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June 2006

### Cave Talk

Cave Association National

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# CaveTalk

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL CAVES ASSOCIATION

National Caves Association - Susan Berdeaux, Coordinating Director

P.O. Box 280, Park City, KY 42160 [susan@cavern.com](mailto:susan@cavern.com) 866-552-2837 (toll free) 270-749-2428 (fax)

## JUNE 2006

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope that each of you had a prosperous Memorial Day weekend and that the summer is off to a good start for your show cave. Natural Bridge Caverns is tracking a little behind for the summer to date and I am hoping for a strong 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend and remainder of the summer until kids go back to school. I like to focus on the positive and look at times such as this to concentrate on maximizing guest spending and being as efficient as possible with our operations. I also know that with ever increasing competition for our guests discretionary dollar (another attraction, gas, etc.) we have to continue to keep our attraction fresh through product development and marketing. We must convince that potential guest why they need to bring their family to our show cave and then when we get them to make sure they have an incredible experience!

Time certainly does fly by and before you know it we will all be enjoying each other's company in sunny Bermuda, sharing ideas and learning how to make our businesses even better. I am very excited about the upcoming convention and I hope you are too! This is another great issue of Cave Talk for you and I certainly don't want to steal the fire from the following articles. You will see that the insurance committee and Gallagher team has wrapped up the NCA group insurance program renewal application and submission process. Brandon Mathis, Gary Berdeaux and his committee have made great progress on the development of the new web site, which you will soon be able to interact with. Tom Aley is getting close to having all NCA caves monitored for Radon. There's activity with the Outdoor Advertising committee and an update for you. Plans are already being made for Convention '07 and Susan already has the board and insurance committee booked for mid-year meetings during next year's Tucson Gem & Mineral show. Talk about planning ahead! Thanks to Susan and all the officers, board and committee members who make progress and good things happen.

This is such an important time of year for all our show cave businesses and I wish each of you a very successful summer. Enjoy your latest issue of Cave Talk. If the NCA or I can do anything to assist you or if you have any questions, suggestions or would like to become more active in your NCA please let me know.

God bless,

Brad Wuest, President  
National Caves Association

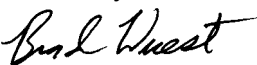
## **Our NCA Group Insurance Program**

We have wrapped up the 2006 insurance renewal application and submission process for the NCA's group insurance program. Thanks to each of you who are participating for sending in your renewal applications in a timely fashion. And thanks to all of our insurance committee members and the Gallagher team for their efforts. This year's renewal application and submission process goes in the record books as the timeliest and most successful we have had, and that is due to everyone's efforts. Each program participant should have received a survey from Gallagher. If you have not done so already, please complete it and send it in. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Currently applications are in the hands of our underwriters who are working on quotes. Program participants will be receiving quotes in early September. While our underwriters are working on quotes, the insurance committee and Gallagher team are focusing on growing our program. If you are not participating in the insurance program and are interested in getting a quote, or have another show cave to refer to the program, please let us know! All members should have received a mailing from Gallagher with information about the NCA's group insurance program and some helpful information that defines two important types of insurance called Boiler & Machinery and Electronic Data Processing. Be looking for more of these to come in the future.

If you would like to know more about the NCA's group insurance program and how it can benefit your attraction, feel free to contact me or any other member of our insurance committee. We will do our best to help you with any insurance questions or needs you may have.

Sincerely,



Brad Wuest  
NCA Insurance Committee Chair

## **ALPHA RADIATION PROJECT UPDATE**

Tom Aley, our alpha radiation consultant, reports that he has now monitored all but two NCA caves. He would like to thank all of our members for the wonderful reception, cooperation and hospitality he receives from everyone he visits. Tom is now working on the reports from the last group of caves he monitored in May. Additionally, he has sent a draft "Best Management Plan" to a select few caves for a dry run before sending the final version to all. All members should have this plan before our meeting in Bermuda this fall. Tom has also asked OSHA to extend our Alliance Agreement for one year, which they are in favor of granting. The paperwork to make that happen is already in the works. Kim Castillon, with whom Tom had been working with at OSHA, has been promoted and Tom expects to have a face-to-face meeting with her replacement soon. Tom does not see any problems working with a new person this late in the game and is confident all will be well. If anyone has any questions about the project, please contact John Sagendorf, committee chair, President Brad Wuest or Susan at the NCA office. All contact information can be found on the masthead of this newsletter.

## **CONVENTION 06**

The convention website is up and running – check out [www.nca06.bm](http://www.nca06.bm). It has an updated agenda, along with a registration form. Yes, you CAN register online this year. If you do not have internet access and have not yet received convention information, please let Susan know so it can be sent snail mail. Hopefully, everyone is making plans to attend this year's meeting.

## **HIGHWAY LEGISLATION NEWS FROM JACK STEINER, JR**

Early in June the Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA), attempted to pass a bill in congress that would allow rebuilding of non-conforming billboards affected by hurricanes. It was attached to the hurricane relief spending bill and we thought that it had a great chance to pass but one particular legislator had the provision dropped from the bill. In the meantime the Federal DOT is putting together "stakeholder" meetings around the country to assess the effectiveness of the Federal Highway Beautification Act. These meetings are to involve government, billboard companies, advertisers and environmentalists. It is important that our industry

show support and speak to the importance of outdoor advertising to the livelihood of our businesses. Please contact your state outdoor advertising association or Myron Liabile at [MLaible@oaaa.org](mailto:MLaible@oaaa.org) for more information about the meetings. For more info visit: [www.oaaa.org](http://www.oaaa.org).

### ADDITIONS

Welcome to Charles Joseph Vitalii (Talii) and Duggan Robert Ivan (Doug) Steidl, the latest additions to the Perry's Cave, OH family. Talii (3) and Doug (14 months) were brought home to the Duggan/Steidl household right before Christmas this past year. Parents Mike and DeeDee are doing well, as are the boys. No doubt the boys already have fishing poles, bikes and boats. Grandparents Skip and Sharon are probably spoiling them rotten, which is the most important job of the grandparents. Congratulations and best wishes to the entire family.



### HAPPENINGS

David Thompson, Bridal Cave, MO, says the Learning Channel will be at Bridal on June 18 to film a wedding. The channel has a program called "Wild and Unusual Weddings" that will air sometime this year. He'll let us know when the air-time is scheduled.

### OPENINGS

Blanchard Springs Caverns, AR, opened a new exhibit hall this winter. On March 18, 2006 the Forest Service opened the hall with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The displays trace the path water takes through the hills and out at Blanchard Springs, including the formation of the caverns. Split Rock Studios from Minnesota, along with local residents and caverns staff, worked on all facets of the project.

### NEW BROCHURE RACK

Fantastic Caverns, MO, has installed a new brochure rack for NCA members. Steve Thompson says it is in a high traffic area and usage has increased dramatically. They would appreciate receiving a minimum of one case of brochures from all members.

### NEW STAMP AVAILABLE

The Postal Service has issued a new 39-cent commemorative stamp series featuring 40 natural and man-made wonders of the US. Places, plants, animals and structures were chosen from every area of the country. Mammoth Cave was selected as the longest cave system in the world. A First Day of Sale was held at MCNP on May 27, with a special underground cancellation. These stamps were made available for sale following the ceremony.



### FIELD STUDIES

Western Kentucky University, through its Center for Cave and Karst Studies and in cooperation with Mammoth Cave National Park, is offering a series of summer courses that focus on caves, karst and caving. Dr. Stan Sides, Diamond Caverns, will be the course instructor for "Exploration of Mammoth Cave". For a complete schedule, check out <http://caveandkarst.wku.edu>.

### IN PRINT

Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Mammoth Cave National Park were prominently mentioned in the June 11, 2006 issue of Parade magazine.

### RECOVERING

Get well wishes go to Steve Fairchild, "Lotsa Caves", CA and Jack Steiner, Ruby Falls, TN. Steve had a hip replaced this spring and Jack is still recovering from a serious lung fungus that caused the removal of a portion of lung. The editor has been in contact with both members, who assures the membership they are well on the road to recovery.






## PASSINGS

Sadly, we have to report the death of Harry Graham, Bull Shoals Caverns, AR, following complications from surgery this spring. Our deepest sympathies and condolences to his widow, Millie.

### Cave of The Mounds National Natural Landmark - Blue Mounds, WI

608-437-3038 | 2975 Cave of The Mounds Rd.  
website | email | Blue Mounds, WI 53517 [map]



Cave of the Mounds - National Natural Landmark: Discover Buried Treasure; Discover Fun. Open Year-Round & Fun for all ages. This natural limestone cave offers guided tours daily on paved and lighted walkways. Tours pass a stunning array of colorful crystal formations including stalactites, stalagmites and columns. Enjoy the constant 50 degree year round temperature.

Sample listing from our new website under development.

## WEBSITE UPDATE

Our NCA website is coming along beautifully. One of the many improvements to the new website is that you now have control over your cave listing information and photograph. Simply email me with your cave name at [webmaster@cavern.com](mailto:webmaster@cavern.com) to request your member password, and I'll send it along with a link to the member site and details on how to edit your information. In order to publish this fancy new site, we need you to have your information updated by July 15th. If you haven't done so by then your listing will look pretty empty when the new site goes online, and I know you don't want that! Have a great summer season!

Brandon Mathis

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## FINAL THOUGHTS

Since this is kind of an uncertain season, with rising fuel costs leading the way for other increases, thoughts on perseverance might be helpful.

"I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles".

Christopher Reeve (1952-2004)

"If you wish success in life, make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counselor, caution your elder brother and hope your guardian genius".

Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

"Victory belongs to the most persevering".

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)