



University of South Florida

Digital Commons @ University of South Florida

Cave Talk

Newsletters and Periodicals

December 2004

Cave Talk

Cave Association National

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

Recommended Citation

National, Cave Association, "Cave Talk" (2004). *Cave Talk*. 25.
https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cave_talk/25

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 Cave Talk by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.



CaveTalk

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL CAVES ASSOCIATION

National Caves Association

Susan Berdeaux, Coordinator

P.O. Box 280

Park City, KY 42160

susan@cavern.com

866-552-2837 (toll free) 270-749-2428 (fax)

OFFICERS:

President: John Sagendorf

Howe Caverns, NY 518-296-8900

johns@howecaverns.com

Vice President: Brad Wuest

Natural Bridge Caverns, TX 210-651-6101

bwuest@naturalbridgecaverns.com

Secretary Treasurer: Susan Berdeaux

Diamond Caverns, KY 866-552-2837

susan@cavern.com

Past President: Richard (Dick) Bell

Seneca Caverns, OH 419-483-6711

senecacaverns@yahoo.com

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Region One:

(CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)

Ann Molosky - Lincoln Caverns, PA

814-643-0268 info@lincolncaverns.com

Region Two: (MD, VA, WV, KY)

Gary Berdeaux - Diamond Caverns, KY

270-749-2233 gary@diamondcaverns.com

Region Three: (IN, MI, OH)

Claudia Yundt - Squire Boone Caverns, IN

812-732-4382 claudia@squireboone.com

Region Four: (AR, IL, IA, MO, MS, LA)

Steve Thompson - Fantastic Caverns, MO

417-833-2010

sthompson@fantasticcaverns.com

Region Five: (MT, WY, NE, MN, WI)

Joe Klimczak - Cave of the Mounds, WI

608-437-3038 joe@caveofthemounds.com

Region Six: (WA, ID, OR, NV, CA, HI, AK)

Bruce Brand - Moaning Cavern

209-736-2708 troll5@goldrush.com

Region Seven: (UT, CO, AZ, NM, SD, ND)

Steve Beckley - Glenwood Caverns, CO

800-530-1635 mantapet@aol.com

Region Eight: (TX, OK, KS)

Michelle Devaney - Longhorn Caverns, TX

830-598-CAVE

michelle@longhorncaverns.com

Region Nine: (AL, FL, GA, NC, SC, TN, PR)

Jack Steiner Jr. - Ruby Falls, TN

423-825-1958 jackjr@rubyfalls.com

International:

Jeanne Gurnee - TN

615-264-0019 jgurnee@aol.com

December 2004

ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

Once again your president, John Sagendorf has been out and about visiting our NCA caves. This time, on the way to Ozark Underground Laboratory for the OUL/OSHA/NCA meeting, John and his wife Susan visited five Missouri cave properties, including Cameron and Mark Twain Caves in Hannibal, Meramec Caverns in Stanton, Fantastic Caverns in Springfield, Talking Rocks Cavern in Branson, and Tumbling Creek Cave (not yet a member) in Protom. Although John is always enthusiastically welcomed, Steve Thompson at Fantastic Caverns was heard to remark, "It is nice to see John but I wonder if it is because he likes us or if something is wrong. We have seen him twice in the past nine months!" According to John, "No, Steve, nothing is wrong. It's just that my non-convention travels this year have taken me to Texas and Missouri, and since you are always so innovative, I like to hear your ideas."

In other comments from John, he had never visited the Hannibal caves; although often on his itinerary he never made it. While visiting he was welcomed by Jim and Linda Coleberd, Susie Shelton and their staff. Both Mark Twain Cave and Cameron Cave are maze caves, very rare in structure. John said, "You really have to have great faith and confidence in your tour guide. I find these caves totally a-MAZE-ing. (UGH!) At Meramec, also visited earlier this year, after a wonderful dinner with Les and Judy Turilli, he had a good chance to look at Judy's huge gift shop and visit with her extensively about the NCA Products Committee, which Judy chairs. He was treated to Judy's homemade pumpkin pie and also saw the completed stainless steel railings, which were in progress when he was there in February. In Springfield, even though time did not allow for a tour of Fantastic Caverns this time, John and Steve Thompson visited enthusiastically about promotional billboards, sponsorship programs, photo systems and Steve's role in the Missouri Cave Association where he is President. Steve also talked about an NCA Hall of Fame, a topic that will be covered at a spring NCA Board meeting. The tour of Talking Rocks Cavern was also a first for John. He visited five or six years ago, but did not tour due to so many school groups at the cavern that day. The return visit was much more relaxed. Hosted by Chuck, Mary Ann and Shane, John toured what he remarked was a "beautiful cave with an expert guide (Chuck)." Talking Rocks retail show markets lots of rocks of all sizes, shapes and variety and we understand John and Susan really helped the local economy of Branson West. John also said that he was really impressed with the photography system he saw where the guide takes the photos, displays them on a monitor screen for all to see and produces pictures on request and places them in a specially designed cave pictured photo mount. Then, in Tom Aley's words, "Since everyone worked so well together in the OSHA/OUL/NCA meeting, I treated them to a tour of Tumbling Creek Cave." According to John, Tumbling Creek Cave is truly an underground laboratory.

With a natural entrance via staircase, carefully made and comfortable pathways, in an all-natural environment with only headlamps and flashlights for lighting, the tour is one of personal discovery. For Susan, this was her first “natural” cave tour and she was quite proud of herself since we know of others named Susan who just don’t do caves very well. Susan, together with the folks from OSHA, was really impressed with Tumbling Creek Cave. Tom then took John and Susan on an above ground walk to see the newly installed bat friendly gate at the ground level exit of Tumbling Creek. At Ozark Underground Laboratory, John and Susan were the guests of Tom and Cathy Aley where they enjoyed marvelous meals, a very comfortable overnight stay, and John’s absence from his cell phone, telephone and e-mail for 30 hours without withdrawal. Good for you John!

John’s summary of the trip was, “10 days, 3,400 miles driven, six cave visits, a great meeting with OSHA, seeing family in both Iowa and Missouri, and too many new ideas to count - - - life is good! Thanks to everyone who made our visits so enjoyable.”

Instead of “where’s Waldo”, we think in the NCA it is “where’s John”.

ALPHA RADIATION PROGRAM UPDATE

On Monday, November 29, 2004, representatives from the Kansas City Area Office of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Ozark Underground Laboratory (OUL) and the National Caves Association (NCA) gathered at Tom Aley’s OUL to discuss the direction and status of the OUL/OSHA/ NCA Cave Radiation Alliance Agreement. Attending, representing OSHA were Kim Castillon, Assistant Area Director, Mark Branden, Compliance Assistance Specialist, Steve Carmichael, Assistant Regional Administrator; representing OUL was Tom Aley, President; and representing the NCA were John Sagendorf and his wife Susan.

The three-hour meeting (followed by a tour of Tom and Cathy Aley’s Tumbling Creek Cave) was most informative and productive. John Sagendorf gave an overview of the NCA and the Association’s commitment to reducing alpha radiation exposures at NCA show caves. Tom Aley updated the group on his monitoring and general findings to date, which included numerous facts: 51 of 90 show caves monitored to date, 4 caves have National Natural Landmark status with 5 more pending, 10 caves with significant state designations as natural areas or state landmarks, 3 caves listed as habitats for federally listed threatened or endangered species and 3 providing habitat for state listed species, 17 caves with occupied buildings attached to the cave and 32 caves which do not have occupied buildings attached, and a number of suggestions for Best Management Practices (BMPs). And, OSHA representatives explained the history of the development of this current Cave Radiation Alliance Agreement, the workings of Alliance Agreements and the benefits of Alliance Agreements already in place with other industries and associations.

The outcomes of the meeting were very favorable. All parties have strong respect for each other’s areas of expertise and significant support for both the studies underway and the proposed plans to reduce alpha radiation exposures at all NCA show caves. Quoting Kim Castillon from her written response to John Sagendorf, *“I am very excited about this Alliance and strongly feel like it is the best one in the country right now. Because of Tom’s efforts and your support, we have the potential to reduce the risk of exposure to alpha radiation not only to your employees, but to the many millions of people that visit these natural wonders. Thanks again for your time and efforts and support for Tom to get this off the ground; he has taught me a lot and has made it very feasible to find a solution that will be in the best outcome regarding the preservation of the cave environment and employee safety balance. It is my greatest pleasure to provide guidance and assistance from a regulatory agency and at the same time support the IMPORTANCE of preserving our natural resources. (My dad was a geology professor at SMSU for 30 years and taught conservation of Natural Resources). He raised us in campgrounds in the summer, hiking through trails and caves in Missouri and I have a great love of those places. I am happy to represent a regulatory agency where we can use an alternative approach to reach a population and industry by methods other than enforcement. After all, our goal is to keep workers safe which should be proactive and not reactive. I believe the outcomes will be far reaching and much more positive than any other means of achieving a safer place for employees in show caves, thanks mainly to Tom and your support of his efforts through the NCA.”*

Tom and Cathy Aley expect to monitor at least 10 more caves during the late winter and early spring – all in warmer climates, of course – as they continue to work on a draft Cave Management Plan for OSHA approval. John Sagendorf suggested that as soon as a Cave Management Plan outline is approved, those monitored

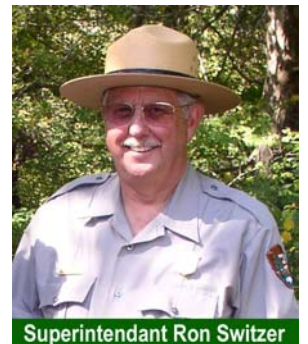
caves immediately begin development of their specific Management Plan for approval by Tom Aley. John also stressed that while current NCA membership requires participation in and contribution to funding the alpha radiation study, a future NCA membership requirement will be the development, implementation and regular reporting and updating of a cave specific Cave Management Plan to reduce alpha radiation exposure to all employees and visitors.

In summary, OSHA's support and enthusiasm for our Alliance Agreement are so solid that Kim Castillon has received approval to present a paper titled "ALPHA RADIATION EXPOSURES IN SHOW CAVES – Do Old Occupational Safety and Health Models Fit New Challenges" at the upcoming 17th World Congress on Safety and Health, held in the United States for the first time, September 18 – 22, 2005 in Orlando, Florida. It is the enthusiasm of OSHA, the superb reputation of and study results done by OUL, and the support of the NCA that allow this worldwide presentation to take place. To quote John Sagendorf in his comments about the meeting, the progress to date and the eventual outcomes, "It appears that we have a mutual admiration and respect society among all involved. I think we have a winner here."

Over time, as new information about the progress of the Alliance Agreement is available, that information will be published in CaveTalk. If there are questions, John Sagendorf invites calls directly to him.

CHANGES

The National Park Service has appointed Ron Switzer, Superintendent, Mammoth Cave National Park KY, as the new superintendent at Buffalo National River in Arkansas. He will be leaving gigantic shoes for his successor at Mammoth Cave. Ron has been responsible for many public/private initiatives that have taken place over his 10-year tenure as superintendent. He made a concerted effort to treat the surrounding communities as friends and neighbors, instead of outsiders. His accomplishments and awards are far too numerous to list here. We in the neighborhood are proud of Ron and wish him the very best in his new endeavor; we are also very sad to be losing such an accomplished leader and good friend. He will be sorely missed.



Superintendent Ron Switzer

REMINDERS

There is still time to take advantage of the Travel Industry Association's (TIA) offer to TIA without paying the initiation fee. (Please refer to the special edition of Cave Talk sent this July for details). This offer will expire on December 31, 2004. We have NCA Vice President Brad Wuest to thank for getting TIA to make this generous offer.

There are a few photo spots left in the NCA 2005 Directory. They are available first come, first serve basis. We'll be ready to go to press shortly after the new year with our 40th anniversary edition so be sure to get your spot reserved.

CONGRATULATIONS

Claudia Yundt, Squire Boone Caverns IN, and Chip Meek were married on September 11, 2004 in Leavenworth, IN. Some of the members have already met Chip at previous NCA meetings. Denise Bell and Gordon and Judy Smith were able to be there to help Claudia and Chip celebrate their long-awaited day of celebration. We all wish them the best of luck in their new life together.

AWARDS

Lost River Cave and Valley, KY were named the Best Tourist Attraction in the March of Dimes Best Fest 2004 in Bowling Green. They were also named as the best place to dance!

REVIEWS

Gary Soule, Sturgeon Bay WI, reports on two new books that have come out this year. "Iowa Underground, A Guide to the State's Subterranean Treasures" by Greg A. Brick covers all the underground wonders in Iowa, including NCA member, Crystal Lake Cave. Trails Books is the publisher but it is also carried by larger bookstores. The cost is \$18.95 and can be ordered from Trails Books, P.O. Box 317, Black Earth, WI 53515.

“Pennsylvania Caves & Other Rocky Roadside Wonders” by Kevin Patrick covers all the commercial show caves, and even ex-commercial show caves, in Pennsylvania. Gary says he has never seen a book with so many explicit details and show cave trivia. In addition to bookstores, the book can be purchased from the publisher, Stackpole Books, 5067 Ritter Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, for \$19.95. Thanks, Gary.

THINK SAFETY

Following is a new section titled SAFETY, which will be included in every issue of Cave Talk for the benefit of every NCA member. The SAFETY message will always be the last page of Cave Talk and is provided by Arthur J. Gallagher and Company, broker for the NCA insurance program. SAFETY is very important for all businesses and we urge your attention and suggest you print, distribute and keep on file copies of each SAFETY message from Cave Talk. If you have suggestions for future SAFETY topics, please submit them via e-mail to NCA Coordinator, Susan Berdeaux, at susan@cavern.com.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Slipping and falling on ice is one of the most common injuries during the winter months. Slip-and-fall accidents often result in fractures or serious strains to the legs and ankles, particularly in adults. You can prevent slip-and-fall accidents by removing snow and ice from steps, especially the area beside the handrail, and along sidewalks. Also remove snow and ice next to curbs, so people won't need to take a giant step over the accumulated slush. It's a good idea to use rock salt in heavily trafficked areas—it melts the ice when temperatures get warmer, and makes the ice more slip resistant. If the floors in your entranceways or lobbies are tiled or made of concrete, use floor mats that are at least 15 feet long, so people can dry their shoes simply by walking on the mats.

Heavy accumulations of snow and ice can severely damage your roof. This is particularly true if snowstorms are followed by rain; the resulting ice creates extreme weight on the roof. Removing snow from your roof can be dangerous, so consider hiring a contractor who holds a certificate of insurance for snow removal. Historically, the damage to the roof is not the expensive part of these claims, it's the water damage from the leaks. If repairs will take several days or weeks, cover the damaged portion of the roof with plastic tarps and seal the edges with duct tape to prevent additional water damage. Also, clean up any water inside the building as soon as possible to prevent mold growth.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Our final thought for the year is “Peace on earth, good will to all”. Have a blessed and joyous holiday season and all the best in this New Year!