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Cave Talk

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CaveTalk

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL CAVES ASSOCIATION

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DECEMBER 2001

RUBY FALLS 2001

The crew at Ruby Falls did a wonderful job hosting this year's annual meeting in November. The business sessions were well done and the field trips to Raccoon Mountain Caverns, Ruby Falls and all the area attractions were enlightening. As usual, the high point of any NCA convention was the sharing and visiting with each other. The pre- and post-convention trips to Cumberland Caverns and Lost Sea were also great opportunities to keep the meeting going. Our thanks to Jack Steiner Sr., Jack Steiner Jr., Jane Derthick, Mandy Cain and their staff. We all know how much work goes into the planning and preparation of a convention and they did a superb job. We'll look forward to next year's meeting at Crystal Cave, WI. Jean and Blaze Cunningham will be taking good care of us. Everyone should put Oct. 1-4, 2002 on their calendars now. The more, the merrier and the smarter we all get!

CAVES AND CAVERNS BROCHURE

By now you all should have started to receive the 2002 edition of the Caves and Caverns brochure. I know some of you have leftovers from previous years. It would be in the best interest of all of our visitors to provide only the most current information. Already there are two changes to this year's brochure so you can all see the importance of keeping only the most up-to-date version. As hard as it may be to do, please dispose of any brochure that does not have the 2001-2002 dates below the NCA logo. All of our visitors will thank you.

FOR SALE

The NCA office received a packet of information from a realtor in Sioux Falls, SD notifying us of the intent to sell Bethlehem Cave. Located approximately halfway between Sturgis and Rapid City, the cave is currently owned by the Bauer family of Rapid City. In addition to the cave, the listing includes 180 acres, campsites, lodging and retail space. Anyone wanting more information can contact the NCA office.

APPOINTMENT

Governor George Pataki, NY, has appointed John Sagendorf, General Manager of Howe Caverns, NY to a two-year term on the New York State Tourism Advisory Council. The 18-member council advises the Governor, State Legislature and Commissioner of Economic Development on matters relating to the state's tourism industry. Congratulations, John!

Congratulations also go to Gary Berdeaux, Diamond Caverns, KY, for his Citizen of the Year award from the Cave City, KY Chamber of Commerce. Gary has done a lot of work for all the businesses in the Cave Country region, specifically in their web-site development. Susan now has to attend meetings with him to be sure he does not raise his hand when someone says, "who will....?"

PENNY PRESS WEBSITE

Those of you with penny presses may want to check out www.pennyatlas.com. It features a locator database for collectors who are looking to visit attractions that have these machines. Be sure you're on it if you have one! The website is run by David Sarkozi and in wife in Houston, TX.

GO UNDERGROUND

USA Today's Travel Guide has published a listing of ten great places to go underground. The author of "Caves: Exploring Hidden Realms (National Geographic), Michael Ray Taylor, highlights those caves that allow the public to experience wild caving. All but two on the list are NCA members. Go to USATODAY.com and check out the travel guide from Dec. 6, 2001. Thanks to Brad Wuest for alerting us to the article.

JAY LENO AND.....HOWE CAVERNS??

Howe Caverns, NY, and two other Schoharie County attractions were featured on the Tonight Show on December 11. With some people still afraid to fly after 9/11, Leno's first "Road Trip America" hit the airwaves. A crew of eight thought they would spend about twenty minutes filming and instead stayed for more than two hours. Of course there were a few jokes, but as John Sagendorf says, "we're talking about late night TV, not the Discovery Channel." As if there could be a bad thing about national exposure!!

PASSING THE BATON

One of the events at our annual meeting this year was Barbara Munson's official retirement. A memory book, compiled by Jeanne Gurnee, along with a check (contributions from individuals and member caves) was presented to Barbara on our riverboat dinner cruise on Wednesday evening. At our business meeting the next day, former president Steve Fairchild awarded Barbara with a plaque, giving her lifetime Honorary Member status for her many, many years of service and dedication. A beautiful floral bouquet accompanied the plaque. Hard to imagine Barbara speechless, but the element of surprise probably had something to do with that! She sends the following message to the family.



"How could a secret be so well kept? When Max, speaking for all of you, made his charming presentation of the wonderful book of memories and the generous gift, my surprise was so complete I was truly speechless – truly overwhelmed. I don't believe there are any words to fully express my appreciation – each message and each picture means so much. And again I was speechless when Steve presented the NCA Family Honorary Member plaque and the beautiful, beautiful flowers. Watching the NCA develop into a loving and supportive "family" has been an ongoing pleasure. Our NCA family is, I think, on the threshold of many exciting changes and I'm looking forward to continuing to be a part of this unique group.

I will remember each of you and this lovely occasion as your generous gift Takes me traveling – perhaps even to Tasmania next year.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.....

Barbara has assured us she will be still be available, as we need her – thank goodness!!

With Barbara's retirement, the NCA office is now full-time in Kentucky. Please be sure your files and those of your business offices have the KY info, found on the masthead of this newsletter.

FINAL THOUGHTS

"One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half. Never run away from anything. Never!"

Winston Churchill

"Common sense is the knack of seeing things as they are, and doing things as they ought to be done."

Harriet Beecher Stowe

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!!!