

November 1980

## Intercom, Volume 16, No. 6, November-December 1980

Greg McCarty

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THE IOWA GROTTO

*National Speleological Society*

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Volume XVI Issue 6

November — December 1980



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

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COVER PICTURE: The Crystal Lake in Crystal Lake Cave, Dubuque County

Photo by John Johnson

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

Chairman - - - - - Michael Bounk  
Vice-Chairman - - - - - Mike Tempel  
Sec'y-Treas. - - - - - Tom Hruska

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## GROTTO MINUTES AT A GLANCE

Thomas Hruska, Secretary

Regular Meeting November 12, 1980

Room 125

Called to order: 7:30 PM

Adjourned: 9:45 PM

Attendance: 8 members and 1 guest

Treasury: \$260.54

The *Intercom* was briefly discussed. Covers will be printed as soon as John Johnson and Tom Hruska can make arrangements to use the print shop. Guest speaker, John Bowles from Central College in Pella, talked about his study of bats in Iowa. Ten species of bat have been observed in Iowa. John will give another presentation at a grotto meeting early next year. Nominations for grotto officers were held. Mike Bounk was nominated to run for chairman. Tom Hruska was nominated for secretary-treasurer. No other members were nominated so nominations were tabled until next meeting. Greg McCarty told about his trip to the Delhi and Manchester areas. Greg also reported on a trip in the Colesburg area. Two trips to Yankee Cave were reported by Mike Bounk. Rudy Pruszko visited a cave in Pennsylvania. Rudy Pruszko will be going to Crystal Lake Cave in December. Mike Bounk plans to go to Coldwater Cave. Mike also announced novice trips for the Sierra Club and another trip in December.

Regular Meeting November 26, 1980

Room 125

Called to order: 7:50 PM

Adjourned: 8:30 PM

Attendance: not taken

Treasury: \$292.04

Mike Bounk cleaned the grotto climbing ropes. He reported the equipment is in good shape and will not need replacement in the near future. Nominations for grotto officers was again brought up. Lowell Burkhead was nominated to run for the office of vice-chairman. Mike Bounk told about a vertical training session for the Sierra Club and visit to Maquoketa Caves State Park. Greg McCarty reported on his visit to Penny Spring and Fiet Cave. The Coldwater Cave activities were reported by Mike Bounk. Greg McCarty is planning a trip to Glenwood Cave in January. Mike Bounk reminded us about the regular Coldwater Cave weekend. Rudy Pruszko announced his plans to visit Crystal Lake Cave.

Regular Meeting December 10, 1980

Room 125

Called to order: 7:50 PM

Adjourned: 8:45 PM

Attendance: not taken

Treasury: \$292.04

Mike Bounk talked about opening a can of worms. His proposed by-law changes were discussed and discussed some more. Gwenne Engh brought in the Yankee Cave map and everyone looked it over. The grotto Christmas party was delayed until January or February. A unanimous ballot was cast in the grotto election since only one candidate is running for each of the three offices. Mike Bounk was elected chairman, Lowell Burkhead as vice-chairman, and Tom Hruska as secretary-treasurer. Greg McCarty reported on his trip to Penny Spring. Several other trip reports were repeated from the previous meeting. Greg McCarty is planning a trip to Glenwood Cave early in January. Mike Bounk is going to Wagon Wheel Cave on January 3, 1981.

No meeting on December 24, 1980

## IOWA GROTTTO ELECTIONS

Thomas Hruska, Secretary

Once again, the Iowa Grotto elections suffered from a shortage of eligible candidates. Mike Bounk was nominated to run for chairman. Tom Hruska was nominated to run for the office of secretary-treasurer. Nobody was nominated to run for vice-chairman so nominations were tabled until the meeting of November 26, 1980. At that meeting, Lowell Burkhead was nominated to run for vice-chairman.

An unanimous ballot was cast at the regular grotto meeting on December 10, 1980. Elected to office: Mike Bounk - chairman, Lowell Burkhead - vice-chairman, and Tom Hruska - secretary-treasurer. The new officers will take office beginning in January.

This election again points out the need to find qualified grotto members that are willing to run for office. Grotto members, to be qualified to run for office, must be paid up members of the NSS as well as the grotto, live close enough to Iowa City to be able to attend most meetings, be willing to serve if elected, and of course, be nominated by another member of the grotto. Until these people are found and nominated to run for office, the grotto will not be able to give the membership the right to select the people that are conducting the business of the grotto.

## IOWA GROTTTO FINANCIAL REPORT

Thomas Hruska, Treasurer

At the end of every calendar year, the internal organizations of the National Speleological Society must submit a copy of their financial status. The following report is a copy of the financial statement of the Iowa Grotto as submitted for the year ending December 31, 1980.

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
dues	\$200.75	equipment	\$44.95
sales	7.25	publications	20.00
publications	70.00	P.O. box	28.00
donation	10.00	misc.	12.00
Total	<u>\$288.00</u>	Total	<u>\$104.95</u>
Balance foward from previous year		\$110.99	
Net income		<u>183.05</u>	
New balance		<u>\$294.04</u>	





CARTOON by Michael Bounk

## CORRECTIONS

Greg McCarty, Editor

A mistake was made in the typing of a trip report by Mike Bounk before he submitted it to the editor. The report "Coldwater Cave Pre-Convention Speleocamp" on page 53, Volume 16 Issue 4, has a mistake in the second paragraph. The sentence "In addition, a work trip, which was led by Pat and I ..." should have the "I" deleted. And yes, I see that I let the misspelling of led get by.

NOVEMBER YANKEE CAVE SURVEY TRIP

November 8 & 9, 1980

Michael Bounk

Lowell Burkhead (Rear Tape), Gary Engh (Lead Tape), Gwenne Engh (Book), and Michael Bounk (Compass)

We entered Yankee Cave about 11:15 P.M. We quickly traversed the section of cave which had been previously mapped, stopping for a short rest at the Mud Room (station H of the October survey). We noticed a number of caddisfly larvae near the entrance of the cave and a large number of fresh water shrimp in the stream.

About noon, we reached the end of October's survey and began surveying. The passage at this point is a high stoopwalk, which gradually increases in height to about seven feet. It is generally bedrock floored, although some clay or mud cemented breccia was seen. Much of this passage, whose walls contain abundant small scale scallops, is joint controlled with abundant wall, floor, and ceiling joints. The passage appears to be trending to the N-NE. It changes direction often and at one point bends so as to almost form a loop, with only about 1.5 feet of rock separating two points about 50 feet apart in the passage.

While in the loop, we began to hear water falling over Lester Falls, an approximately 2.5-foot high rimstone dam. At this point, an actively flowing side passage enters the main passage from the left. We mapped a total of 330 meters to this point. We set a chip high on the right hand wall after which we exited the cave. This side passage which was pushed by Gary, Gwenne, and me on a previous trip, continues for over 100 feet to a T intersection. At the T, the character of the passage changes from a narrow, rock floored passage with a shallow stream to a wider passage whose floor is at least 1.5 feet below the level of the bedrock floor of the passage just traveled. To the left, it is plugged with mud. To the right, the passage continues upstream for at least several hundred feet. We pushed in this direction to where there was only about four inches of air.

Because of the drop off at the T, the change in passage cross section, and the relationships of the three branches of the T, I have concluded that at one time, the upper part of the T was a separate passage or cave with water flowing from the upstream section into the now dirt-filled section. The stem of the T was probably developed by water pirated from the passage into the Yankee Cave main passage, possibly in part through previously developed side passage(s). The mud plug may have developed in relatively slow moving water after the piracy. Alternatively, the plug may have developed behind breakdown or another obstruction after which the stream was forced to develop its present route.

A number of other side passages were seen off the main passage on this survey trip. Many of these are almost totally dirt filled. However, we are setting chips at as many of these as is reasonably possible.

On our way out, we collected some caddisfly larvae, two shrimp, and some shrimp eggs for identification. We finally exited the cave at 5:00 P.M.



The next morning, we drove to a nearby spring cave that Lowell knew of. Gary and I examined approximately the first 50 feet of the cave. The passage continued, so Gary, Gwenne, and I decided to push it. This is discussed in Gary's report.

Editor's Note: The report mentioned above was never received. The cave mentioned was explored for about 150 feet of easy crawlway to where the passage was blocked by a rimstone dam. There was only 4 inches of space above the dam.

#### RESURVEY - DOWNSTREAM COLDWATER CAVE

November 15, 1980

Gwenne Engh

Jim Klager (Lead Tape), Mike Bounk (Number Book), Barry Schuman (Compass and Rear Tape), Pete DeVries (Compass and Rear Tape), Gwenne Engh (Picture Book)

The resurvey crew had a quick trip downstream to the end of Mike's survey of the month before. We had plans of finishing the main stream quickly and then hitting a side passage or two. We had been told we only had 300 feet or so to go but as usual the cave had other ideas.

The section of Coldwater main stream close to the resurgence is around 8 feet high with waist deep water wall to wall and sucking mud. In spite of flood water depositing wire, plastic bits, and muck on all formations, ceiling cracks, which crisscross the passage in no obvious pattern, still manage to contain formations of beauty. Mud covered stalactites hang next to more active white ones.

As the stream nears the resurgence, the passage yields up an unpleasant odor of sewer smells; hopefully this won't decay into a methane problem. After surveying around 1100 feet, we arrived at the old equipment cache where the ceiling lowers and 6 inches of air remain. While three of us parked on a mud bank, Barry and Jim went on into the sump section, yelling back data to Mike and me. It soon became apparent that this process was not working, so I plunged in after Barry and Jim into the coldest water I'd experienced in Coldwater. We quickly recorded 3 more stations between expanded ceiling cracks, and rejoined the other two characters.

Pete was knitting the front of his wet suit together with wire, and although he'd managed to get it held shut, it wasn't exactly maintaining a tight seal. Meanwhile, Barry, Jim, and I were thoroughly chilled, so we decided to close the books and head out, after only surveying 1300 feet in the main passage. At least the downstream resurvey is finished.

We made it back to the shaft by 9:30 PM, a fairly fast trip.

We did find a new lead. While climbing around on a mud bank, Jim looked across the main passage to discover a high dry crawlway. It will require a climbing pole to reach it.

## TRAINING TRIP

November 21 - 23, 1980

Michael Bounk

Linda Appelgate, Jim Giles, Sue Giles, Peter Marts, Tony Marts, Lorraine Rovig, Ed Smith, John Thelen, and Michael Bounk

At 7:30 PM, Linda, an Iowa Grotto member, and Jim, Sue, Peter, Tony, Lorraine, and John arrived at my trailer in North Liberty. After showing some slides of Iowa caves, some caving equipment, and explaining basic safety and organizational procedures, we drove to Maquoketa Caves State Park. The next morning, Ed arrived about 7:30 AM after which we ate breakfast in Maquoketa. After breakfast, we returned to the park and rigged a 20-foot high drop upstream of the natural bridge. After everyone had rappelled and ascended this drop, the rope was derigged. We rigged the grotto's 200-foot Bluewater II and my 150-foot Bluewater III at the upstream entrance of Dancehall Cave. Everyone descended the approximately 70-foot drop and most ascended it either using a modified Inchworm or Mitchell System.

The next day, everyone except Peter and Tony, who were having car trouble, visited the Steelgate Passage of Dancehall Cave, and Wye Cave. Finally, about 3:00 PM, Ed and I left to try to find some lost equipment, and shortly after that everyone else headed home.

## THE FINAL PUSH IN PENNY SPRING

November 23, 1980

Greg McCarty

Dave Schwendinger and Greg McCarty

I had been curious about Penny Spring ever since Loren McVey and I checked it out in the fall of 1972. I never felt sure that we had pushed hard enough, so Dave and I drove on up there to find out. After some driving around while we located the owner of some adjacent land, and then had to go back to get the key for a gate that a neighbor had locked, we finally were able to put on our wet suits and check it out. There was snow on the ground and a chill wind in the air, but that didn't bother me near as much as wearing my wet suit (especially the hood). My lack of conditioning and my overweight status caused my wet suit to feel like a choking prison. Once we had hiked all the way up the valley to the spring, I didn't feel much like pushing into what I knew was to come. The cave starts out fairly large, then quickly lowers down to a low bellycrawl in water. Too low to have a helmet or carbide lamp. We wore hoods and carried six-volt flashlights. In case the cave went somewhere, I had two spare lanterns around my waist on a belt. These proved to be in the way most of the time. Before you get to where Loren and I had stopped, the cave gets low enough that you have to squeeze to fit. Airspace is low, and the floor is bedrock. It is difficult to negotiate. A small ceiling channel follows, and this gives you enough space to get your face most of the way out of the water. When I reached the point where Loren and I had stopped previously, I checked the size of the continuing passage and tried to see what was up ahead. It looked low, and then it seemed to split. It did not look good at all. I felt lousy,



and knew I could push no farther, so I crawled back to Dave so that he could squeeze past me. He couldn't get into the passage either, until he tried it on his back. There was just enough room at the end of the channel to allow him to roll over, and enough mud on the floor to allow him to slide. He couldn't see anything, though, so I had to guide him. He worked his way up to the split, but it wasn't safe for him to go farther. The passage just wasn't high enough to allow an easy fit, so the friction might have kept him from working his way back out had he forced it.

Disappointed, we worked our way back out of the cave and drove back to the owner's place. He said that the reason it's called Penny Spring is because a guy named Penny had a mill there back in the middle 1800's. We had left our wet suits on, so we drove on over to Fiet Cave. Dave had never seen it, and it's a nice little cave. After getting permission, we hiked up the creek to the entrance and proceeded to the end. I took advantage of the clear water to stick my flashlight under the water and look at the passage that continues beyond the sump. There is no way to lower this sump, but it is large enough to be divable if I ever get ambitious again. Dave had another suggestion, though. A short distance back from the sump is a side passage that is dirt filled. There are several of them in this cave and they actually look like the main passage runs into them and becomes filled. The open passage that continues is off to the side, and is always a little smaller and a little higher up. The one near the sump seems to be going in the same direction as the underwater passage, so Dave wants to try digging it out some day. After exiting the cave, we took off our wet suit jackets and drove on back home.

#### WINTER NORTH COUNTRY REGION MEETING

December 13, 1980

Michael Bounk

On Friday night, I drove to Lombard, Illinois, where I spent the night at John Moses's house. The next morning, we visited a section of the Chicago deep tunnel project. The tunnel which we visited is being drilled through bedrock by a boring machine which produces a circular tunnel fourteen feet in diameter. Waste rock is removed by cars which run on tracks to a shaft where it is lifted to the surface. At the time of our visit, this tunnel was approximately half way completed with a present length of about 14,000 feet.

At 1:28 PM Saturday, the North Country Region (NCR) Meeting was opened at the Lombard Community Center. Among the decisions reached are the following: (1) the Spring 1981 NCR meeting will be held at Coldwater Cave on June 20; and (2) the annual regional dues for grottos will remain at \$10, however, for every member of a grotto that joins the NCR, that grotto's dues will be decreased by \$2, thus, if five members of a given grotto are NCR members, that grotto will not have to pay any dues. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 PM.

That night, I attended the Windy City Grotto Christmas Party. The next day, I returned to Iowa City.

DECEMBER COLDWATER TRIP

December 20 & 21, 1980

Gwenne Engh

Pete DeVries (Trip Leader, Compass), Dave DeVries (Ladder), Jim Klager (Ladder), Greg Scherf (Lead Tape), Gary Engh (Rear Tape), Gwenne Engh (Book)

Christmas parties and pneumonia thinned out the available work crews to a single 6-person team with which to survey the new lead Klager spotted last month. Dave DeVries brought a 12-foot aluminum extension ladder to get us up the wall of flowstone. Two crew members easily carried the 6-foot sections downstream, all caroling, hooping, and Gregorian chanting aside.

As relative newcomers to CWC, Gary and I were thrilled to our toes by a spectacular death defying Klager-leap off a high side bank into the depths beyond Cascade as well as the usual comedic delights of an easy stroll to Monument, the Breakdown Rooms and both Swims to Rimstone Dam Country.

Up high, not visible from the mainstream, the new lead is on the right, about 250 feet downstream from the Fountain Formation. Klager had seen it from the opposite high bank with the aid of a dive light. Once the ladder was assembled and secured, Dave went up to see if we had a survey lead. He reported it looked mud filled and headed in. Pete and Jim went up the ladder and when Dave said he was standing, Jim went on in followed by Greg, then me, then Gary. I almost had to go up the ladder twice but Pete had a firm grasp on me when my holds gave way and he hauled me up. Thank you, Pete!

The entrance to Christmas Passage is a tight squeeze through the mud fill for about 20 feet. Then the passage widens into a 17-foot high expanded ceiling crack room. One ducks under a large breakdown block to continue. A small trickle of water flows along the base of the left wall with a steep muck bank along the other wall, nearly filling the passage. There are a couple of small alcoves with isolated stalactites but for the most part, the passage is all mud, until one reaches the "end." Instead of terminating in a dome, Christmas Passage comes into another expanded ceiling crack room filled with soda straws (one was 3 feet long!) and a white flowstone floor that sounded hollow. The passage continues through the room but is very tight and would have to be excavated by piling copious quantities of mud onto the flowstone.

We surveyed out way back out and tied the passage into the Fountain Formation for the time being. We didn't realize we were close to a chip set in the Swim and the next trip down that way, we hope it will be done.

Sunday, Wanda Flatland had a Christmas turkey and a bulging table spread out for us and we all overindulged to our limits. Thank you, Wanda!

CRYSTAL LAKE CAVE TRIP

December 20 & 21, 1980

Rudy Prusko

Mike Bounk, Gary Taylor, Bill Collett, Stewart Anderson, Loren Schutt, Dave Schwendinger, Greg McCarty, Debra McCarty, Ed Smith, Rudy Prusko (Leader)



We all met at Crystal Lake Cave on the morning of one of the coldest days of the month, a low of  $-13^{\circ}\text{F}$  and a high of the day at  $+12^{\circ}\text{F}$ . The owner, Jim Rubel, his two sons, and one daughter went along on the trip.

We toured the commercial section first which was abundant in speleothems. Then we entered the back passages. Using an old map of the cave, we explored all passages shown on the map. We found six passages that could be pushed futher. One passage we pushed went 200 feet further than was shown on the map.

Future trips will be planned to the cave to continue the work. The speleothems in the back passages are quite numerous and we will be taking pictures on the next trip.

#### CREVICES ALL LOOK ALIKE

December 30, 1980

Greg McCarty

Rudy Pruszko, Criss Gilbert, and Greg McCarty

Rudy had acquired some leads on a farm well to the south of Dubuque, So Criss and I drove up to meet him and check them out. The weather was a good deal better than the extremely frigid stuff we had been experiencing, but it was still cool. After we had met Rudy, we all drove south to a farm just north of St. Donatus. While the owner's son led us up a lane to the first cave, I determined from the topography that we were in an area of Silurian Escarpment. The caves we would find would be crevices, rather than solutional, and would have nothing to do with the lead mining district. This was indeed the case, as we were led along the top of a narrow ridge to four different caves. The first was the longest and the deepest with about 70 feet of length and 35 feet of depth. We didn't go all the way to the west, however, as it was quite tight and didn't seem worth the effort. It was just a crevice, so no use killing yourself. When we got back to the farmhouse, though, we found out that the owner had squeezed through the tight place previously. He is tall but not that slim, so I was pretty impressed by his determination. He had a book on caves, and had heard rumors about one of his caves continuing down to a big room with water. He was so enthusiastic I really hated having to tell him about the geology of the area and how there was no possiblity of his caves going anywhere. He had some more crevices to show us, so we jumped into the back of his truck and he drove us around to some deep crevices that he had been in on the neighbor's land. They were 40 to 50 feet deep, but were just crevices. Then he took us up to a crevice in a roadcut, but it didn't go very far. The last stop was a crevice he had found coon hunting, of course. He hadn't been in this one before, so I chimneyed on in. It was on a par with the first crevice we had looked at.

After thanking him for his help, we decided to head down to Maquoketa Caves State Park to see if Tourists Delight was open. It was flooded, so we wandered around for a while. I showed Criss and Rudy a sinkhole near the road, then we walked over to the bluff and looked at the natural arch above Rainy Day Cave. For some reason I don't recall whether I've ever seen it before. After talking for a while, we split up and headed home.

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