

April 2006

Alaskan Caver, Volume 26, No. 2, April 2006

Carlene Allred

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/alaskan_caver

Recommended Citation

Allred, Carlene, "Alaskan Caver, Volume 26, No. 2, April 2006" (2006). *Alaskan Caver*. 14.
https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/alaskan_caver/14

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Newsletters and Periodicals at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Alaskan Caver by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

THE ALASKAN CAVER



2005 CORONATION ISLAND EXPEDITION

By Steve Lewis

Tim Heaton's expedition to Coronation Island to locate new paleontological sites had been in the works for much of 2005. It was designed to locate more caves on Coronation Island that might contain ancient animal bones. We did find many new caves, some with good bone potential, and also had a wonderful reunion of many of the old cavers from early Prince of Wales, Heceta, and Dall Island expeditions.

Dave Love and Dan Monteith came from Juneau, Steve Lewis and Nick Olmsted from Tenakee Springs, Tim from South Dakota, and Pete Smith met us all on Prince of Wales Island. We also stayed with Kevin and Carlene Allred in Ketchikan, coming and going. With this crew, one knew for sure that there would be a lot of laughing and good times along with some hard-core searching for caves. What remained to be seen was whether we'd actually find any caves, and especially, any caves that met Tim's strict criteria.

Folks began dribbling into Ketchikan on August 25. Dan was off visiting friends when Nick and I were met at the airport ferry by Kevin. We hung out at the Allreds for the afternoon. It was my lucky day---Kevin had been on one of his weekly (daily??) forays to the dump and scored a pair of virtually new Xtra-tuffs with a little green paint on them that were my size! What a guy!

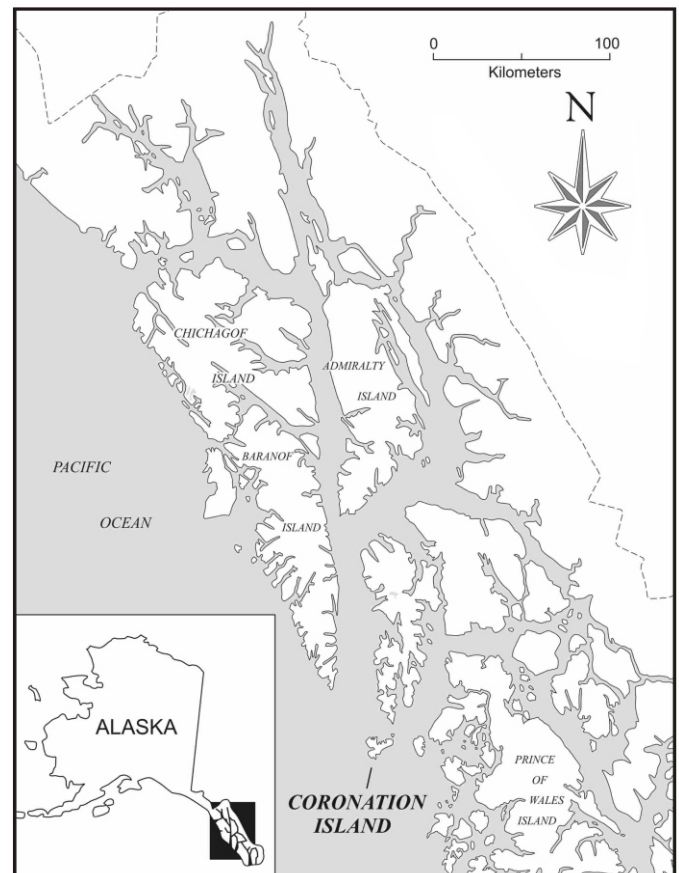
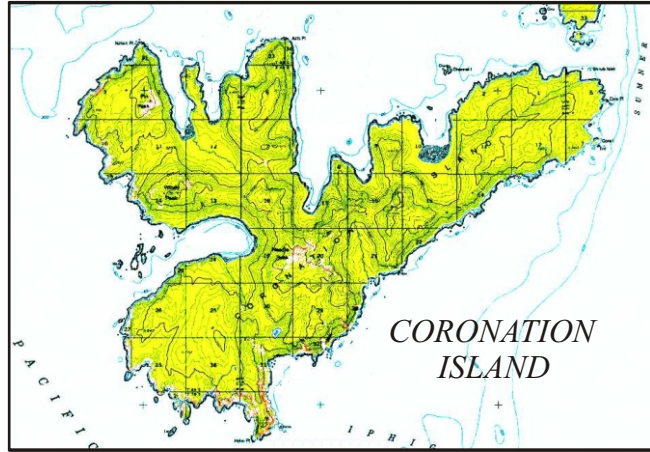
Dinner time was just before ferry departure, so we decided to go out to dinner and have Tim meet us there after Kevin met him at the plane. We ordered up and Nick, Carlene and I had a pleasant meal and watched two other plates cool off. The plane was late like most Alaska Airlines flights this summer. We finally had the cooling meals boxed up and began walking to the ferry since Kevin had the only wheels. Kevin and Tim picked us up halfway to the ferry line up where we finally found Dan. I'd had the bad fortune to have a conference call scheduled for just about ferry departure. I had borrowed a cell phone (a rare thing for me) and dialed in as we lined up for the security check. Of course, I was the one selected to have my pack searched and got to juggle phone and exploding caving gear. All was well, and we headed off for Hollis, me still on the

phone. I was stuck on the phone for almost the duration of the trip, including whale sightings near Kasaan. I happily packaged up the phone and mailed it away as soon as I could.

We were met in Hollis by Terry Fifield, the Craig District Archaeologist for the Forest Service. He shuttled us up to Thorne Bay where we were given lodging in the Forest Service bunkhouse. Next morning we shopped till we dropped, using the excellent menu/food list Val White had prepared for us. Pete had showed up with a regular vehicle instead of one of his big army trucks, and

room was a big premium. In fact, some of us were gonna be hitch-hiking while our gear rode with Pete. Luckily, Karen Petersen was going up to Whale Pass for a meeting and offered to take Nick and all our cave gear up to Pete's. Good miracles happen sometimes! Thanks Karen!

(continues on page 4)



Planes came in and Dave was nowhere to be seen. Pete asked to borrow the phone at Pro-Mech Air and picked up a phone in a back room. Before he dialed he was already saying "Hello"---he'd picked up the phone and who was already on it but Dave Love. More good miracles! We were ready to go.

Off we headed, vehicle full of cavers and food, for Whale Pass. We were well fed by Pete and Val, and lodged down at the Allred's cozy cabin. Pete's son, Kina, had hoped to come along, but was gimping from a 4-wheeler crash he'd had not long before while trying to keep up with Pete who was riding his dirt bike. Ouch! No Kina this trip.

Early the next morning found us loading Goest with gear and then trailering her to El Capitan, where we launched for Coronation. First stop was to pick up some oysters at Kathy and George Klinkert's oyster farm! Eating well was our first order of business. Several foggy gray hours later we landed 4 of us at West Aats Bay to search out a camp site. It didn't take long to find a great flat site under big trees with a nice karst-fed creek running alongside. Ruins of an old log cabin showed that we weren't the first to ever use the area. It was a long haul up the beach with all the gear---of course we'd landed at low tide.



Aats Bay, photo by Steve Lewis

Tents were pitched and we rigged a cathedral-like kitchen with 11mm rope and a huge tarp that Pete had brought. We even had the makings for a table to use for cooking and food preparation. Hand saw and screwgun and 10 minutes- voila, table. I couldn't resist a quick hike that turned out not quick. A scramble up the creek behind camp revealed that it percolated out of a bunch of junk limestone rubble. No cave entrance but a nice karsty ridge. I side-hilled the ridge above a bigger creek to the east of camp. This creek split, with branches heading up to a pass and up a canyon. By this point my stomach won out so I headed back to camp and filled it.



Our camp: Left to right; David Love, Tim Heaton, Dan Monteith and Pete Smith (photo by Steve Lewis)

West Aats Bay was one of the few places along the north shore that I hadn't visited during my 6 months living on Coronation Island to study deer. However, it was just below Peak 1720 which was karsty according to the map. Just over the ridge was Gish Bay, where I had noted Gish Cave in 1988, but not pushed past the entrance slot. So, off we headed to see what these places would offer. Dave and Dan discovered Out of Line Cave, which turned out tight, muddy, but keeps going vertical down reasonably large passage. Gish Cave was a nice looking insurgence slot at the bottom of a canyon, but one tight twist and it was too tight for any of us to follow. The slopes of 1720 were definitely karst, but caves were not to be found. Lunch was spectacular throughout on a limestone overlook atop a huge cliff. Aats Bay, Sumner Strait, Kuiu and Baranof Islands and the wide Pacific beyond were all gleaming under a clear blue sky. We split up on the return to camp, scrambling down the other side of 1720 and discovering that the big creek did resurge, but only out of more broken limestone. The cliffs to the southwest looked promising but too far to get to today. We also discovered to our chagrin, that several hoped for limey areas were not good prospects. No Brits, no quality limestone, and definitely not gonna be any caves. Our campsite was exquisite for camping, but was going to be a long way from the other spots with good potential.

July 29 found Pete ready for a break. He volunteered to use Goest to take us around the island to Hunger Valley which had been named by me when it was explored by two of us one cold February day in 1989 with just a carrot and a piece of hard candy for sustenance. Pete dropped us off and then drifted off to try to catch us some dinner. All the rest of us searched the base of huge limestone cliffs (nothing cave-like to be

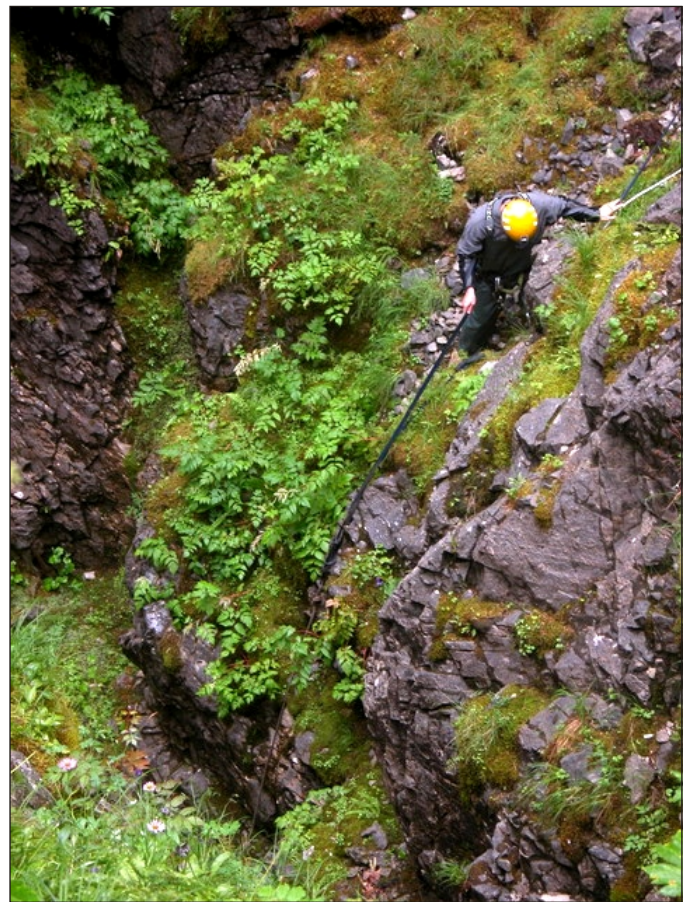
(continues on page 5)

found) and then proceeded up very steep terrain. Nick scoped out an intriguing canyon and we spent the next hour or so figuring out how to rejoin forces without going back to the bottom. Everything looked promising but didn't live up to promises. Vegan Pit looked really good, a 40 foot wide sink that required vertical gear to get in. It was filled with lots of breakdown and plant matter, including an orange I dropped down the hole. However, no bones, and the leads at the bottom were all plugged with breakdown. There were lots more big sinks above the limestone cliffs we'd seen the day but nothing went. One small pit, PIT 01 contained deer bones, but these did not look old. Working our way over toward Needle Peak we found areas that promised good things, but it was a long way back to camp along ways previously untravelled, so we left them for another day. Enroute to camp we skirted along the eastern slopes of Needle Peak, and excitement rose. The leader had found a 70 foot deep, two-mouthed pit right on the ridge top. I was sorry to catch up and find that we had merely rediscovered She Devil's Hell Hole. I already knew that it was choked with massive breakdown at the bottom. No bones for Tim in there. We followed the ridge back to camp, discovering Aats Pit, which didn't look promising and got no survey. Pete had caught a luscious dinner and had it cooking when we got home.



The Funnel, photo by Steve Lewis

Rain and low clouds greeted us the next morning. Seemed like a good day to check out Needle Peak so we all scrambled aboard Goest and drove over to East Aats, where I knew the route to the top was fairly easy and direct. We set up a haul out anchoring system for Goest and headed for the top that we knew must be up there somewhere. Fog was thick above about 1500 feet, so GPS and map and compass ruled the day. We did discover some nice little caves and lots of area that seemed to have great potential. But first, we discovered the Funnel. This was a massive sink with a big headwall and scary access. Lots of rigging to avoid loose rock. Dave led down the hole while others took photos, napped, or told old caving tales. Sad to say, the funnel was plugged after all that work (for Dave!).



Steve drops The Funnel

I got my comeuppance not much later. A tight little squeeze led to a short drop. I rigged the nasty little segment, barely squeezed through with my descender and free-dropped about 5 feet into a nice chamber only to hear Dan and Dave up-passage at a walk-in entrance. Needless to say, I exited that way after discovering that two entrances and a chamber composed all there was of Paper Chase (aka-Dope-on-a-Rope Cave). Foggy Top Pit, (continues on page 6)

Sink-Side Pit and No-Go Cave wrapped up this day. Foggy and No Go seemed to be the dominant themes although we all felt this area on top of Needle deserved another look when we could actually see where we were.



Tim above the slot from Needle Summit, looking towards East Aats Beach. Photo by Steve Lewis

July 30 and Pete was ready to not walk again. Seemed like the perfect day to core the lake above China Cove and have Pete pick us up in Windy Bay after a journey out to the Hazy Islands. So, Pete dropped us in China Cove and we struggled up the steep slopes. No good leads here--lots of muck and loose rock over the limestone base. Dave and Tim and Dan dropped into the lake with homemade coring devices while Nick and I scrambled along the western slopes. Cores on their backs, the others met us for lunch before heading back indirectly towards Windy Bay. We worked the tops of the cliffs above the southeast coast, relocating Goest (aka The Wet One) Cave, the cliff top resurgence discovered several years earlier. It still needs mapping, but, with 4-foot deep swimming passage and lots of water flowing it wasn't high on Tim's list of likely caves for discovering bones. So, Goest awaits survey.

We walked back to Windy Bay through areas that we'd already surveyed and found several new

caves. Foot Hole Pit was discovered by Nick--the entrance was just big enough to stick a foot into before moss was pulled back to reveal a small pit. We hurried to survey Pete Pissed Pit, because we located it as we were rushing to be somewhere close to our scheduled meeting time. An invigorating dash for the last half hour or so got us to Windy Bay before he really was (pissed that is). On the way home, we explored several sea caves where Tim collected bird bones and Dan managed to get wet jumping back into the boat. The ocean surge made getting back aboard interesting as Pete hovered just within jumping distance.

August first was the day to rework the top of Needle Peak. There was no fog at all, in fact it was a beautiful clear day. We reanchored in East Aats and headed up under the looming cliffs of Needle Peak, splitting into two teams. Nick discovered and dropped several nice little pits before we discovered Grater Pit. This may have been the 70 foot plus deep pit noted by Dave Klein in his earlier (1961) explorations of Coronation, mostly to study deer. I was lucky to get to drop this pit, a beautiful clean drop with eagle bones at the bottom. The passage continued at the bottom, but pinched off after about 40 feet of tall canyon. Sharp fins, especially at the top of the pit gave it its name. Lots of new caves were discovered along both sides of the ridge heading north from Needle Peak toward Windy Peak, and also under the cliffs of Needle above Windy Bay. These included Grater Pit, Big Buck Pit, Slippery Slide to Nowhere, Mossy Top, Three Arch Cave, Old Flag Cave, Disappointment Pit, Improvisation Pit, Face First Pit, Pinched Pit, and Russian Jumar Pit. Russian Jumars is a term from old Heceta days when the Russians proudly named hand over hand on rope as Russian Jumars. They were tough cavers indeed. We found plenty of sediment and a few bones, so Tim was

(continues on page7)



Nick going into Needle Peak, photo by Steve Lewis

getting happier and happier as the day progressed. We were nowhere near finished with ridge-walking, much less surveying when we realized that getting home should be a priority if we wanted any light to do it in.

With caves to map and lots of unwalked ridge, we headed back up onto Needle Peak again on our last day. We mapped Three Arch Cave, a short drop-in loaded with fresh deer bones from animals that had fallen in the three high skylight entrances. I'd discovered this entrance back in 1988-89, but never had time or equipment to do more than take a quick peek at the opening. It's always nice to discover old leads again and find that time doesn't always shrink them. Three Arches is a very nice cathedral-like cave, but sadly doesn't go far and has only fresh bones.

Phreda Phreatic's Cave was without doubt the most exciting find of the day. It consisted of several entrances into a big dome, floored with breakdown. Side leads led back up with plenty of challenging chimneying and bridging. But, best of all, a quick test excavation in the breakdown showed bones. This cave should be worth coming back to with Tim to excavate some day soon.

Numerous other caves were discovered and/or mapped today. We mapped Foggy Bottom, Three

Arches, and Phreda Phreatic's Cave, as well as Juvenile Descension, Bayview Pit, and One-at-a-Time-Pit. We sketched Disappointment Pit #37, and neighboring Bop Drop, both blind pits, as well as Moss Blanket Pit,

And Thru Trip. Dave Love mapped J. Hammond Cave & Permanent Fund Pit which had originally been named Carbonate Contact & 4.5 m Pit. We renamed them in honor of Jay Hammond, when we



*Nick and Pete drop a pit on Needle Peak,
photo by Steve Lewis*

heard that he had passed away during the expedition. We all hope that the real permanent fund is a little deeper than 4.5m though. The ridge toward Windy Bay remains mostly unexplored for cave.

Walking back down to East Aats Bay was bittersweet. We'd discovered well over 30 new caves during the expedition and still had good reason to do more work on Coronation Island. But, this trip was coming to an end with all its good memories and tons of laughter. It was wonderful to discover that we all were still the goofy but competent cavers we'd been many years ago, and that once we had a few days of thrashing the hills, we were all still pretty darn fit. Sharing another adventure had been a wonderful treat.

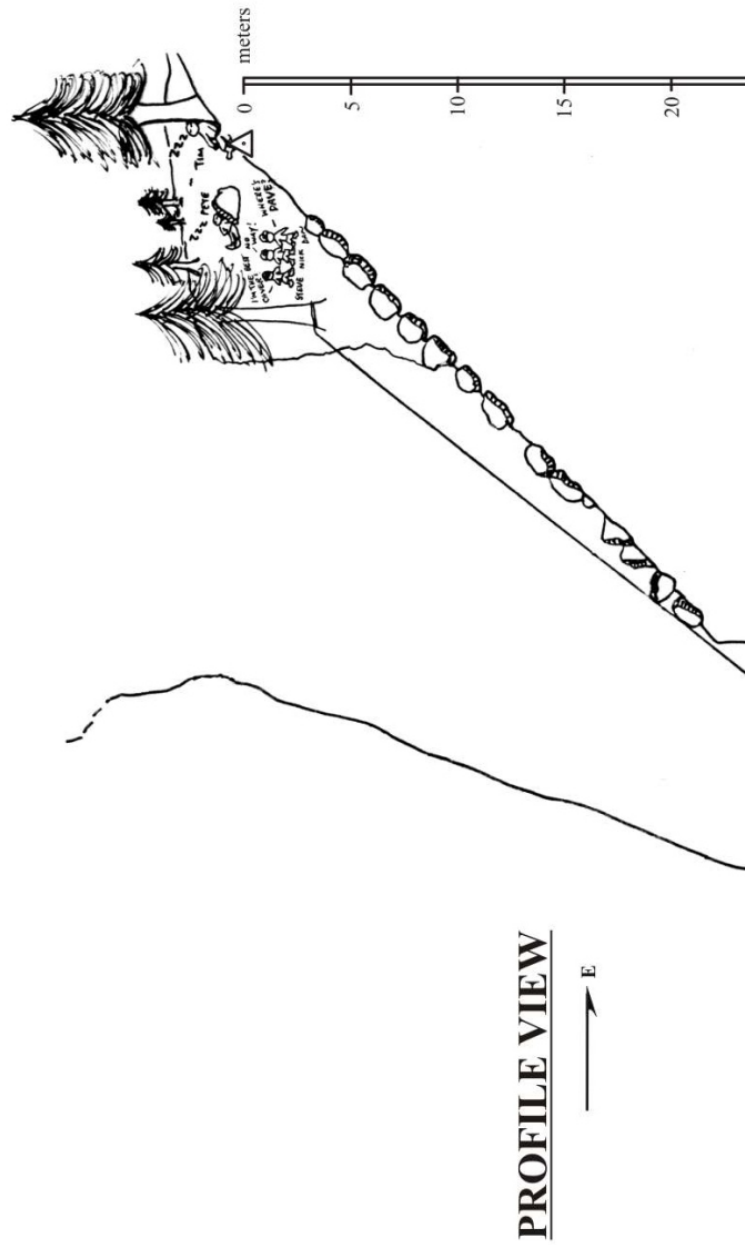
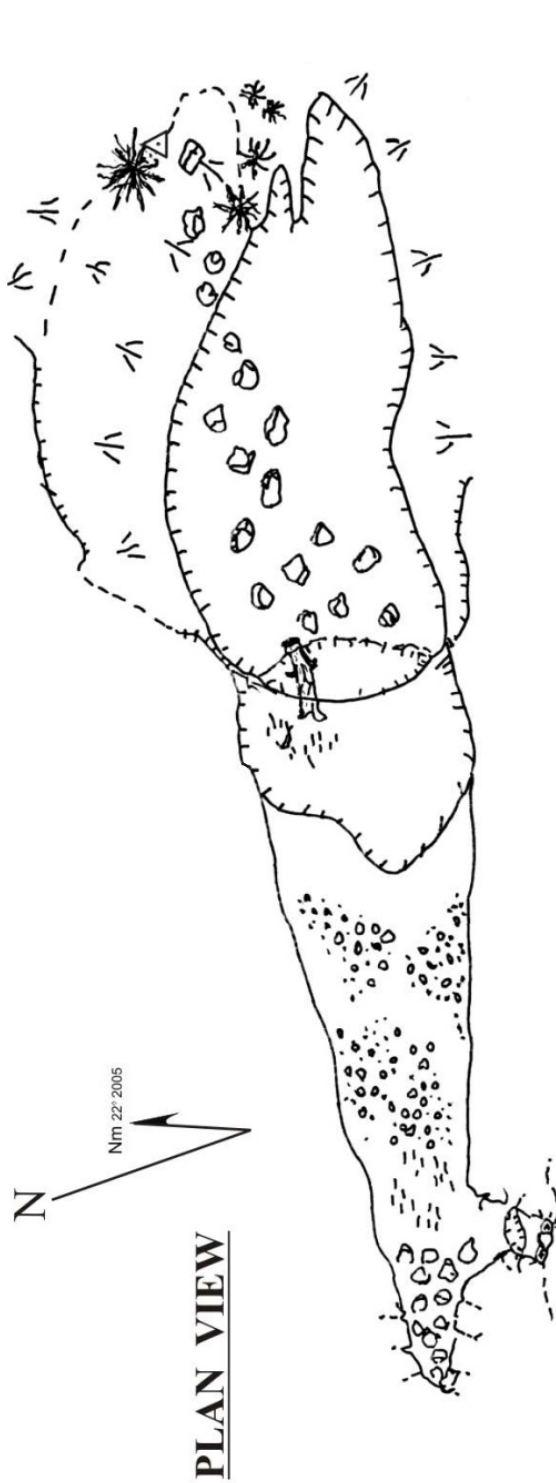
(continues on page 10)



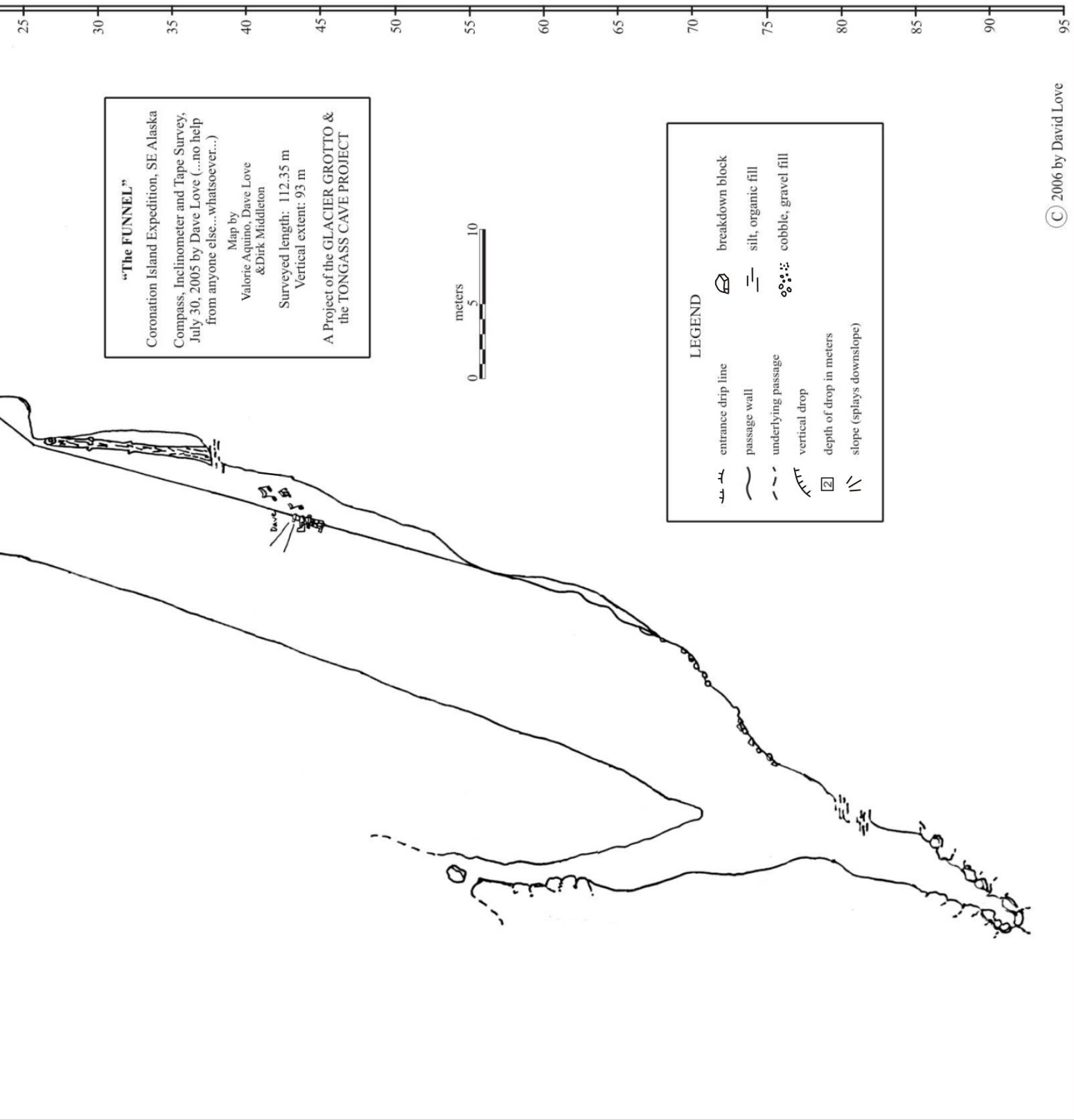
Steve drops Disappointment pit

“The FUNNEL”

Needle Peak, CORONATION ISLAND, Alaska



The Funnel, upper half



The Funnel, lower half

The weather the next morning took our minds off bittersweet thoughts and on to survival. There was just enough fuel to make it back to El Capitan after all our trips in Goest. The winds were howling and we had a sizeable load, a 24-foot boat, and expected some big seas. If we had to turn around, we'd have to call and ask for fuel from somewhere. Nonetheless, we all had faith in Pete's skills and his decision to head home today. So, we dragged all the gear down---low tide again. Swells were rolling in and Pete was having a hard time pulling the haulout, so we began hauling gear back up the beach as the tide rose. Timing was critical and hilarious as we ran to the boat grounded on the beach, trying to avoid the big waves that were over boot high. I finally topped my boots as we were launching, but amazingly everyone else stayed dry.

Sitting on the back deck, looking out at foggy skies and seas rising high over the cabin of Goest rain and spray sloshed off the roof and down onto our Helly's. We looked out and hoped we'd been right about leaving in this weather. But Pete, by getting into shelter on the north side of Sumner, was able to get us home in style. We picked up a bit of fuel from the oyster farm, just in case, but didn't need it.

But, it was Pete who gave us the final great memory of the trip. Val had left the truck and boat trailer for us. Pete pulled Goest just above the rising tide so we could get things tied down and packed away

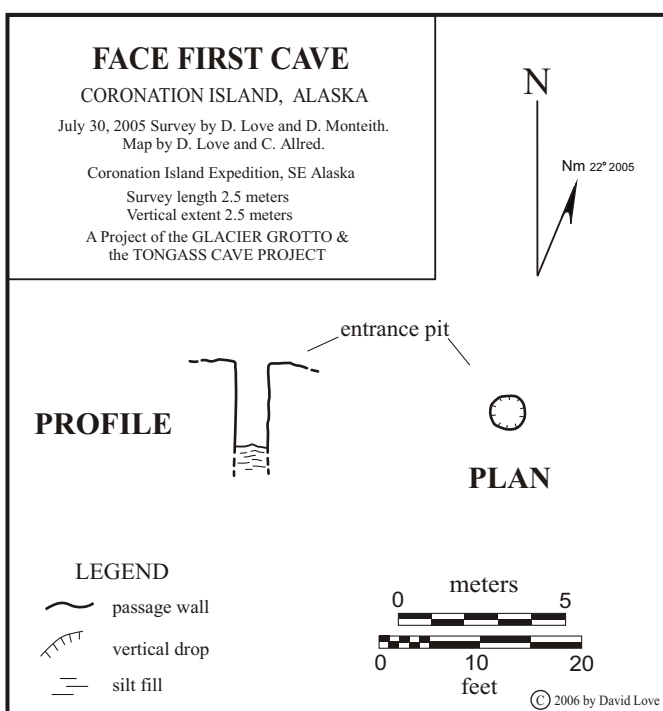
before driving to Whale Pass. He got out of the truck...."click.....Aaargh..... Damn!!!" He'd started to shut the door and had half done it. The only keys were inside, the engine was running, and the tide was rising. Whale Pass and another key was 10 or more miles away. The radio wouldn't reach that far. So, time for caver ingenuity. Between a pry stick, wrench handle, and a long stick that reached the window opener button we beat the tide and avoided smashing any windows. And we finally had caught Pete in a real, undeniable, goof!

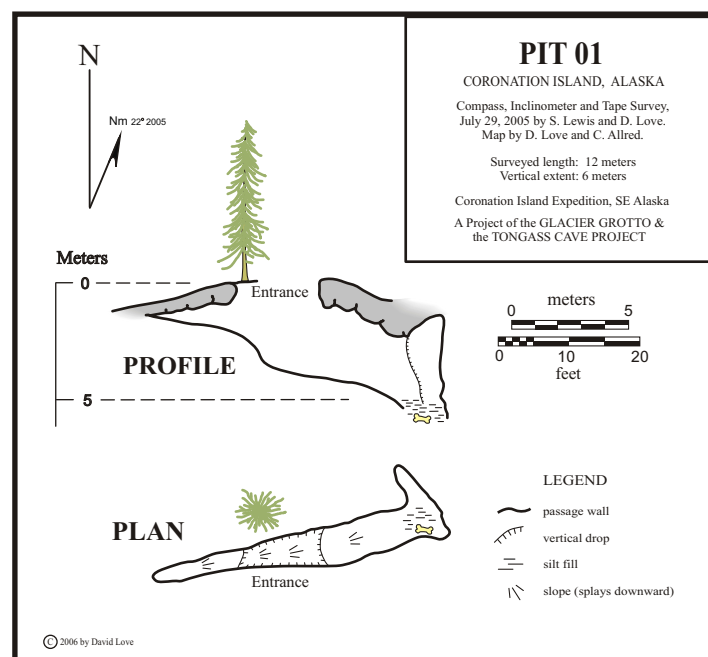
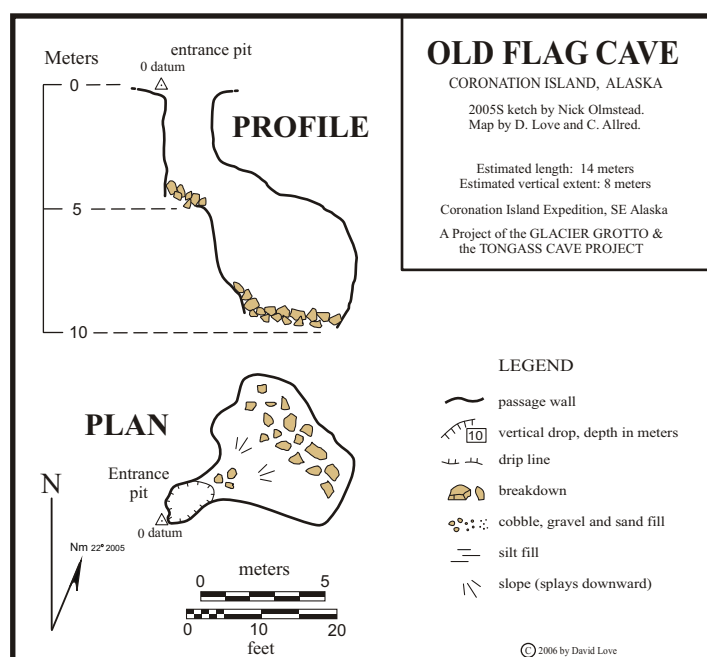
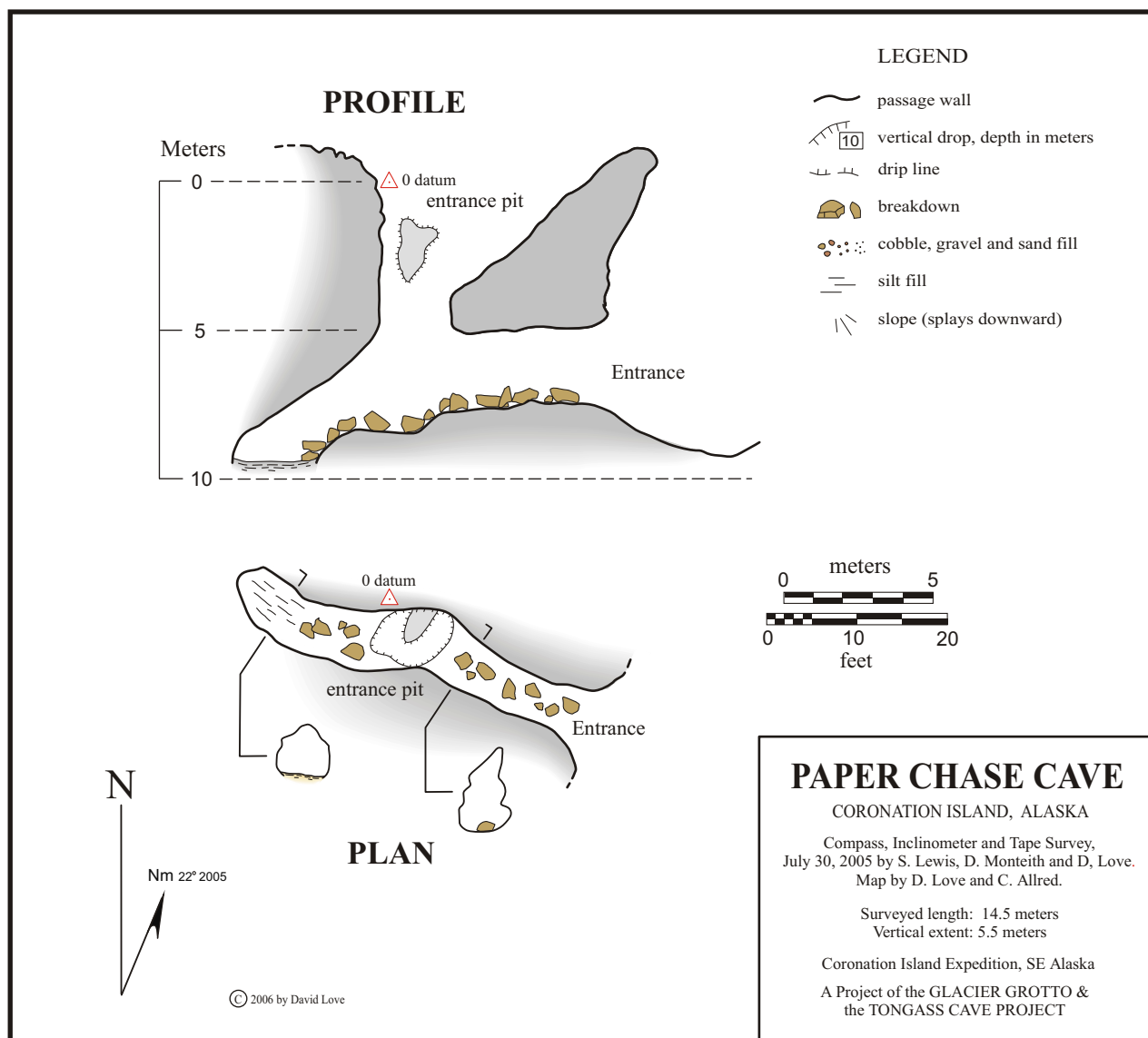
A wonderful Val feast, a long ride down to Hollis in the morning, a ferry ride (sans cell phone!) and we were back in the hands of Kevin and Carlene. We almost ended up on an Allred-inspired Ketchikan storm sewer expedition, but opted instead to help Carlene empty the garage by sorting through heaps of old cave journals that the Grotto has collected over the years. We salvaged what needed saving, scoured the rest for fun bits to put into future cavers, and provided a big pile of paper for the recyclers. Then we all crashed out between the boxes on the living room floor before catching early flights to all over Southeast Alaska and even South Dakota.

We're all hopefully waiting to hear soon that Tim has a new grant to go back and finish the work we started on Coronation. And next time, Kevin definitely needs to come along. We gotta get him out of the storm sewers. ▲

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES ON CORONATION ISLAND CAVES

- Allred, Kevin (2004). Coronation Island Expedition 2002 Log. *Alaskan Caver*, Vol.24, No. 3
- Krejca, Jean (2003). Tongass Cave Project Expedition to Coronation Island, Alaska. *NSS News*, Vol. 61, No.4
- Krejca, Jean (2003). Biology of Caves on Coronation Island, Alaska. *NSS News*, Vol. 61, No.4
- Hampton, Don (1989). Explorations on Coronation Island. *Alaskan Caver*, Vol. 10, No. 3
- Lewis, Steve (1989). Caves on Coronation Island. *Alaskan Caver*, Vol. 9, No. 1
- Halliday, W. R. (1975). Calceospeleological Abstract. *Alaskan Caver*, Vol. 2, No. 1, page 17
- Hackman, Robert J. (1949). Speleology in Southeastern Alaska, *NSS Bulletin*, Vol.11, pages 11-16





JEWEL CAVE

From: Chris_Gabriele@nps.gov
> Date: Thu, 6 Apr 2006 10:22:33 -0800

Four volunteer cavers made a four-day underground trek into the far reaches of Jewel Cave last month, adding more than half a mile to its known length and making it the second longest cave in the world. The exploration trip added about 3,700 feet to the cave's known length, bringing it to 135 miles and 10 feet long, according to Jewel Cave National Monument superintendent Todd Suess. That made Jewel Cave the second-longest cave in the world, eclipsing the Optimisticeskaja Cave in Ukraine, according to Karen Rosga, chief of interpretation at Jewel Cave.

Cave officials believed Jewel Cave might already have passed the Ukraine cave, but it's challenging to get updated information from the Ukraine.

Rosga said. "We felt sure if we hit the 135-mile mark, there would be no doubt." The Ukraine cave is still being explored, also.

The longest known cave in the world is Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, with 360 miles explored and mapped, Suess said.

The Jan. 13-16 trek explored the eastern reaches of Jewel Cave and brought the cavers to a point near Pass Creek Road, Suess said.

Making the survey trip were Mike Wiles, cave management specialist at Jewel Cave; Larry Shaffer, a computer specialist and cave volunteer from the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research in Hill City; Andy Armstrong of Custer, an intern at Jewel Cave; and Stan Allison, a National Park Service cave specialist from Carlsbad, N.M. It takes exploration crews six to eight hours to travel from the cave entrance to the main camp deep inside the cave, Suess said. Water is stored along the way in plastic and nylon caches that catch drips from the cave roof. The main camp stores 20 gallons of water, enough to hold four people for four days. Explorers then travel another three hours from the camp to the unexplored areas, work for six to eight hours, then make their way back to camp.

They repeat that process, heading out to explore each day and returning to the base camp deep underground at the end of the work day.

Cavers pack light, taking only critical equipment such as head lamps, along with food, protein bars and special equipment. Though the cave is a constant 49 degrees, cavers wear T-shirts and light clothing to increase mobility and to fight the high humidity and heat of exertion. "We do all of our cooking and cleaning and eating over tarps so we don't leave anything there," Armstrong said, "including human waste or garbage."

Armstrong said he liked exploring beyond the End, the name of the last place that had been explored. "When we got beyond the End, we found lots more, like a passage 30 feet wide and 50 feet high that went on and on." But there are plenty of tough, tight spots to get through, also, including a stretch in the first few miles underground called the Miseries. "It took us an hour and 40 minutes to get through the Miseries," Allison said. "It's a thousand feet of belly crawling."

But there are also high wide galleries where mobility is hindered less and jeweled walls reflect the light of headlamps, Suess said.

Along the way, the explorers saw untouched calcite rafts, thin mineral deposits that look like water lilies; gypsum "flowers" with long streamers and hairs created by wind and water; walls lined with crystals; and deep inside the cave a mummified Townsends long-eared bat, hanging from a roof filled with fossils from the even more distant past.

"You get to see places no one has ever gone before," Shaffer said. "When you get there, it's like Neil Armstrong stepping onto the moon."

The cave continues to be explored so that measures can be taken to protect the interior from activities above ground, Suess said. Landowners spraying herbicides or introducing harmful chemicals could affect water in the cave. Drilling could change the ecological balance deep underground, he said.

Scientists are studying the DNA of micro-organisms and chemical reactions with water in Jewel Cave. Cavers use a combination of old-fashioned grit and high-tech computers and lasers to measure the interior of the cave. Suess said more than 90,000 visitors took the cave tour in 2005, but only a few cavers

(continues on page 15)

NSS CONVENTION.... continued from page 2

But what about the caves? Well, we thought you would never ask. Even though the area is not as rich in caves as the southern US we do have caves that you will enjoy. In the local area, we have a several small limestone caves, talus caves, and snow caves (and we will even help you find them, or give you tours). The longest limestone cave in Washington State is a daytrip from Bellingham, accessible by hiking in the foothills of the Cascades.

A bit over an hour drive from Bellingham, in lower British Columbia, is the Chilliwack caving area. The Chilliwack has high alpine karst caves as well as low valley caving. The area sports vertical as well as nice horizontal caving options, and the Chilliwack scenery is truly spectacular.

The largest concentration of limestone caves in Washington State is about three hours from Bellingham and east of Seattle. These caves require a beautiful, but challenging hike. At the top, you will find numerous caves including Washington's deepest cave, Newton, at nearly 700 feet deep.

Southern Washington state, five or more hours drive from Bellingham, hosts a huge concentration of lava tube caves in the Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Adams areas. If you want the big caves, then

Vancouver Island is your destination. A 1-hour drive and 2-hour ferry trip to Vancouver Island will bring you to some spectacular international caving.

The Chilliwack, Vancouver Island, Victoria, and Vancouver, British Columbia Canada all require crossing the border. You must have your passport or other valid identification on hand to cross the border.

At this years convention you have a range of accommodation options from camping to motels and fantastic dormitories with fine dining in the cafeteria or one of many restaurants a short distance from the campus. If you are traveling far and want to travel light, you might consider one of the dorm rooms near the registration area. If you want to reserve a dorm floor for your grotto or a group of friends then let us know.

For up to the minute convention information, check the convention web site at <http://www.nss2006.org>. For more Bellingham information, check the Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism web site at <http://bellingham.org/>.

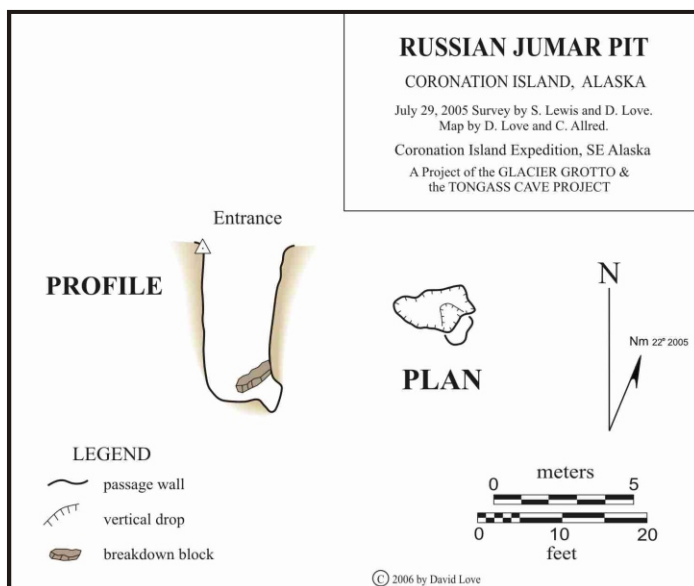
Looking forward to seeing you in August! Michael McCormack and the NSS 2006 Convention Staff ▲

!! STOP PRESS !!

The editor would like to announce that she became a new grandma on May 6, at 8:37 PM. Her undivided interest in this event is one reason why this newsletter is so late. The parents of the 6.5 pound baby boy are Ella and David Fish, of Ketchikan. They were featured in the January 2006 issue of the Alaskan Caver. All is well with both mother and baby. The photo here is of little Lehi Dominic when only 1.5 hours old, while inside his father's shirt.



ured in the January 2006 issue of the Alaskan Caver. All is well with both mother and baby. The photo here is of little Lehi Dominic when only 1.5 hours old, while inside his father's shirt.





Rope Cutter

Dear Phreada Phreatic,

How could I possibly find interest in a cave if I can't have WiFi?

Signed, Ofishal Cosmopolitan.

Dear Ofishal Cosmopolitan;

Let me talk about WiFi. Like any acronym it could have several meanings. If you are asking Why I Find insurgences, my answer would be because I go looking for them. Its really not that hard. Just make sure you are on Karst, find an exposed stream and follow it down stream until bingo it disappears. Of course this is somewhat of a simplification because the reality is more like this. You trudge through acres of woods looking for a stream, which takes a really long time because if you really are on Karsted terrain most water will be so deep in the ground not even a water witch would bob. When you do stumble across a stream, it is easier said then done to follow it. This means struggling through bushes, doing bush rappels down cliffs when the most convenient handholds happen to be devils club, sliding on slippery rocks and then finally seeing the big hole for an insurgence. Then at least the fun of exploring the cave can get started. Still the reward of discovery is great, and the lasting memories with the additional reminders of picking the devils club thorns out of various parts of your anatomy will give you many stories to tell your grandchildren. That is if you don't fall into the insurgence and die.

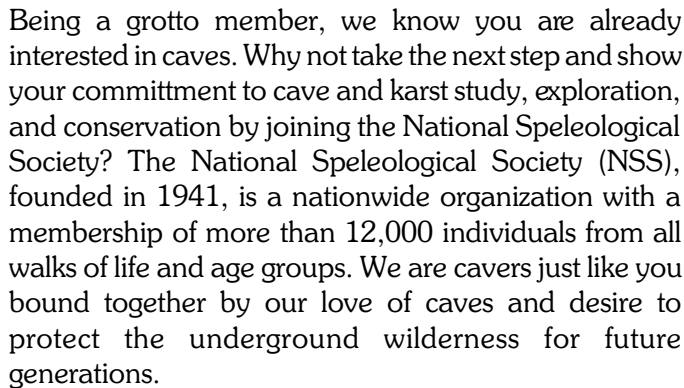
But I suppose that WiFi might also mean Wide Fidelity. And although this might refer to the habits of movie stars that appear with regularity on tabloids, I will reach out beyond my areas of expertise and guess that you are talking about a local area network that uses high frequency radio

signals to transmit and receive data over distances. Were you really planning on taking a computer into a cave? Where are you writing from, because you obviously haven't been caving here in Alaska to even ask a question, that in light of the kind of caving here, ranks right up with the kind of drivel we hear every night on the evening news listening to morons (substitute elected officials so as to keep from insulting someone who is proud to be a moron, instead of an elected official!) Why do you think we go caving if not to escape the so called wonders of modern civilization? I think you might be confusing caving with mountaineering where they can send messages from the top of Everest.

It takes very special equipment to send radio signals through rock, but just for one minute lets suppose it could be done. There you are dragging your computer through a passage lined with that special sticky mud caves are so well know for. The kind of mud that makes a sucking sound as you slither on your belly through tight passages. You finally get a chamber large enough to sit up in and so you pull out your computer. Who are you going to email? Your only choice would be another caver, because if anyone else saw where you were or if you described accurately your situation, there would be guys in special decontaminations suits to de mud you and cart you off in a special coat with long sleeves when you exited the cave. Secondly, you wouldn't want to email another caver, because they would just call you a woose and email a video of their last cave experience that makes your misery look like a walk in the park. The only way for this experience to become an epic is with the true aging process that causes fine wine and good stories.

So, if you can't leave your computer at home, or at least in the base camp, don't bother to go caving. It will just wreck your experience. ▲

Phreada Phreatic



Membership costs just:

LIMITED- 1 year: \$15 2 years: \$29 3 years: \$42
(Over 17 years of age, privileges of Regular

Email questions to Eric Weaver at:
WEAVEREM@UCMAIL.UC.EDU or Dawn Ryan at
(815) 260-3454. ▲

Contact Steve Miller at 394-8417 or steve.miller@rapidcityjournal.com. ▲

Hosted by San Diego Grotto at Dos Picos County Park in Ramona, California. All cavers are invited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Western Region. Activities include sea caving, hard rock caving, hiking, rock climbing, auction and a pig roast and party on Saturday night. For details and registration call Carl at (619) 561-3815 or visit www.sdgrotto.org/regional. If there is anything you can donate for the fundraising auction, please bring it with you or mail it to: San Diego Grotto, Russ Hunsaker, 1540 Savin Dr., El Cajon, CA 92021. All proceeds go to the NSS Western Region and all donations are tax deductible! For auction questions or suggestions: rbhunsaker@aol.com

The Alaskan Caver
2525 Fourth Ave.
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Address Service Requested

