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Lowell Burkhead

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I N T E R C O M

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National Speleological Society



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The Iowa Grotto meets at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in room 226 of Trowbridge Hall on the campus of the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa. The Iowa Grotto was founded in 1949 and is celebrating out 40th anniversary this year and is the third oldest grotto west of the Mississippi.

Air Force Rescue Coordination Center
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This number calls out Iowa Grotto rescue personnel.

Cover Photo: Unlabeled recent photo from Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa. Photo By Scott Dankof



IOWA GROTTO
National Speleological Society
P. O. Box 228
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Chairman - - - - - Mike Lace
Vice-Chairman - - Lowell Burkhead
Secretary-Treasurer - Larry Welch

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IOWA GROTTO MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting March 22, 1989

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Lace at 7:40 p.m. in room 267 of Trowbridge Hall. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as edited by the INTERCOM editor. The Treasurer's report listed a balance of \$352.38 in the club treasury. TRIP REPORTS: Doug Schmuecker reported on a trip to Doll Cave in Jones County with Jay Wells. Doug also gave some details on the Basic Cave Diving Class he attended with several other grotto members. The class was held in Florida, and featured very non-midwestern springs containing clear and warm water. Larry Welch reported on a survey trip in Coldwater Cave to pick up some footage in side passages off of Dead Coon Passage. Mike Bounk reported on a Coldwater Cave trip in which he collected bentonite samples to give clues to the caves stratigraphic position. Some Minnesota cavers joined him and took some photos. Mike Lace reported on a dig near Pete's Pipe in Coldwater in which he and Scott Dankof made progress toward what appears to be a big dome. FUTURE TRIPS: The platform at Coldwater Cave will be reconstructed in April. Discussion of a grotto picnic to celebrate 40 years of caving in Iowa centered on the best possible date for the event. At present, a date in early August is favored. OLD BUSINESS: Lowell Burkhead has been very busy working on the INTERCOM back issue effort with help from Mike Lace and Tom Hruska. Tom started cleaning at his house and dropped off a truckload of old INTERCOMs and back issue material at Lowell's. Mike Lace got several more "new" back issues printed to finish off the money donated for that purpose. Lowell has it all put in order along with a list of what's available for the HOTLINE. He also has a complete list put together of which issues have been published and which ones are still nonexistent. NEW BUSINESS: A list of paid members will be prepared before the April meeting. Doug Schmuecker will contact the NSS News about adding an Iowa rescue number to their listing. A discussion of caving in the Dubuque area ensued with the news that Rudy Pruszko has moved out of the state. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m. After the meeting, Mike Bounk gave a slide show featuring pictures taken during some of the mainstream survey trips in April Cave. Highlights included the beautiful Cathedral Dome and the Mike Bounk formation. Mike Lace followed with slides from a trip to Flowstone Pot, Winneshiek County, that took place last winter.

Regular meeting April 26, 1989

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by chairman Mike Lace with eight members present and one guest (Tim Hornaday). No minutes of the previous meeting or Treasurer's report were available due to the Secretary-Treasurer's absence. TRIP REPORTS: Mike Bounk reported on a trip to Coldwater Cave on April 15th with Dave DeVries (Yes! Disco Dave was actually in the cave!), Mike Nelson and Sue Ecklund. The party built a new platform at the bottom of the shaft. Mike Lace recounted the Bat Room survey trip that took place that same weekend in Coldwater Cave. He, Larry Welch and Jay Wells surveyed 270 feet of mostly dry side passages. Greg McCarty reported that he and John Fuhrman have continued their digging projects. FUTURE TRIPS: Coldwater Cave weekend is scheduled for May 20th. The first April Cave trip of the season will take place on May 27th. The 40th Anniversary Iowa Grotto Summer Picnic is scheduled for August 12 at Dutton's Cave County Park. OLD BUSINESS: The pros and cons of organizing an Iowa Grotto fund raiser event similar to the Hodag Hunt (Wisconsin) and the MSS Cornfeed (Minnesota) were discussed. Guest, Tim Hornaday, briefly described similar successful efforts in Indiana. A cost breakdown of the grotto publication efforts was outlined by chairman Mike Lace. A total of \$8.28 per member is required to publish and distribute twelve HOTLINE issues per year and six INTERCOMs per year to each member. Other expenses were not included in the estimate.

The accumulation of cave information for the Iowa Grotto Cave Index was begun at this meeting. Winneshiek and Clayton Counties are the regions targeted for the next meeting. NEW BUSINESS: Mike Lace announced that three new members had joined within the past few weeks: Julie Whitfield & family, Matt Kramar and Scott Wickwire. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. After the meeting, a slide show on Iowa Caves was given by Greg McCarty.

A BRIDGE TOO NARROW
(White Knuckles in the Ozarks)

March 16-19, 1989

by Mike Nelson

Mike, Delores, and Aaron Nelson, Chad Gentz, Jennie Spores, Robin O'Toole, and Dave, Sue and Cathi Ecklund.

We took off for Mark Twainsville (Hannible, Mo.) after work Thursday night, in a 28 foot Itasca motor home. My wife had secured its use through what amounts to a product testing program by her employers, Winnebago Industries. Friday morning we took in a short walk and then visited the historic areas of town. The trip was a Happy Birthday Teenager event. I had always told my son that instead of amassing "stuff", that if he had something he wanted to do or experience, just say the word. So this "joy ride" with his three best friends was his gift welcoming him to the big "one three" (13). Aaron, Chad, Robin and Jennie were setting the tone for the weekend by truly enjoying one another's company; the sojourn was just the format. After seeing the downtown exhibits, we drove out to Mark Twain Cave Campgrounds and ate dinner. We had considered taking the kids into this cave, but at \$6.00 a head, we opted to show them some real, wild cave. So we headed off for Waynesville, in Pulaski County, where I had already gotten permission to take them to Tunnel Cave.

We stayed on major highways, as one might expect, until very near our goal, where driving smaller county roads was almost unavoidable. On a long uphill piece of road, which included a bridge span in the middle of it, we were unfortunate enough to be forced to share the bridge with a semi-trailer truck. We each had about 2" of space on our outsides, leaving us 10 to 12 inches between our driver's side mirrors. I used up the remainder of my free space on the passenger side. Dave and Sue in their van behind us, said we really put some stuff into the air. He got too busy taking evasive action to take in the entire spectacle. If the truck hadn't been going 9000 mph, we might have had a bit more of a chance. The "thwang" of the mirror off the bridge sent the complete structure into cosmic reverberations. Once off the bridge and over the hill and around the curve that hid the truck from us "until it was too late", we found a place to pull over.

We had merely kissed the bridge and the sounds were more severe than the damage. I was certain, though, that we had kissed our damage deposit good-bye also.

At Waynesville, we went to look at Roubidouz Spring. We just happened to have brought our cave diving gear and after the earlier experience, a nice relaxing cave dive seemed in order. As the kids risked life and limb climbing the impressive bluff that backed the spring, we looked things over and formulated a dive plan.

The water did look somewhat milky, but no higher than I had seen it in the past. My experience level did not let me accurately judge the swell of the boil. It was getting late, and despite a warning to be very careful, a couple of the kids had gotten to a place on the bluff where I wouldn't have gone without a belay. I told them I wasn't even going to watch while they got themselves out of that spot and back down to the camper. This was as stern as I had to get with them all weekend, thankfully. We found a camping spot, had supper and crashed.

The morning was a bit chilly. We were glad we had signed the release forms the day before and could get into the water before the fishermen showed up. When we hit the water, we found it to be a tad cool. 46 degrees cool to be exact; about 7 degrees below normal. As we attempted to do our pre-dive safety drills, we found ourselves being washed out of the rise pool toward Roubidoux Creek. The conditions dictated that we abbreviate our efforts to a cavern dive. It took several attempts to fight past the flow of the restricted entrance to reach the relatively peaceful waters inside. The force of the flow had depressed my purge button and created quite a show of bubbles for Dave and Sue behind me and everyone else watching from the bridge. I was unable to distinguish the sensation of these bubbles Jacuzziing the length of my body as the flow I was fighting made me feel like a pennant in a gale. I was flapping clear down to my fin tips. I had lost so much air that all I could do was hold a spot near the entrance while Dave and Sue, benefiting from my experience, used their larger reserves to do a short look around from their safety reel.

We then just played, practicing getting in and out of the entrance, so that the dive would still be a learning opportunity and not a complete waste.

As we got ourselves out of the water, four open water divers, splendidly outfitted for that environment, were about ready to get in. We exchanged pleasantries, but being aware that it was not always accepted in the manner it was given, kept our advice to ourselves.

We were relieved when they almost became discouraged of getting in and concerned when they finally made it. They were talking of doing a simple dive but the Tekna scooter one of them was trying to get in, to stash for their second dive, belied that. Using the scooter and kicking with all his might, that guy only held his own against the current. We babysat the unit as he joined his friends by clawing his way in, as we had.

Our concern grew as we sat on the bridge and waited and watched. We discussed diving caves with a large bunch of off-duty soldiers who had piled out of a tiny truck. 45 minutes after the first diver entered, one finally came out, then another, then another. Eventually, one of them went back in for the last man. The heroing adventures they related to us were full of typical errors that kill people, too many to relate, but I'll skim over the "standard" one. One fellow took several kicks in pursuit of a large bass, then turned to find himself in complete black. After several moments of severe fretting, he saw a buddy's light and safety. Familiarity with the cave would have shown him that all he would have to have done would be to let the current work and it would have spit him right out of the cave.

They were very receptive to our rap as they doffed their gear. Rather than being too specific, we got their address and offered to supply them with some basic literature on the subject. We also decided to contact the various cave diving organizations and have them supply the Waynesville Police Department, who oversee the diving, with enough of the same material to hand out freely.

It was suggested in a letter to them that maybe making one of the simpler, more direct, brochures be required reading before permission was granted.

The kids were still having too much fun splashing around and climbing on things to consider doing anything else. So we lingered around a while before finally getting our act out to Tunnel Cave.

They were absolutely ecstatic once into the cave. The only member of the entire party who balked was 1 year old, Cathi Marie. I guess she didn't feel safe in her mother's backpack without a helmet on. Sue was forced to dawdle outside while the rest of us enjoyed the water-sculpted beauty of this cave that turned out to be much shorter than described in a previous trip report. (Hey, you all know me by now, don't ya?)

Actually, the error was made because I now understand it to be a two cave system. Tunnel appears to be connected to nearby Spring Cave, that has been mapped to over 5000 feet. While inspecting the wet entrance to that cave, a five foot long black snake was observed basking in the sun directly over the entrance. It remained less interested in us than we were in it, until every camera in the entourage had been shoved into its face at least once. Then it slipped its face into a vug to better ignore us.

It was talking to the landowner that cleared up my misconception of the cave's proportions. He also explained the temperature and condition of the Roubidoux Spring. There had been 16 inches of wet heavy snow on the ground the week before. It had been deposited in a single short storm and not a trace of it was left to be seen anywhere.

The long trip back was leisurely, with a long stopover at Truman Lake. Thank God, the return was uneventful. As the damage to the Itasca was not through negligence, our deposit was returned, making for a good time for everyone. I believe it provided Aaron with a coming of age Birthday Party he won't soon forget.

THE HARDY BOYS: ADVENTURE AT WIMP HOLE

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
March 18, 1989
Scott Dankof and Mike Lace.

by Scott Dankof
Water temp. 42 degrees F

The water temperature was low as was the enthusiasm for any long trips in the cave. Water levels were up a little bit compared to last month, and with the meltingsnows on the surface, a trip through the upstream sumps seemed a little chancy. A wimp trip seemed like a good idea, and Mike and I volunteered.

Mike told me of a small lead near Pete's Pipe that needed some digging and had a nice echo when you shouted into it. We gathered a hammer, shovel, and a pry bar and started out.

The trip upstream to Pete's Pipe was uneventful. We took our time and admired some of the delicate beauty in the many ceiling crevices along the way. When we arrived at the junction where the Pipe takes off, Mike pointed out a small hole in the right-hand wall with a trickle of water flowing out. This was it.

We unpacked the digging tools. I unpacked my camera and snapped a few pictures. Mike crawled into the lead with a shovel and started to remove the mud fill. After a while, it was my turn to take a crack at it. I took the shovel and entered. The lead is about 2½ feet high and anywhere from one foot to as little as eight inches wide. About 10 feet in, it makes a sharp 90 degree turn to the right. It is here that a mud plug rises to within a few inches of the ceiling. Yelling into it produces a very impressive echo. I dug for a while, then we took turns trying to widen the passage to make it easier to get back to where it turns. After an hour or so, we had made a pretty good dent in the plug, but it's still going to take a few more trips to finish it up. We headed back toward the shaft. We could tell it was melting on the surface because the water was noticeably colder. My feet have never gotten so cold in such a short time. I'm looking forward to going back for another look at what we called the Wimp Hole.

COLD WEEKEND

Coldwater Cave, Wimeshiek County, Iowa
 March 18, 1989
 Larry Welch, Jay Wells and Doug Schmuecker

by Larry Welch

A winter of raping and pillaging following the great drought of 1988 came to an end, and in March, the cave more than held its own for a change. The temperature had risen considerably for a week and a half before this outing, which injected several good bursts of meltdown products into the water table. The stream level recorder read 12.3 inches, but it had been over a foot higher than this several times during the week. Finding myself somewhat curious, I took a jaunt down the ladder on Friday evening to see the platform level at 7.5+ inches. The Scandawhovian was definitely out, and to dampen enthusiasm even more, the water temperature read 41 degrees.

To help matters more, I was in the midst of the cold that I hadn't had all winter. Still, you know what they say, "Cave a cold and feed a fever." It looked to be a good day for a survey trip to knock off some short scraps of nearby passage. Jay and Doug seemed eager to give it a go, so we packed the survey gear and I resigned myself to keeping the survey book, which is not a great favorite of mine. Reigning sketch expert, Mike Lace, was suffering through bronchitis, so there would be no masterpieces this month.

The water temperature did feel much colder as we set off in Cascade and at the mouth of the Toboggan Ride the temperature dropped even further, suggesting fairly direct surface drainage. Our pace was casual as it was Jay's first downstream trip, and I didn't feel up to Nelson pace anyway. After the usual route to Cascade and the wet bit back to the start of Dead Coon Passage, we rested at the junction and plotted our destination. A Bat Room trip was nixed in favor of survey along the Dead Coon side passages. A short hike brought us to the Mud Cone dome passage, where we pulled out the survey gear. Jay had been lead tape last month so knew the program, and I gave Doug a brief lesson with the compass that he probably didn't need anyway.

The survey into the dome was straight-forward, and we doubled back into the upper level over the entryway to finish the job. There is a small dome on Dead Coon just upstream of Mud Cone Dome, and I would guess that the upper level drains into the dome (too tight to follow on either end). The whole passage was only 120 feet, but very scenic.

Everyone was still in pretty good spirits, so we crawled upstream to the Baking Soda Passage, which also needed surveying. We started surveying here in the same manner as before. A seemingly boring passage at first glance, the Baking Soda Passage had a number of subtle delights that will never be evident from my survey sketches. One particular line of white stalactites over a flowstone shelf was particularly notable. I eventually developed cold feet and called to a halt our work for the day, hoping to not worsen my cold. Doug and Jay were feeling fine, but were agreeable to tying off for the day. Total footage was around 390 feet.

We crawled back to the main passage and headed back to the platform. To our surprise, there was no platform. It wore out suddenly and will be replaced by a newer model next month. Mike Nelson and Dave Ecklund did all of the work except for a little board collecting by our party as we came upstream. One manifestation of the platform removal is also the removal of the stream depth guage, which was the standard Spong barometer. A new guage is planned, but it will be difficult to correlate the new readings to the old ones.

NEXT YEAR

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
March 18, 1989

by Mike Nelson

With the good winter conditions on the heels of the drought, we were indeed lucky to get into the Nelson Section of Coldwater Cave three times in two months. These three trips by non-divers picked up easily over 2500 feet of new survey, bringing the total for the area to over 3500 feet. There was easily over 1000 feet of virgin cave explored, with several good leads remaining. This good fortune was appearing to hold up into the month of March. We had had a week of cold enough temps following a couple of days of thaw. It seemed as though we may get in to push the mainstream one more time before the season ended. The pulse on the stream level recorder did not deter us, it was dropping off consistently from the thaw. The firsthand view of the stream level dropped my hopes, as it was still 2" higher than we had been experiencing. The water temp dashed those hopes. It was 40 degrees at the shaft; it could be 5 degrees or more colder "up there". Looks like we're done for the winter of "88-"89. It was a good but short season. My personal thanks go out to all who accomplished so much so safely.

The deterioration of the platform had escalated rapidly over the last few months, so Dave Ecklund and I took out our frustrations from our aborted push trip on it. It has been entirely removed and construction of a new and improved model will be undertaken in April.

RETURN TO SUTTLE CREEK

Devil's Cave, Alamakee County, Iowa
March 19, 1989

by Mike Nelson

Mike Nelson, Aaron Nelson, and Dave, Sue and Cathi Marie Ecklund

We left Coldwater Cave this Sunday morning to go look at a few springs, and look was all we could do. Everything in this part of the state that carried karst waters was cold and chocolaty. As long as we were in the area, I took the

Ecklunds to see the beauty of the tributary of Suttle Creek that runs up to the poorly named Devil's Cave.

Some info that has come to light since my last visit up here is that Suttle Creek Cave, as I called this one in my last trip report, was actually a sink hole cave that was bulldozed years ago. It was a couple of hundred feet long and is believed to lie beyond the sump of the Devil's Cave.

I say this cave is poorly named because the walk up to it is not only pleasant, it is euphoric. I've only been here twice, both times taking the hike through snow, and both coming away feeling great. It's a neat place.

The cave, though short and entirely lit from the outside, is a cheery, snug little den. One can easily imagine it being a comfortable place for the mound building Indians, that once inhabited the area, to spend their winters. There was adequate protection from the elements and water right at hand. One can almost feel the life that abounded in here amid the harsh realities that those people faced each long winter. There is absolutely no "demonic" feel to the cave.

We all took turns carrying one year old Cathi up and back from the cave, handing her back and forth over the tiny stream, up and down the climbs. She was in my arms wide awake, as I handed her to her father, who received her into his, sound asleep. She had passed out right in the middle of the transfer! That, by far, the better describes the relaxed feeling I've experienced both times I've visited this remarkable spot.

MARCH COLDWATER CAVE PHOTOGRAPHY AND FRACTURE MEASURING TRIP

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa

March 18, 1989

by Michael Bounk

Matt Kramar, Rich Ness, Vince Sehusk, Kris Licursi and Michael Bounk

I arrived at the cave about 11:30 a.m. and met Matt, Rich, and Vince. They entered the cave at about noon, and headed upstream to photograph the crinoid slab. We agreed to meet at 1 p.m. at the platform and head downstream to the Pillar of Light formation which they planned to photograph while I measured ceiling fracture directions and collected bentonites. While I was visiting on the surface, Kris arrived, and wanted to go in the cave. Kris and I entered the cave at about 1 p.m., met the other group and I headed downstream. Kris helped with the measurements and bentonite collecting while Matt's group took pictures. Finally near the dome over the main passage near the downstream end of Pothole Country, I decided that we were holding up the photographers, and suggested to Matt that his group continue by themselves. Kris and I turned around at the dome and exited at around 3:30 p.m. We collected three bentonites, a very successful trip. Matt, Rich and Vince exited around 6:30 p.m. after photographing the Pillar Of Light.

I collected one 35mm film can of each bentonite. These will be sent to a researcher who can pinpoint the exact stratigraphic position of each, thus helping us understand the stratigraphic relationship of the cave.

BAT ROOM JOURNEY

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
April 15, 1989
Larry Welch, Mike Lace, and Jay Wells

by Larry Welch

It was one of those spring days when most souls were busied taking a relaxing cave trip or reconstructing the platform. An ideal time, it would seem, to send a team out to chase down some forgotten nooks and crannies and survey them. I had a couple of leads off of Cascade, and was able to con Jay and Mike into joining me.

The journey out Cascade was relatively uneventful, although we were glad the water had warmed up since the previous month. We located a lead just past the Pig Trough that led to a flat-out belly crawl on bedrock. Jay gave it a close look and decided that it was not quite big enough to enter, so we passed on it. We went from there to the Bat Room with only a small interlude of falling into a deep rimstone pool. As usual, the Gary Engh and associates survey team had marked their stations well, and we were able to find the station at the Bat Room. Mike went ahead to look, finding the passage to proceed at a comfortable size which enticed us to follow with the survey gear.

We finally got into a crawlway in which progress could only be made by lying on one's side and squirming. Here we put in a survey chip and surveyed back to Cascade. Next we cleaned the gear and proceeded to the next lead. It was developed along a ceiling crack, which we followed two ways after a split in the passage. To the left, the passage rose to a roomy height before being plugged with fill after 25 feet. The right side was a belly-crawl that snaked up and over the top of Cascade Passage. I think this will be the first point in the cave survey where we have two vertical levels crossing one another without connecting. The muddy little crawl took its toll on the survey party, who found it difficult to keep the instruments and book clean. The crawl eventually led to a tiny dome, which was actually just part of another crevice that was mostly filled with mud. The crevice went nowhere but there was a low continuation of the crawl that could be dug open pretty quickly. We could see the passage continue to the point where a dirt pile stood. The passage may turn sharply to the left at this point or else it stops at the dirt pile (a close up look will provide the answer).

We surveyed what we could and left a chip over the dig site. The survey gear was soused when we regained Cascade, so we decided to scout the next lead. It wasn't much further down Cascade and on the right side of the passage. It was another bedrock crawl that quickly became helmet-off squeezing. After about 15 feet, there was a small chamber that didn't seem to lead anywhere. After some neck-craning, it became obvious that the passage was being sculpted with water coming in from a ceiling crack above the chamber. It would have taken a Gumby bend to get into the crack, and I decided it wasn't big enough for me to fit anyway. After backing out, it was time to return to the picnic feast taking place above.

We did note on the return journey a lead just downstream of Holy Cow Crawl. The passage was big enough to follow if we could have gotten past yet another bedrock squeeze. We made our merry way back over the rimstones to find a beautiful new platform courtesy of the Coldwater Construction Crew. We capped the night by porking out at another one of Sue Ecklund's well-planned potluck suppers.

SPRING TRAINING

April 15-16, 1989

by Mike Nelson

At Coldwater Cave this month, a bunch of us put in the new platform, replacing the original that we had removed last month. It had done a good job for somewhere around 18 years. It had gone to hell rapidly in the three months prior to being removed. The new one should outlast the caving lives of most of us.

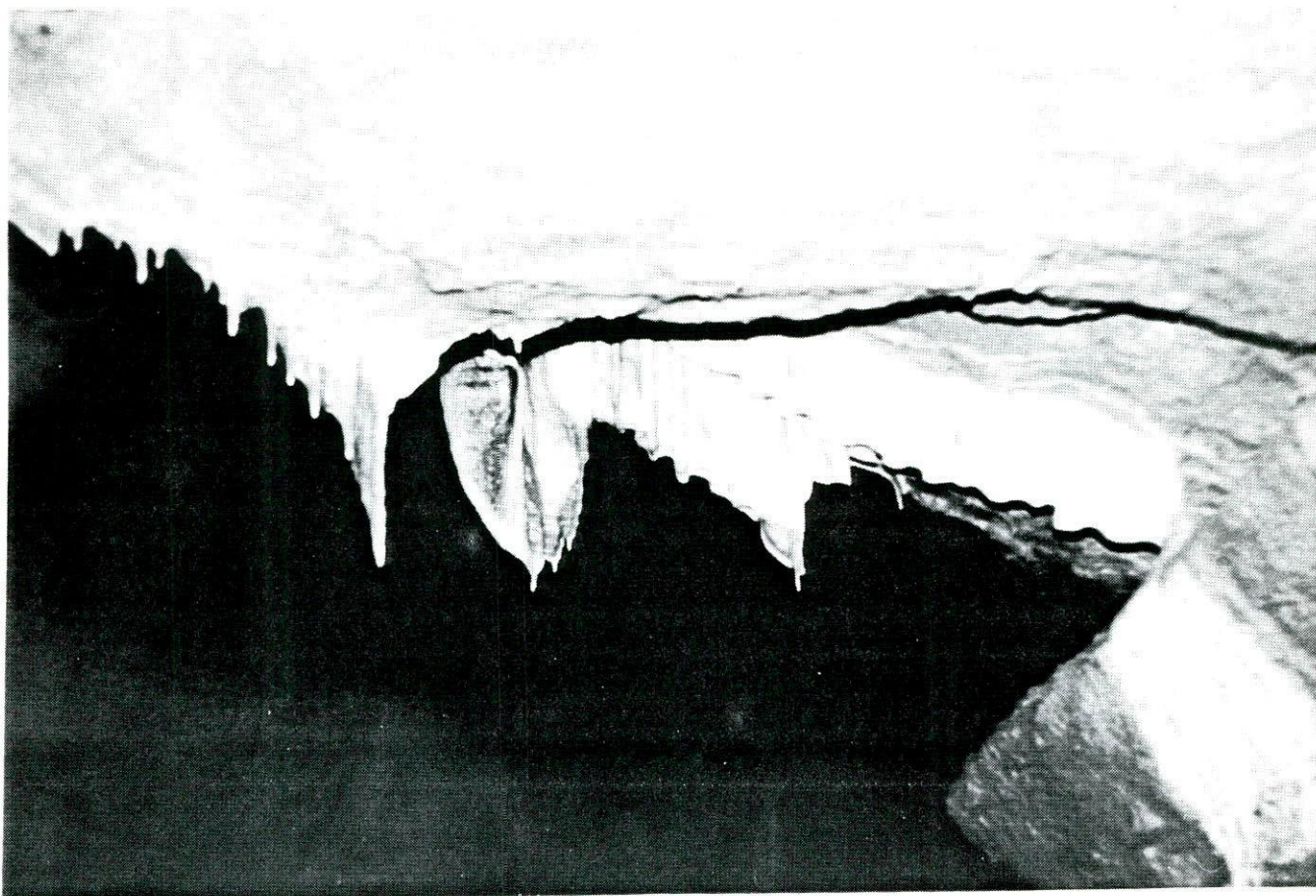
The next day, we headed over to A.J. Spring Cave. I wanted to give Dave Ecklund an orientation and introduction to side mount dive. I also had newly assembled gear to check out. After discussing side mounts with John Schweyen and taking the cavern and basic cave classes, I had put together a whole new system. As our intended summer project is to map this cave, I needed to experiment with helmet mounted lights, too. As it worked out, my new side mounts system was flawless and the helmet, which I had never dived with before, was an acceptable light holder, though it did require precision fitting of ones goggles.

Dave was less fortunate in gaining experience, diving anyhow. I had suggested that he lead, as that would be the only way he could get a good look at our intended project. He opted to follow the three feet of vis in my wake. That combined with the need for prescription goggles, left him rather close to blind. He had expended a lot of time, cash and travel distance to no avail. But I'm sure that he still learned a lot about the actual amount of preparation and dedication required to participate in these sorts of undertakings.

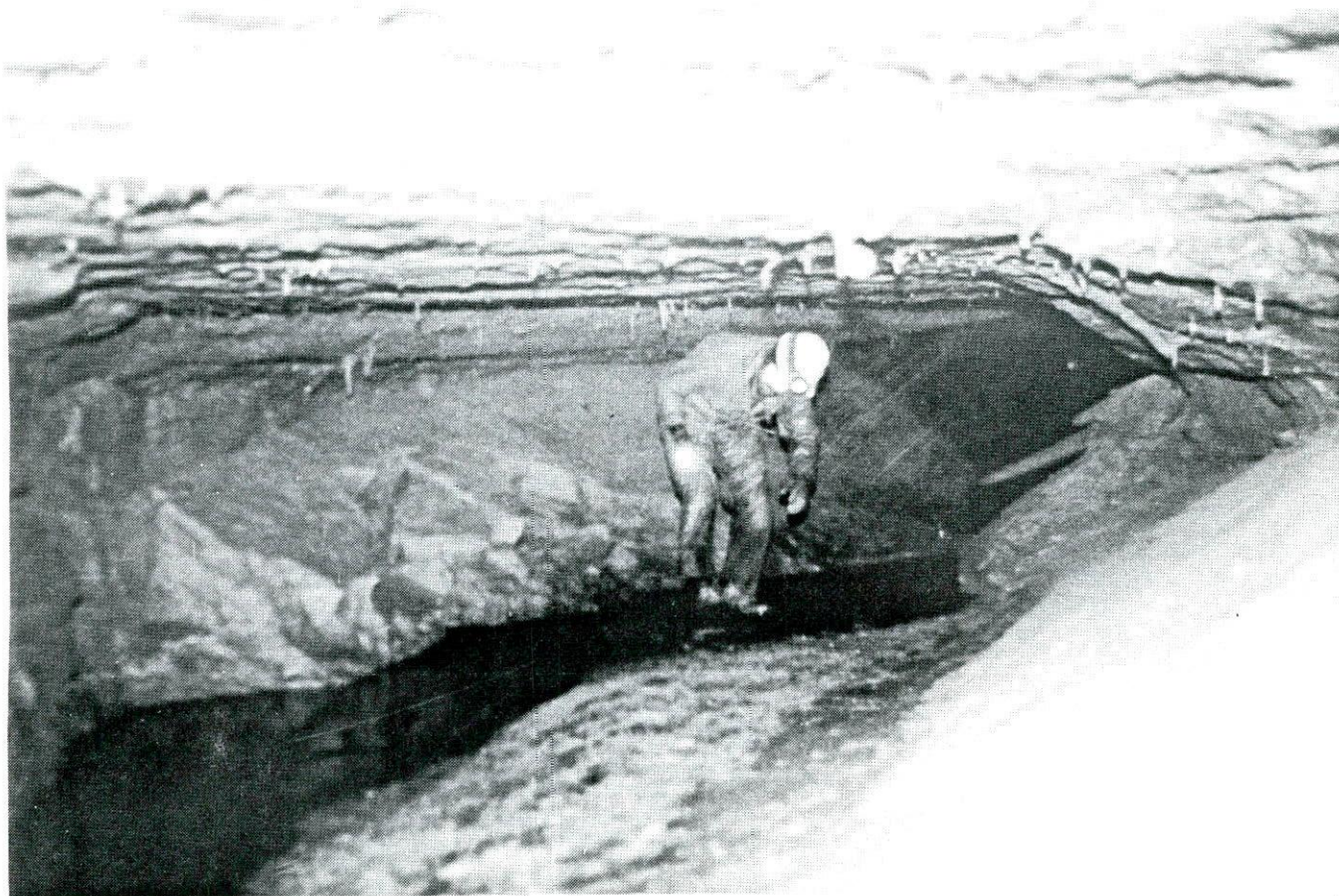
Dave, Sue and Cathi Marie, the Ecklunds, headed cross country toward Omaha and our group went to Decorah for more "training". Stopping at Dunning Spring for a meal, we turned the kids loose on the relatively safe rock faces while Delores and I made sandwiches. Later, we took our son, Aaron and his two friends, Robin O'Toole and Jennie Spores, to the Ice Cave. Jennie proved to be a natural caver, eager to see all that could be seen and intuitive in what she could and couldn't do safely. She brought out capabilities in Aaron that I couldn't, simply by leading on some interesting climbs. Robin proved very capable too, needing only a small bit of encouragement and assurance to follow along.

We climbed some protected faces above the cave and on the way back down, Jennie led Aaron on a more open face. It was low and close to the road and I walked along below. Had either of them fallen, they would have only taken a short roll on a steep slope and faced more of a chance of injury from rolling through the brush than the fall itself. While up there, a car full of older kids stopped and gawked at them. "Are they stuck?" one gum smacking young lady asked. "No, they're having fun." I informed her. "Well, that's stupid." she responded. They took off down the road, turned around and drove past again, the young lady flipping us off. To each their own, I guess.

Aaron's friends are rewarding to work with and I truly enjoy the opportunity to show these first year teenagers what real challenges and fun are. I hope that the lure of drugs and alcohol are no match for joys to be found in fulfilling, rigorous, physically and mentally demanding activities.



Formations in upper level passage across from Bert Falls in the Nelson Section of Coldwater Cave, Feb. 1989 Photo by Scott Dankof



Mike Lace coming out of the Iguana Crawl in the Nelson Section of Coldwater Cave, Feb. 1989 Photo by Scott Dankof



Larry Welch slides into the Cesspool while Gary Engh coaches.
Wiedenmans Pit, Clayton County, Iowa, July, 1988 Photo by Mike Lace



Dave Ecklund cleans the lip of
Wiedenmans Pit, Clayton County, Iowa, July 1988 Photo by Larry Welch