTES AT A GLANCE

Thomas Hruska, Secretary

Regular Meeting September 10, 1980

Room 125 Called to order: 7:40 PM Adjourned: 8:10 PM
Attendance: 8 members and 1 guest Treasury: \$183.54
Dave Schwendinger said the large vehicle stickers are lost. Bob Jarski made posters for putting on the Cambuses in Iowa City but the company lost them. Several trip reports were given. A report on the trip to Yankee Cave was given. Gwenne Engh will write up a trip report. Mike Bounk and Criss Gilbert reported on their visit to Stochels Cave. Roger Heidt led a trip to Skunk Cave. Many future trips were announced. The Hodag Hunt will be September 13 & 14, 1980. September 20 & 21 is the monthly trip to Coldwater Cave. One week later will be the fall M.V.O.R. October 5 is the recreation department cave trip. Coldwater Cave again on October 18 & 19, 1980. A survey trip to Yankee Cave was proposed for October 25 & 26, 1980.

Regular Meeting September 24, 1980

Room 125 Called to order: 7:35 PM Adjourned: 9:00 PM
Attendance: 8 members and 1 guest Treasury: \$182.54
Copies of Intercom issue 16-3 were distributed without covers at the meeting. Mike Bounk talked about the stream gauge recorder that had been installed at Coldwater Cave. He brought the recorder chart to the meeting. Several reports were given. Mike Bounk told about the Hodag Hunt. Lowell Burkhead reported on a trip to Coldwater Cave. A trip to Skunk Cave was reported by Roger Heidt. Criss Gilbert will need help mapping Fence Cave on a future trip.

Regular Meeting October 8, 1980

Room 125 Called to order: 7:40 PM Adjourned: 8:40 PM
Attendance: 13 members and 1 guest Treasury: \$210.54
Gwenne Engh and Lowell Burkhead will separately look into changing the Iowa Grotto logo. Mike Bounk presented the minutes of the North Country Region meeting that was held in Wisconsin. Editor Greg McCarty reported the Intercom will be submitted for typing as soon as Criss Gilbert turns in his reports. The grotto voted to send Christmas cards to cave owners. Gwenne Engh will prepare the cards for mailing. Four trip reports were given. Greg McCarty told about his trip to Fence, Bixby Ice, and Backbone caves. Greg also reported on the recreation department cave trip to Maquoketa. Mike Bounk went to the fall M.V.O.R. in Missouri. Manuel Lara visited several caves while in Missouri. Several future trips were announced. Mike Bounk proposed several novice trips for October 12, November 9, and December 7, 1980. Mike also suggested a future rescue training session. Coldwater trip is scheduled for October 17 - 19, 1980. Gwenne Engh is planning a trip to Yankee Cave.

Regular Meeting October 22, 1980

Room 125 Called to order: 7:40 PM Adjourned: 9:15 PM
Attendance: (not taken) Treasury: \$250.54
Intercom covers are not available nor will they be until: 1) suitable pictures are chosen, 2) the printer can spare some time, 3) we can decide on regular or heavy stock. Mike Bounk is compiling a training manual for novice cavers. Mike Bounk, Gwenne Engh, and Roger Heidt gave reports on the October Coldwater Cave trip. Future trips include: Yankee Cave on October 25 - 27, lead checking trip on November 2, Glenwood Cave on November 8, a novice trip on November 9, Coldwater Cave on November 14 - 16, a rescue training trip on November 16, a novice trip on December 7, and the North Country Region meeting on December 13.

AUGUST YANKEE CAVE EXPEDITION TRIP

August 29, 30, 31 and Sept. 1, 1980

Michael Bounk

Lowell Burkhead, Gary Engh, Gwenne Engh (Survey Team Leader), Rudy Prusko, Ed Smith (Digging Team Leader), Dwayne Story, and Michael Bounk (Expedition Leader)

Gary and Gwenne arrived at about 4:00 p.m. on Friday, and were guided by the landowner back to a campsite to which he had reopened a road for us. They then cleared the site, and set up camp.

Gary, Gwenne and I met Lowell, Rudy and Dwayne at Mabe's Pizza in Decorah at about 9:00 p.m. We then drove back to camp.

At about 6:30 the next morning, it started to rain. Dwayne and I headed back into Decorah to eat breakfast and meet another caver, who did not show up. On our way back to camp, the truck hit a soft spot and got stuck. After the people from camp arrived, we were able to move the truck a few feet up the hill. Gwenne, Rudy and Dwayne then headed into the cave to continue the survey. The rain had stopped 2-3 hours earlier, and since the cave drains freely, there was no great danger of flooding. This trip will be discussed in greater detail in Gwenne's report. (Editor's note: The report was received late; Gwenne's report is in the July-August issue). Lowell, Gary and I worked on the truck and the trail awhile longer. Finally, Gary and I walked back to the landowner's house and asked him to tow the truck, the Enghs' and Lowell's cars out. While this was being done, Ed arrived, parked on the road and walked back to camp.

Due to the threat of rain, which might make the road even less passable, we took down all of the camp except what we thought the survey crew might need. We packed part of it in Rudy's jeep and part in my truck. Finally, at about midnight, we got the survey crew and all equipment back out to the road. That night Rudy went home and the rest of us camped in Decorah.

On Sunday, we returned to the landowner's property and spent the day trying to get into a sink as is discussed in Ed's report. That night, we camped at a county park and had an extremely good dinner cooked by Gwenne. We spent the next day working in a nearby spring, lowering the water level by 1.5 feet. Although the spring is not yet enterable, an air flow was noticed coming from a side passage. Hopefully, we will be able to enter it after a few more hours of work.

STOCHELS CAVE, NE OF SOLON ON THE IOWA RIVER

September 4, 1980

Criss Gilbert

Mike Bounk and Criss Gilbert

This "cave" is located very near what was thought to be an old spring resurgence. It turned out that the area was an old quarry. The cave is

approximately 25 feet in length (possibly more with digging). Our purpose for this trip was to take some samples of fill for the purpose of extracting any bone that might be there. Mike had noticed some bone on a previous trip and thought it might be a significant deposit. We took samples from a 1 foot square area at approximately 4" levels down to 24". There was some bone on the surface and in the preliminary sample that Mike had brought back from his previous trip. The cave has an entrance on a hillside, so it is not what you would consider a good bone trap. The samples have been washed and dried at this time, but have not been picked. A few pieces of bone were observed during the wet screening process, and picking under the microscope will reveal anything further.

HODAG HUNT

September 12, 13, 14, 1980

Michael Bounk

Tom Gavin, Rudy Prusko, and Michael Bounk

I arrived at the Hodag Hunt being held near Gotham, Wisconsin at about 11:00 p.m. The next morning, I rode with John Mosis of Windy City Grotto to near Pop's Cave. When we arrived, we learned that Rudy and Tom, who is writing an article about caves, had arrived at the campground just as we were pulling out and had followed us.

Pop's Cave consists of what appears to have once been a large passage which is now filled with breakdown to a great extent. However, much of the cave which is developed in the Prairie du Chien Group consists of walking passage, although crawlways are present. It is possible to climb down among some of this breakdown.

After leaving the cave, Rudy and Tom returned to Dubuque and I returned to camp. That evening, I attended the North Country Regional meeting after which we had dinner and saw a slide show. The next day, after visiting the railroad museum in North Freedom, Wisconsin, where John Johnson works on weekends, I returned home.

WORST FEARS - SEPTEMBER COLD WATER TRIP

September 20, 21, 1980

Gwenne Engh

Greg Sherf, Lowell Burkhead, Gary Engh, Gwenne Engh, Doc Lewis

Upon reading a September 7, 1980, Des Moines Register article titled Animal Wastes from Feedlot Blamed for Iowan's Illnesses by Jack Hovelson, Gary and I became alarmed by the possibility that a confinement cattle operation, up dip of Cold Water Cave, could be channeling concentrated cattle wastes into the cave. Confinement operation wastes in a karst area are, of course, not subject to purification by natural percolation through a network of slow seepage, but tend to find natural accessways or conduits to base level, short circuiting percolation processes.

Rolling Hills Feedlot was already under fire from two local sources: first, a doctor who'd diagnosed illnesses of near-by residents as caused by feedlot contamination, and second by bitterness of area residents who spurn unresponsive absentee landowners running rough-shod over local people's perceived basic rights. The article also pointed out concern for the "scenic Upper Iowa River and Cold Water Creek, a trout stream" and farm wells near-by. The article was triggered by a request by the feedlot owners to increase the herd from 3,000 to 5,000 head.

On September 10, I called the Hygenics Lab at Oakdale to inquire about what type of tests should be made to check for inordinate cattle waste pollution to a stream cave. I explained our fears and limited resources, and was told to take water samples as far upstream and downstream as possible, to immediately pack the samples on ice and to take them to the lab on Sunday afternoon where Dr. Shirley Lindell would perform the tests.

I was told to contact Walter Brekke, the water officer of Winneshiek County, to see if he would sponsor the tests. We called the Flatlands and they had no objections, so all was arranged through Brekke. That saved us \$48.00. We kept Rock River folks apprised of our activities.

Saturday morning, Gary and I drove over to the 2 feedlots to see the sights. Both were perched atop high hills and in full swing. Grading at one site for the proposed increase looked well underway with future building perimeters already staked with little red flags. It appeared someone was fairly confident.

After we got back to the compound, Greg and Lowell joined us to check out 5 sinks Gary and I had found while doing some surface checking in June. We walked around and poked into each sink, each one being eliminated for one reason or another as likely dig sites. The most promising and largest of the sinks had an upside down entire vehicle in it, which precluded anything but the most desperate dig.

Later that afternoon, Lowell, Greg, Gary and I went down the shaft to take the upstream samples from Spong Siphon. We soon realized, after 2 rest stops before reaching the large breakdown blocks and the crinoid fence, that the CO₂ level was terribly high. At this rate, our easy run up to the siphon was going to be a long journey. Lowell decided since it shouldn't take 4 people to take 2 samples, that he'd rather spend a more pleasant afternoon appreciating the main passage at a leisurely pace. He jointed up with Doc Lewis after the 3 of us went very slowly up to the Siphon. Our lamps were having trouble burning and keeping them lit was tricky. We slowly became used to panting constantly. No one was muscularly tired, but frequent rests did little to abate our breathing rates.

We took the samples, packed them up, and managed to get back to the shaft in much better time. I usually enjoy the upstream passage, but this trip was not any fun at all.

Up top, the weather continued to grow more ominous. We barely had our dinner cooked when torrents of wind and rain swept the area. Tornados were roaming about, the compound flooded, the shed flooded and our tent, which we had optimistically set up during a brief patch of sun, flooded, along with everything in it.

Two hours later, the stream level recorder spiked with a sharp rise and fall. By morning the normal water level returned. After breakfast, Doc, Greg, Gary and I went down to the resurgence to take 2 more samples. During the night the water had risen and flooded the access parking area. Although the streams were still muddy and swollen, the level there had also sharply dropped.

After packing the samples in ice, we left for the lab to deliver the samples to Dr. Lindell. She phoned on Wednesday with the results. Up at the Siphon, fecal coliforms were 30,000 per 100 ml, the fecal streptococci were 50,000 per 100 ml. The FC/FS ratio equaled 0.6. (Anything under 1.0 means it comes from cattle.) At the resurgence, fecal coli was 600,000/100 ml. and fecal strep was 610,000/100 ml., the FC/FS ration was 0.98.

Placed against samples taken in the main stream passage near the shaft in 1973 by Mike Osterholm, our samples were between 30 to 600 times worse for fecal coli and 25 to 300 times worse for fecal strep. In 1973, Rolling Hills Feedlot had not been built. In 1973, the rains had not been over .34 inches within a 48-hour period of the sample taking.

These numbers cannot be placed in any proper context until further tests during low rainfall are taken, but they are so far off the scale that our concern continues. We will continue to take samples in the hopes these results were a fluke. Right now, it looks pretty grim, folks. Stay tuned.

FALL MVOR

September 26, 27, 28, 1980

Michael Bounk

Dave Neff, Dave Schwendinger, and Michael Bounk

I arrived at the Mark Twain Cave campground near Hannibal, Missouri, where the Quincy Speleological Society was holding the MVOR, at about 10:00 p.m. The next morning, Dave and I spent visiting friends, including Dave Neff, an Iowa Grotto member, who has organized a student grotto in Indiana, and a number of Rock River Speleological Society, Littly Egypt Grotto, Windy City Grotto and Missouri Cavers.

Early in the afternoon, Dave Schwendinger, Dave Neff and his cavers, and the Rock River Speleological Society cavers drove to Franksville Cave. Dave Neff's group and I entered the cave, followed about 15 minutes later by Dave Schwendinger and the Rock River Speleological Society cavers. The cave begins as a crawlway, which after about 30 feet leads to a room about 30 feet high. This room has a skylight through which cavers were ascending and rappelling. We left this room by following the stream downstream into a crawlway which gradually became walking passage with short sections of crawlways. The ceiling of this passage is very heavily decorated with brown formations.

Finally, not knowing how far the passage continued, we decided to stop at the next low or wet spot. A few minutes later, we reached a low wet spot and turned back. At about this time, Dave Schwendinger and the Rock River Speleological Society cavers arrived. They informed me that they had been told that the cave has a second entrance. However, their information indicated that we were only about halfway there and that ropes might be needed to exit that way. For these reasons and the fact that my group was already spread out over a distance of passage, I decided that it was unwise for all of my group to try the door to door trip, since if we had to turn back later, we might miss the banquet. Furthermore, I could not leave without letting Dave Neff know. When we reached our vehicles, we found that the other group was already there. We had turned around about 150 feet from a walk-in entrance.

That evening, Dave Schwendinger and Dave Neff and I went to the banquet, MVOR business meeting and saw a slide show. The next day, Dave Schwendinger returned to Iowa, Dave Neff to Indiana, and I headed south to St. Louis.

A RELAXING FALL TRIP

September 27, 28, 1980

Greg McCarty

Deb and Greg McCarty

Deb and I departed Iowa City and traveled to Anamosa to pick up some gear from my parents house. By the time we had completed our odd tasks we were running a little behind schedule (we hadn't left Iowa City until afternoon). We were to meet Criss Gilbert up at Fence cave to help him map it as part of his thesis project. By the time we got up to Edgewood and out to the farm, Criss had already taken off. We missed him by only twenty minutes. Since Deb hadn't seen the cave, we got into our gear and started off into the field. Actually we were headed for Thurn cave, as I knew Deb couldn't do the wide chimney down into the Fence cave. When we got to the entrance to Fence cave, though we found that Criss had left his ladder in the entrance pit. I traversed to the back to retrieve it, but found no safe way to place it while in the chimney. So I climbed to the bottom and positioned the ladder so Deb could enter the cave. We immediately found the trench that Criss had started, and made sure we didn't disturb it. We toured the whole cave, except for the passage at the top of the dome (dangerous to get to, and not worth seeing), and found that it was longer than I remembered. After some chimneying practice in the high branch off the passage that drains the water we exited the cave into darkness. I replaced the ladder before ascending the pit.

Finding Thurn cave in the dark is no easy task. I've done it before on a couple occasions, but that was when I had been to the cave in the recent past. Now it had been almost three years since I had seen the cave. I was confident at first, but the closer we got to the cave the less confident I grew. Things did not look familiar enough. I think we were following a line of travel that put us too far to the north, causing us to walk through the upper end of the ravine the cave is in and to continue to the large valley nearby. We changed carbide and wandered around

for a while, but never did find the cave. We couldn't look for too long, as I had told the owner we wouldn't be very long thinking we were only going to the one cave. As we were walking back I saw some trees that looked familiar, but a quick run through did not produce the cave. We walked to a hilltop so I could sight on the farms, and I think I figured out where the cave was, but we did not have time to check it out.

After talking with the owner again, we traveled back to Edgewood to eat. Our next stop was Bixby park to camp for the night. Unfortunately we found the normally quiet park to be filled with high school kids on a hay ride. Seeking less crowded surroundings, we drove towards Greeley to camp at Fountain Springs park. My favorite trout fishing spot when I was in high school, but I had been there only a couple times in the last decade. We took the first spot inside the park, and set up the tent a short distance from the burbling stream. We took a walk down the road to relax and admire the stars, then hit the sack. We were confident this time that we were finally going to get to camp out without being rained upon, as the forecast had said no chance of rain.

When the rain finally stopped the next morning we crawled out of our soggy tent and inspected the stream. It was still clear, thanks to the sandy soil, and I wanted to show Deb a trout. I located one brown in an eddy below a fallen tree. We packed up our wet gear and drove out through the other end of the park. On the way we found numerous people and families camped along the road that follows the winding stream, but we were blissfully unaware of anyone where we camped. We stopped in Edgewood again for breakfast, at the drive-in on the west edge of town (the cafe was too crowded and smokey), but came away unsatisfied. My chicken dinner had bones and skin, but no chicken. They refused to anything about it, so I quickly lost interest in giving them any more of my business.

Once again we drove out to Bixby park, and this time found things more to our liking. When we got up to the Ice cave, I got quite a surprise. This late in the season I was expecting to find little if any ice in the cave, especially after the dry warm winter and the exceedingly hot summer, but we found more ice there than I have ever seen or heard of. Normally there is a lake at the back of this short talus cave that covers the floor of a crawlway. This time the whole passage was completely filled, top to bottom and side to side, with a solid block of ice. The only way I could imagine for that much ice to be present would be if the talus slope still had left over cold stored up from the three extremely cold and snowy winters before the mild one just past. If the ice did not melt all the way from the year before, then more could have been built up to fill the passage. To check this we need to talk to someone who saw the cave late last fall, to see if ice indeed was present.

We crossed the creek and hiked up to Nearpinnacle cave, the only known solutional cave in the park, then followed the path to the top of the bluff and out onto the pinnacle overlook. We took a different path back to the car, and the badly needed restroom, and ended up following a pretty ravine with bedrock waterfalls down into the valley. After consulting the maps, we decided to take a scenic route along the Silurian Escarpment to the little town of Osborn. We passed through Mederville on the way, and I decided to show Deb the hill nearby that caught us by surprise years ago. It is

impressive both ways, but is best from the south. You climb a steep hill for some time, and then reach the crest only to immediately drop down the other side. The effect is startling, and you leave your heart behind when you fly over the top.

When we arrived at Osborn we headed into the Osborn Nature Center, run by the Iowa Conservation Commission. I had never been there, but thought it might be a neat place to check out. That turned out to be very true. The Center is a nice little park with numerous animal exhibits. They have buffalo, elk, deer, raccoons, a coyote, geese, and many kinds of game birds. One of the raccoons was particularly friendly, and would stick his paws through the wire to play with you. His paws were amazingly nimble and he would perform all sorts of antics while playing with your fingers, we had a ball playing with him. The coyote was friendly also, but the geese would very much like to eat your fingers off up to the elbow. We looked around briefly to try and locate a spring that is supposed to be in the area, but no one we asked could direct it to us. We had other plans for the rest of the day anyway.

Leaving Osborn behind, we headed for Strawberry Point and Backbone State Park. Deb has much to see in NE Iowa, and Backbone is certainly a nice place to see. We looked at Richmond spring first, then toured Backbone cave. We did it with one flashlight and no coveralls or other gear. This bothered Deb's knees, as duckwalking (to avoid getting muddy by crawling) is too hard on her strained ligaments. We stopped off at the old fish hatchery, but found all the basins to be empty. On our way to the "Devil's Backbone" we were driving up a hill with dense woods on both sides of the road. After rounding a bend about seven wild turkeys were suddenly ahead of us, crossing the ditch and working their way up into the woods. They didn't seem terribly afraid, but just continued to walk up the hill when I stopped the car to watch. We hiked out onto the Backbone, and beyond, and enjoyed the fall scenery from its craggy heights. If you haven't seen it, the 'Backbone' is an interesting geologic feature definitely worth a visit. We stopped at the dozens of overlooks along the way, seeing a very large flock of crows across the river, then walked back to the car for the trip home.

UNIVERSITY RECREATION DEPARTMENT CAVE TRIP

October 5, 1980

Greg McCarty

Deb and Greg McCarty

This fall's trip went very smoothly and the people were very interested. This makes leading the trip much more enjoyable. After the usual slide show to orient everyone to conservation, safety and techniques, I instructed them on what clothes and equipment to bring. As usual many people ignore some of the suggestions I gave, but this time we had a large number of them not bring flashlights. The Rec. Dept. had a few, with year old batteries I found out later, but not nearly enough. So we stopped in Anamosa and picked up some more. I'd never seen this type before, but had the pile of them

assembled by the time we pulled into Maquoketa Caves state park. After explaining the rules of the game again, we walked down into the upper entrance. I explained some things about the history of the caves and how they formed, then we started in. A few people took the loop through the Bat passage, then we all visited the passages in the area of the Balcony.

After everyone had gotten a little practice crawling and climbing in the Balcony area, we headed into the Steel Gate passage. I was leading, of course, and Deb brought up the rear so we could communicate with the most people and keep track of everyone. We made the loop and ran everyone down the chimney. As usual, many were disoriented when I directed them back toward the entrance telling them they would find something interesting if they went that way. When we had all gathered again at the center entrance, we proceeded out the downstream entrance and down the valley to Rainy Day cave. A quick tour of Rainy Day cave was followed by a trip back up to the road by way of Balanced Rock. I explained to everyone what Wye cave was like, and that we might run into water, and everyone was game to see it. Several people had used the restrooms when we first arrived, but some people just can't seem to pass up a restroom when they see one. So after a short delay we entered Wye cave. Unfortunately some kids had gone in ahead of us and set off some firecrackers. The first room was filled with pungent white smoke, not to mention lots of paper shreds. On the way out we met two young boys just inside the entrance smoking cigarettes, but I don't think they were the ones with the firecrackers.

The low spot in Wye cave turned out to be completely dry (I didn't want to take them through if it was wet because they would be cold and miserable by the time we got to Hunters cave), so we proceeded on to the back end of the cave. I stopped just short of the Tee to change carbide, and to wait for everyone to work their way through the low spot. The ambitious people with me asked about the little passage I was sitting next to, so I told them it was a short loop that connected with the passage just around the corner. They went around the corner to make the connection from that direction, and I didn't hear anything from them for a while. The passage is tight, so I thought it was just taking them a while to get through. When some more people caught up and asked about the others, I told them they were just a few feet around the corner. They reported back that instead the other group had continued up the upstream fork and were now asking what to do. I sent the word ahead for them to come back, and when they did I found out just how ambitious they were. When they got to the place where it turns into a belly crawl in water they just kept going until the guy in the lead couldn't get his shoulders through anymore. A couple of them were wet and muddy, and the lead guy was soaked. This was such an improvement over the panty-waists that were on the trip last spring.

After everyone had seen the downstream fork we went back to the van so people could wash up for lunch. It was sunny and mild, so the weather helped make the trip fun. Deb and I laid out our coveralls to dry, and they dried most of the way by the end of lunch. After some people had wandered out onto the Natural Bridge to take pictures, we packed up and headed for Hunters cave. As usual, the cave was not unoccupied. I let everyone wander around in the Main room for a while to get their eyes used to the dark, then we headed into the Pit room. From there it was on to the Skull room. The area around Rupture

Rock was quite wet, but the Canyon room was dry. After returning to the Pit room we puttered around in some mazy passages near the camp room, and I led a few people through a tight connection to the Main room. I circled back around to gather up the others and we headed for the Paradise room. When I got there I found a wooden plank in the water that someone has used in an attempt to keep dry. I pulled it out, amid groans from the trip members, and hid it about fifty feet down the passage. The water helps to discourage locals from going back to the Paradise room and vandalizing the formations. I headed on through and eventually everyone followed. Once in the Paradise room I had everyone remove their helmets and keep low. Only a few in the room at a time, so I sent the overflow on into the next passage. I'm sure the formations here have suffered some abuse since I first saw them back in 1971.

We all gathered back in the Main room, and I described our final objective. The route from the Flat room through Peck's Peril to the Pit room is usually wet, and is always tight. Anyone who didn't wish to go could wait with Deb, but most of the people decided to go. Deb's knees were in bad shape by this time due to considerable pain from her tendonitis, so there was no way for her to make the route. We crawled through the Flat room and started into the passage, and found that there wasn't any water in the first place that pools up. Later, at the place where you must squeeze through a round hole, we found the second pool to be dry also. That pool is almost always present. Other parts of the cave were quite wet, so I don't know why this series of passages were dry. Everyone was quite relieved to be out of the tight crawlway when we finally got to the series of rooms just off the pit room. They joked about wanting to do more, but it was obvious that everyone had had a full day. They were wet, muddy, and tired, but they all said they enjoyed the trip very much.

We joined the others in the Main room, and made sure all fourteen of us were there, then hiked on back to the van. The representative from the Rec. Dept. had chosen not to go through the last route, and instead hiked back to the van. He had gotten lost, though, and had to be redirected by someone cutting firewood. On the way back to Iowa City, a couple people expressed an interest in coming to a Grotto meeting and trying caving.

OCTOBER COLD WATER TRIP - CASCADE SURVEY

October 18, 1980

Gwenne Engh

Brad Olson-Compass, Barry Schuman-Rear Tape, Gary Engh-Lead Tape, Gwenne Engh-Book

While Mike Bounk's group continued the downstream resurvey, we returned to Cascade to continue our survey of the longest side passage known at C.W.C. We had been waiting since last April for the weather and CO₂ levels to calm down, and for our crew to return from flights to other cave systems during Cold Water weekends.

Last April's trip was unreported so I'll briefly describe the results. Barry and Jim Klager led Gary and I on our first trip up Cascade. When Barry and Jim couldn't find the last chip they had set in a mud bank, we

went all the way up to the room where the 1st bats seen in Cold Water had been discovered in a ceiling crack passage. While Gary and I went off to verify the bats' existence, Jim and Barry tried to figure out what to do. It was decided to set a chip at the Bat Room and survey back to the survey before last instead of exploring further. After eight hours of surveying 2300 feet in 37 stations, Gary luckily found the missing chip in the mud bank, and we headed out, knowing then that the Bat Room was well over a mile from the main stream passage.

From the junction with Dead Coon, Cascade continues as a high stoop walk and walking passage through a series of submerged rimstone dams. The dams range from shin height to waist height and are planted across the passage in, delight of delights, deep sucking mud. The width of the passage is a fairly uniform 6 to 10 feet. Soda straws and stalactites decorate the ceiling and narrow ledges. The side passages are mostly muddy hands and knees crawls. Near the Bat Room is a dryer crawl where Jim and Barry had found a cherty dome and continuing passage.

There are at least two large cut arounds where one can leave the waist deep water to recarbide, eat, and rest but to enjoy these places, one must have a full pack. Somewhere along the way the waist deep water or a rimstone dam opened Brad's pack and silently grabbed his extra carbide lamp, canteen, carbide and goodies.

Gary and I were up ahead a short distance and missed his reaction. We were busy attempting a small joke. Close to the Bat Room, we had come upon a rimstone dam which had trapped piles of foam. We carefully straddled the foam to leave them to assume we were terrific long jumpers. Brad's lightened pack must have stunted their powers of observation and a couple minutes later we began to survey sans joke.

The first shot from the Bat Room was 88 feet, one of the longest of the day, under an uninviting ceiling of suspended breakdown slabs. We continued along walking passage with shots complicated by breakdown piles. The large slabs had formations of ribbons and flowstone on the undersides and appeared much more stable.

Once through the breakdown, the nature of Cascade changes. Four to five feet above the floor, deep alcoves of stalagmite expanses, floored with flowstone, edge one side of the passage. The passage and ledges become sandier. Some alcoves were sand covered slopes with stalagmites poking through like a cactus strewn desert.

There are several side passages and one was covered with fresh (?) coon tracks. About 850 feet from the Bat Room, a side passage took off to the right bearing most of the stream. Barry climbed up into a room to report all the water was coming from an impassable hole. A second hole was also too small to enter. The main passage continued with a small trickle running across the floor and abruptly terminated in a tee junction, 150 feet later.

The left branch was a tight sleeze which Barry said continued tight and nasty. Someone had been there before, leaving scuff marks. The right branch is walking passage for 50 feet until the floor rises to an almost mud-filled

end. Barry and I shined lights through the slot to see the mud floor slope go down and continue. We could hear water rushing back there and dubbed it a future dig.

The branch also has a nice chimneyable dome which we named Rolling Hills Dome, in honor of our favorite feedlot. (On the way out, we realized we'd foolishly neglected to survey to the dome.)

Amusing myself on the long slog out, I counted 83 rimstone dam complexes from the Bat Room to Dead Coon. If each dam raises the floor level of the passage we may be well above the main stream elevation. Using an inclinometer is in our future plans for trips up Cascade as well as surveying the side passages.

OCTOBER COLDWATER CAVE TRIP

October 17, 18, 19, 1980

Michael Bounk

Pete DeVries (Expedition Leader), Stewart Anderson, Lowell Burkhead, Bill Collett, Gary Engh, Gwenne Engh, Bruce Frona, Mike Gehl, Rodger Heidt, Jody Hines, Steve Howe, Dr. Warren Lewis, Brad Olson, Jeff Reynolds, Barry Schuman, Patricia Whitnock, and Michael Bounk

Pat, Bruce, Jody, Mike, and I arrived at the shaft entrance shed to Coldwater Cave at about 9:00 p.m., and began to move our equipment in and prepare to enter the cave. Gary and Gwenne arrived a few minutes later.

At about 10:00 p.m., the five of us entered the cave, while Gwenne assisted people in entering the shaft. We headed upstream to the breakdown room a few feet beyond the Jumping-Off-Point. We then headed back downstream to the shaft, while Bruce and Mike took pictures. On one of the breakdown areas, one of the cavers who was wearing rubber ripple soled boots, jammed her foot between two pieces of breakdown. She was able to remove her foot from the boot with no trouble; however, it took a few minutes to pull the boot loose. Since this was at a time of normal water level, near the shaft there was no real hazard. However, this should be kept in mind when choosing wet suit caving footwear. After reaching the shaft, we continued downstream to the Gallery where more pictures were taken before exiting the cave at about 1:30 a.m. (Saturday).

The next day (Saturday) at about 12:30 p.m., Barry, Brad, Gwenne and Gary, entered the cave, and headed for the Cascade passage to survey, as will be discussed in Gwenne's report. Shortly after this, Dr. Lewis lead Rodger and Jeff on a photography trip as will be discussed in Rodger's report.

At about 1:00 p.m., Stewart, Steve, Bill and I, entered the cave, and headed downstream, where we continued the resurvey of the main stream passage for about 500 feet to just beyond the First Right Hand Side Passage. After finishing this section, which probably leaves about 300 feet until the sump, we headed back upstream. Near the Cascade Passage, we met Gary's group which was now also heading out. We finally exited the cave at about 10:00 p.m.

The next morning, Dr. Lewis and I did some surface work, and the Enghs and Pete collected water samples. We headed home at about 1:00 p.m.

COLDWATER PHOTO TRIP

October 18, 1980

Roger Heidt

Jeff Reynolds, Doc Lewis, Roger Heidt

Jeff and I left Cedar Rapids about 6:30 a.m. and headed for Coldwater Cave. It was to be a quick trip because both of us had previous plans for that evening.

The main reason for going was to do some photography. I had done some photography in smaller caves whose only challenge was keeping the camera and camera gear clean and dry, but because of the larger size of Coldwater Cave I felt it would be a challenge to get some decent photographs. It would also provide some good experience for future cave photographers.

We arrived at the cave at 9:00 a.m. after making a quick pit stop in Decorah. Gary and Gwenne Engh were up and alive as everyone else was still sleeping. Shortly thereafter, other bodies started to come alive. Most everyone went to town for breakfast. We had hoped to get an early start so we could maximize our time, but that didn't happen. The troops didn't get back until 11:00. Jeff and I spent the time being entertained by Lowell Burkhead's dog and talking to Lowell.

Jeff and I entered the cave at twelve noon and started downstream a short distance to start taking some photographs. A survey team, lead by Gary and Gwenne, passed us and a few minutes later Doc Lewis joined Jeff and I. We talked a bit about photo techniques and he provided me with several tips. Doc Lewis had his camera gear along and provided me with some auxiliary lighting with his slave strobe. We moved slowly downstream pausing to take photographs. After a while, one of Doc Lewis' strobes quit working. He told us to go on ahead while he changed batteries in his strobe to see if he could get it working again.

Jeff and I headed downstream again, continuing to take pictures. Jeff was helping carry part of my gear and providing me with extra light to aid me in focusing my camera. Doc Lewis caught up with us again, still with only one strobe working. As we walked along, Doc Lewis expanded our knowledge, telling us about the features in the cave and some quick geology lessons as another survey team, led by Mike Bounk, passed us. Actually the survey team stopped long enough for Doc Lewis to take their picture before heading past us.

Jeff's and my time was running short, so we headed back, after Doc Lewis said he was going on downstream, assuring us he would be all right travelling alone.

We left the cave and stopped at the Flatland's house so Jeff could sign the guest register. We made it back to Cedar Rapids with ten minutes to spare. We were greeted with a large pot of beef stew by Jeff's wife. We stuffed ourselves with stew, washed down with ample rations of beer.

OCTOBER YANKEE SURVEY

October 25, 1980

Gwenne Engh

Lowell Burkhead, Rear Tape, Gary Engh, Lead Tape, Mike Bounk, Compass, Gwenne Engh, Book and Trip Leader

If it weren't for the landowner, this trip may have been a weather-defeats-cavers story. Having planned to set up camp ahead of the others, I arrived at the landowner's with a fine sleet falling. He and his wife had discussed the rotten weather and had decided we were to stay in their other farm house.

He then showed me his way to the cave from the campsite - a very steep but shorter walk, good for the way down but not up! When Gary, Mike, Lowell and Beast arrived, we went over to the farm house to sleep ensconced in palatial splendor.

Next morning, we all piled aboard Beast and rode through the wooded path made by the landowner for our use to the campsite, and took the steep way down to Yankee. At the entrance we took three water samples to compare with those taken the week before at Cold Water. The water level was a little lower and muddier than the month before, and the cave was sucking air.

We picked up three flat rocks to use as portable survey stations, and packed them in the survey kit. At the first station Gary tied a streamer to one of the rocks and set it on the floor where it successfully stayed put. The long shot which had given my crew sighting problems the month before was divided into 2 parts; the resurvey of the entire bellycrawl was quickly polished off with no time lost losing station points or voice contact. After each backsight one of the rocks was passed up to Gary. Only the hassel of the tape snagging in the rimstone dams slowed us down.

The 30 meter bellycrawl ends in a small complex breakdown and ceiling cracks. The passage continues as a clean crawl with bedrock slopes, some having small rimstone dams. Lowell noticed water beetles teemed in the stream. Clumped along the waterline were caddisfly larva that looked like fossilized twigs, and the egg sacks of fresh water shrimp clung to the banks.

350 feet down the crawl is the Mud Room, named for the banks on either side of a waist deep pool. Above, a ceiling crack runs from bank to bank. One bank goes up to a mud fill while the other leads to a small dome at one end of a 12 foot long el-shaped passage.

The ceiling rises to a stoop walk on the other side of the Mud Room, gradually getting higher and higher to comfortable walking passage. After setting 10 or 11 stations we tied off a projection of broken rimstone having added 750 feet of survey.

The next group in will find all walking passage to survey, for which you may thank us four grubs for. Flowers and candy welcome.

Sunday, the landowner, possessing a very accurate stride for pacing footage, joined us in our attempt to locate the entrance on the topo. It's exact location had puzzled us and we're fairly sure where it is now.

The water samples tested out to be more polluted than those taken at Cold Water. Samples of the egg sacks and shrimp were identified as shrimp (amphopods) and sighted. Our source informs us these creatures are found in streams which are polluted by livestock wastes.

A SHORT BUT SUCCESSFUL TRIP

October 25, 1980

Greg McCarty

Deb and Greg McCarty

Deb and I left my parents house in Anamosa a little after noon and ambled on up north on a cold and blustery day. Our first stop was at the pit near Delhi that we found on a trip last spring with Ed Smith and Mike Bounk. Ed has lost his vertical gear, and thought possibly he had left it here. The owner hadn't seen it, so we drove on down to his other farm to check the area around the pit. No luck there either. While we were in the valley where the pit is, we walked on up the side branch to look at the sink that is in the streambed just down from the pond. I hadn't seen this one on the earlier trip, Ed had checked it out, so I wanted to see what it looked like. It takes a lot of water like the others, but the karst development in this area seems to be at a very young stage. Not likely to find a cave that goes very far in these sinkholes.

When we talked to the owner of the pit, he told us about a possible cave on a farm several miles to the south. We decided to check this out next. We crossed the South Fork Maquoketa on the way to the farm, and found the area to be well elevated above the bottom land. The owner said the cave didn't go very far, and his description of what it was like and where it was situated made it sound very much like a crevice. He also described a couple holes that steamed, and a sinkhole. While we were talking to him a brief snow flurry hit, one of several during the day. He said we could drive back in the fields, so I gave it a try. His barnyard was a slope, though, and I wasn't able to make it through the greasy mud. When I tried to back out, the car just slid sideways. Deb and the farmer pushed on the side of the car so it would miss the silo, and I backed down onto a cement apron. After a couple tries I was able to get up enough speed on the slippery apron to make it back onto the driveway. I parked the car, and we grabbed our flashlights to go check things out. The directions were a little hazy, and we wandered around over hill and dale through the woods for quite a while. We finally got back to a corner of a field that matched the description, and followed a trail through the woods until we found the sinkhole. It was plugged, and resembled features I had seen in areas where crevices and fissures are known to exist.

We decided not to hike down the ridge and check out the cave, as it is surely a crevice. The only other thing of interest we saw here was a large deer. After telling the owner what we had found, and playing with his dogs, we headed up to Manchester for our next lead. This was one we had tried to check out last spring, but the owner had not been home. This time he was, and he gave us permission to go in. But not before I did a lot of talking to

assure him that we were a legitimate group, and after we had signed a legal release. He is definitely in favor of our exploring the cave, he just wants to make sure he has all the bases covered. He led the way in his pickup, and we parked less than one hundred feet from the cave. He showed us a sinkhole near the entrance that drains some water, but there was too much debris choking any opening. There was a good amount of bedrock exposed, however. The owner said that he had dumped a bunch of logs and stuff in there before he knew what he had, and that we would be willing to help us dig it open some time so long as stuff was put back the way it was. Just down the valley from the cave was a little bluff that had a solutional chamber under it. I crawled down into it, but there was no way to continue. The owner wanted us to set a time to be out, and to definitely be out by that time. From what I knew about the cave, I thought it was pretty small. I didn't think it would take long to check out, so I told him we would be out in two hours. He said they might be gone by that time, and to leave a note on the door telling them whether we would be coming back. He mentioned there was a rumor about a pit being in the cave, but that he had not been able to find it. We thanked him and got into our gear.

Since it was to be a small cave, I choose six volt flashlights instead of carbide lamps. We were quite chilled by the time we slipped into the small hillside entrance, so the cave air felt warm and nice. We immediately went downslope after entering, and stood up in a fair sized room. Three passages led off from this room, and that proved to be the pattern for the day. Many passages and side rooms presented themselves, and the great quantities of gravelly fill made some passages even more complex. We clamored over a block of breakdown and followed the passage that went straight ahead. The passage lowered to stooping height, and split in two. The right hand branch led to a room, with a passage sloping down from the far end. This crawlway split in two also. Deb went to the right this time, while I went to the left. I was sure that each of these branches would soon end, as that is the common pattern of caves like this in Iowa. I soon found out that this was not a typical cave at all, and that it held many surprises. I had brought along my rock hammer in case I needed to dig, and I soon had to put it to work when I got to a low spot. I called for Deb to quit following her passage and to join me in mine. I soon had dug out enough gravel and sandy mud that I could fit through the low spot. The passage dipped down at that point, and then curved back up. The low crawlway continued on its windy way, with little side pockets here and there. I reached a point where the floor sloped down into a hole in the fill, and I was able to stand up here and relax. The passage continued at ceiling height from this room. I crawled back to the low spot, and helped Deb dig it open larger so that she could follow. We soon were both in the room I had reached, and I crawled into the continuing passage by chimneying up to the ceiling (about eight feet). Another tight crawlway let to a room that allowed low stooping. I checked the room out and found a low passage that continued. It would require some digging at first, but definitely does continue.

Since we were limited in time, I wanted to have a look at the more wide open passages before we got into too much digging. I rejoined Deb, and we crawled back to the low spot to do some more digging. Since we knew we would have to come back to this passage some day, might as well make it less painful. I got our helmets out of the pocket they had been stored in, and crawled up to have a quick look at the righthand branch that Deb had started into. It got small after a couple corners, but it did not end. Leaving the

crawlway by the way we came, up into the sloping room, we started into some larger passages. A couple sizable rooms (twenty feet long by eight feet wide and up to eight feet high) connected by stoopway led to the breakdown section. Here we clambered up the pile of very large pieces of breakdown in passage high enough to walk. We evidently had gotten close to the surface, as the fragil looking ceiling had many roots dangling through the cracks. We descended the other side of the pile into solid passage again. It was now a wide knee crawl that led to a long low room on the left side of the passage. To the right the floor went down into a pocket room six feet high. I followed the one passage that continued, straight ahead, and had some fun squeezing through tight places while trying to keep my face out of some fresh coon manure. Deposits of the stuff were quite common throughout the cave. I got back to a room that had a few formations on the ceiling, but no more passage. On the way to the room I had passed a sharply angled crawlway that continued around the corner, but I could not get into it on the way out. It can only be entered if you are going into the passage toward the room.

Deb's knees were shot, and we were running out of time, so we headed back to the entrance room checking things as we went. We found one more passage that might continue near the entrance, but the best bet is a passage even closer to the first room. As you come into the cave, the right hand passage leads down into a room with no open passage continuing. The left hand passage leads down past an overhang into a room where you can standup. I walked across it and climbed up onto a large shelf like ledge, but found only insect ridden coon manure. The passage that continued was under the overhang, and it gently sloped down and headed right under the main passage of the cave. I moved some rocks, but got stopped when I tried to fit through. It is definitely passable up ahead, you just need to do a little digging. Water flows down this passage at times, and it is definitely an interesting lead. We were out of time to check it today, though, so we packed up and headed out into the cold again.

I estimated we had seen four hundred feet of passage, and there were five passages that were still going. Ed Smith and Jim Hedges were supposed to have been in this cave a number of years ago, but the description I got from Ed of a small uninteresting cave doesn't fit. The sediments in this cave were of interest also, showing many forms and features that are different from any cave I've seen in Iowa. Deb's watch showed that we had used up all of our allotted time, so we hurried back up to the farmhouse. The owner was gone, so we left a note on the door saying what we had found and that we would be coming back. Deb and I had planned to camp out and get some more work done somewhere on Sunday, but it was very cold and windy so we decided to head for Anamosa. We always get rained on when we camp, and in temperatures below freezing we would get trapped in the tent by the ice. And we had accomplished something good, so we could go home satisfied.