

April 2005

Alaskan Caver, Volume 25, No. 2, April 2005

Carlene Allred

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THE ALASKAN CAVER



Volume 25 Number 2
April, 2005

THE ALASKAN CAVER

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Annual dues are \$15 per individual and \$20 per family or organization. *The Alaskan Caver* is included in the membership fee. For an additional \$8, six *The Alaskan Cavers* will be sent overseas via airmail. Send dues to the treasurer.

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Several projects are being pursued by Glacier Grotto members in three communities: The Grotto has been productive! Members of Marcel and Connie LaPerriere's caving class being taught at Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka spent the past week exploring the Mt. Edgecome area for lava tubes. We look forward to results from their explorations. Maybe we will not have to travel all the way to Hawaii to cave in lava tubes!

Kevin and Carlene Allred, Pete Smith and Steve Lewis have also been working on a cave pamphlet for the entrance of El Capitan cave and elsewhere. This informational pamphlet will discuss cave conservation on the Tongass National Forest and appropriate land management practices. The completed version will hopefully be available for Grotto members later this spring/summer. The aforementioned folks have also been busy completing comments on the Lynn Canal/Juneau access road and University of Alaska land turnover. Both projects could adversely affect karst and cave systems, one in the El Capitan passage area of POW and the other along the western shore of Lynn Canal. Submitted comments for the Lynn Canal road are provided in this edition of the Caver. The comments on the State of Alaska university land grant parcels are available from Kevin Allred and Steve Lewis.

Kevin Casey, cave expedition leader for the USFS-funded expeditions announced the dates of the 2005 explorations on Kosciusko and Heceta island- July 8 to July 29, with approximately two weeks on each island. For those of you interested in participating in this years' expedition, please contact Kevin Casey directly at kevycasey@hotmail.com. Travel roundtrip from Ketchikan will be provided, as will "room(your tent!) and board" (as many Power Bars as you can stomach...). Kevin's notice announcing the expedition is provided in this edition of the Caver.

Dan Monteith made several slide presentations for the Alaska Science Lecture series on the history of cave exploration in Southeast Alaska to the communities of Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks. Overall turnout was excellent at all the venues and Dan and I enjoyed ourselves in Juneau, rappelling into Centennial Hall for introductions.

Finally, Dan Monteith, Cathy Connor, University of Alaska Geology professor and Grotto member, and I have been working to establish a University of Alaska Southeast student organization of the Glacier Grotto. Our first meeting occurred on March 3, with another planned for April 7. Four very interested and enthusiastic members were added to the Grotto and we hope that more will join as the word gets out. Our hope is to stimulate excitement in caving, provide training, promote education and involve some of Southeast Alaska's younger outdoorsmen and women in caving. We need to train and find additional, younger members willing to continue the necessary work towards discovery, exploration, and preservation of the caves of Alaska. In a nutshell, this describes the activities of the Glacier Grotto during the early months of 2005. To all of our active membership-Keep up the good work!

[illegible]

*Front cover: Moonmilk formations in Thrush Cave, August 2003
photo by Gavin Newman/Greenpeace*

MY THIRD AVENUE BYPASS CAVE ADVENTURE

by Carlene Allred

It has been a long and dreary winter and relentless, cold rain has descended upon our town nearly every day. We of Ketchikan create all kinds of diversions to keep our souls from sinking into seasonal depression. Work, drama, music, church... but what about caving? I have not had the opportunity to do that for a long long time, and the urge was way overdue.

The spark in me was rekindled by a man who came to stay with us for a couple of weeks. His name is Kevin Climer and he is from Texas. He has caved in Maine, Tennessee, Texas and Georgia. He stayed in a cave for three months in order to preserve it by keeping vandals at bay. He, Kevin (my husband to whom I will refer to as KEVIN in capital letters) and I were independently taking walks regularly from our house up onto the nearby "Third Avenue Bypass" road. This road was finished last fall and it avoids the downtown traffic by swinging high along the hillside above the subdivisions. Walking this has become quite popular and brings to one beautiful vistas of the ocean and various islands. There is even a little nice trail system right above it in the forest called the *Rainbird Trail*. It has been recently improved for the public enjoyment.

As I have mentioned above, Kevin (Kevin Climer, to whom I will refer to in mostly lower case

Letters) had been regularly walking the Bypass road and its trail uphill. Being a caver, his eye naturally roves into the forest around, automatically searching for holes to check. (Cavers cannot help themselves; they are always looking for caves, no matter where they are.) His caving urge would take him up into the schisty cliffs above, where he began to see some holes. He would return home with great enthusiasm about getting up into them.

On Tuesday, March 8 (2005) Kevin's enthusiasm boiled over onto KEVIN and me, and we all headed for the Bypass. The gearing up was exciting for me, but we found that we (KEVIN and I) were out of shape when it comes to hauling an array of ropes and caving equipment uphill. We climbed up the long wooden stairway that leads into the forest and up onto the trail. That led us to a place where we could see cliffs a short ways above us.



Gearing up to go caving- note the staircase that leads up onto the Rainbird Trail. Photo by Carlene Allred



Kevin Climer on rope, photo by Carlene Allred

Climbing up to the base of a cliff, I immediately saw a hole! I called the others over and we excitedly peered in together. It was a roomy cavity that bored about ten feet into the mountainside and in its bottom was a pool of clear water. This was a man-made

(continues on page 4)

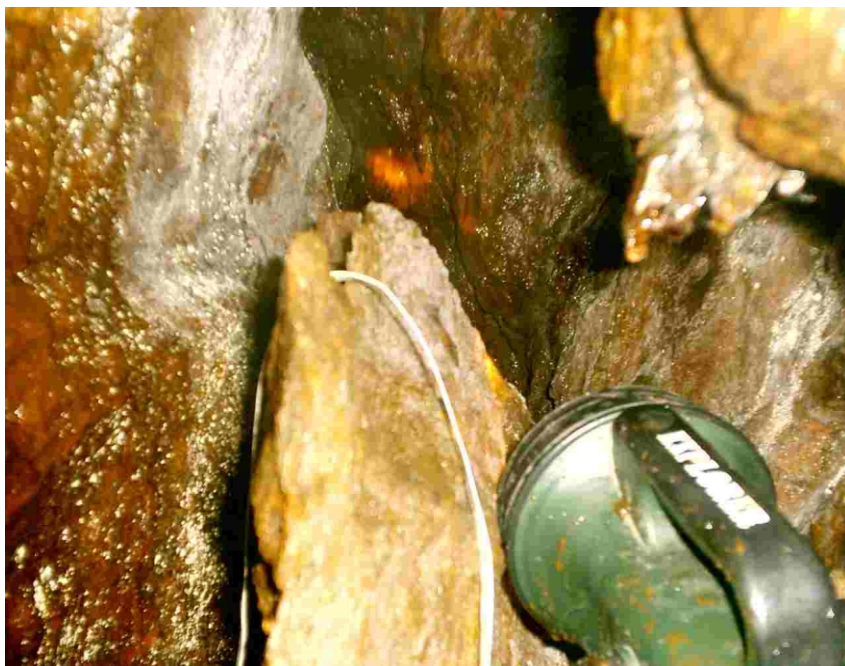
cutting into the rock, but it could be a nice hideout for someone if the pool were drained.

Next we began to search for a particular tree that marks the spot of a particular hole in a cliff. It was easy to find. This was a huge old dead tree that stands enormously tall above the other trees. Uphill from it about a hundred feet was the cliff with the hole about 15 feet up. KEVIN climbed up around to the top of the cliff and lowered a rope after anchoring one end above. Then Kevin climbed up to the hole from below using the rope hanging down from above as a handline. KEVIN did a body rappel downward and joined Kevin in the entrance. I was content to take pictures from below, for I could tell that here was not room for me to join them up there on the tiny, slippery sloping ledge. I will now quote Kevin regarding what they found.

"The hole is approximately 100 feet above the walking trail, and 15 feet above the closest level spot at the bottom of a 25 foot sheer rock face. Tucked away in the side, the hole is approximately four feet tall and three feet wide with a rock protruding up through the middle of it. I was able to get myself five feet within it. Just past the protruding rock the cave spirals downward to the right. About six feet inside it narrows to about one foot wide and two feet tall. About eight feet down from this point it opens up wider. [I was] unable to determine how far from this point or how deep it goes. I was the first in this cave. And I have named it The Toaster Cave of Ketchikan, Alaska."

KEVIN has this to say about the cave:

"The cave is actually a steeply inclined block creep cave. The block slid downwards an unknown distance, and openings were created from the wavy, nearly vertical bedding being mismatched. Small debris in the cave appears to have fallen through the narrow crack below and into an opening Underneath." ππ

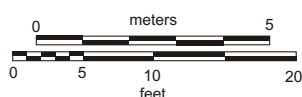


The interior of The Toaster Cave. Note the "bread" (being toasted) in the middle of the passage, which is represented by the rock chocked between the walls. Photo by Kevin Climer.

THE TOASTER CAVE

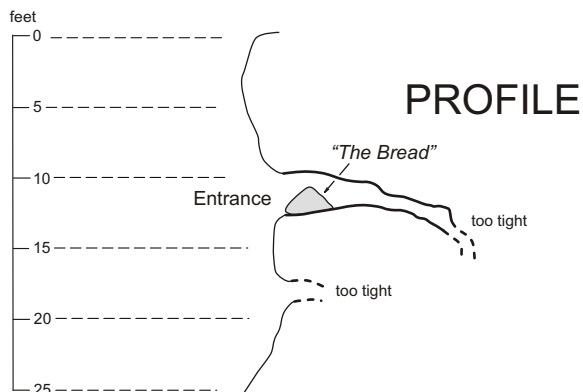
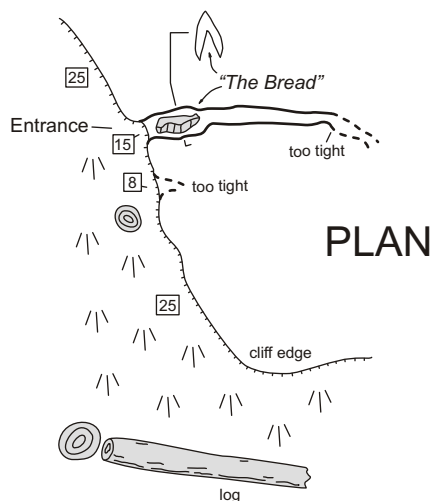
REVILLAGIGEDO ISLAND, ALASKA

Sketch with Tape and Compass
March 2005, by Kevin Climer and
Carlene Allred.



LEGEND

- passage wall
- rock
- slope (splays downward)
- vertical cliff
- tree



LETTER: HAINES-JUNEAU ROAD

Attn: Reuben Yost
ADOT Southeast Region
6860 Glacier Highway
Juneau, 99801

Reuben Yost, AKDOT Project Manager-Juneau Access,

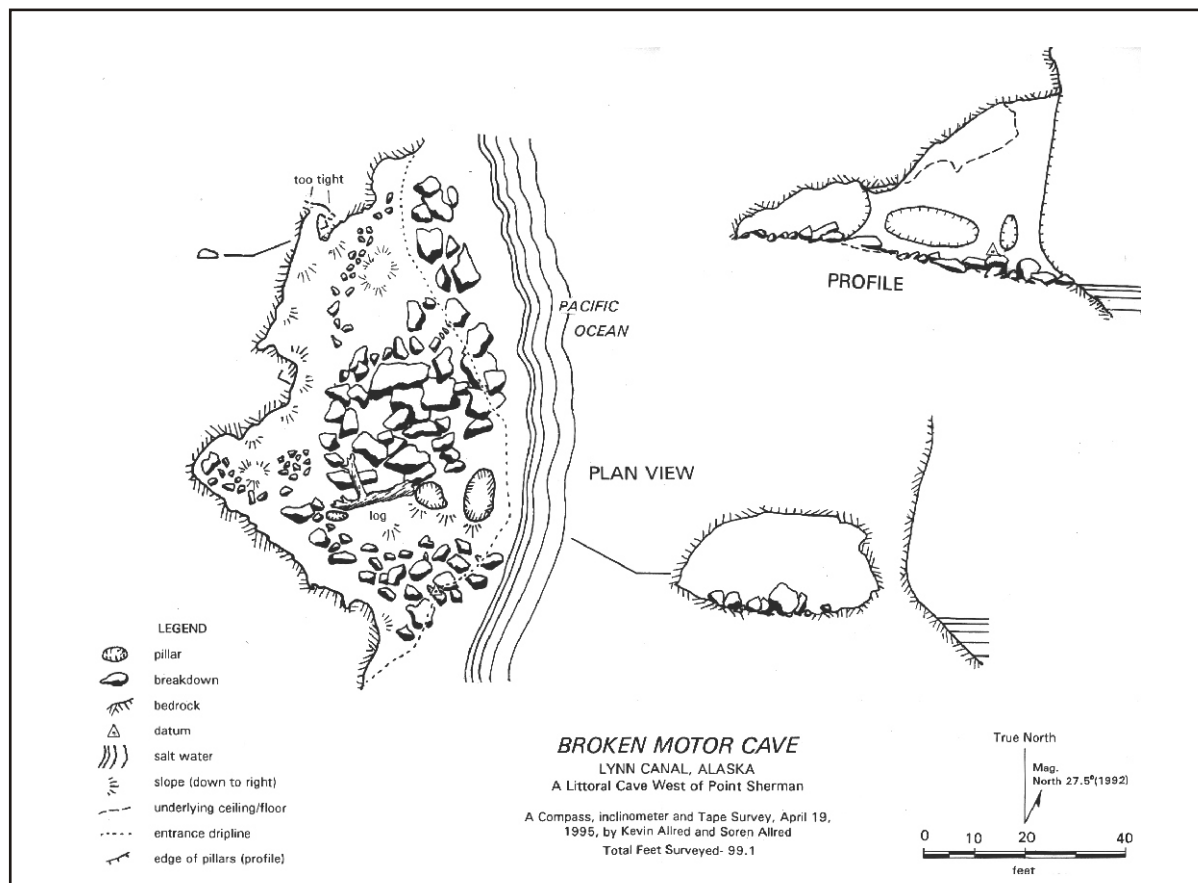
The following listed members of the Glacier Grotto, the Alaska statewide chapter of the National Speleological Society, and of the Tongass Cave Project, dedicated to the preservation of caves and karst systems in Southeast Alaska, would like to go on record in opposition to the Juneau access road between Haines/Skagway and Juneau. We are particularly opposed to any road being proposed for the west side of Lynn Canal due to concerns for impacts to karst landscapes.

An approximate 8-mile linear section of the proposed road along the west side of Lynn Canal (Alternative 3) running from just south of Endicott River northwards to the mainland at approximately Sullivan Rock has well documented karst features of moderate to high vulnerability (Dames and Moore, 1994, Allred 1995 and Love, 1999). While we are pleased to see that the Department of Transportation (ADOT) has included the 1994 Dames and Moore study, the 1995 and 1999 articles from the Alaskan Caver in their analysis of road routes along the west side of Lynn Canal, we feel the significance of the karst in this area has been minimalized. Developed karst systems and the carbonate rock caves in the Lynn Canal area of Southeast Alaska is geologically rare, especially at sea level, and may have archeological and paleontological significance. In 1998, a jointly-funded week long expedition involving members of the Tongass Cave Project, Glacier Grotto and US Forest Service, inventoried the area described above and discovered over 30 karst features, significant caves, sinkholes and

drainage systems along the proposed Alternative 3 road route. Twenty-five of these features were significant caves that would require full protection under the definitions in the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988. In addition, building roads over carbonate bedrock poses a possible public safety risk with high likelihood of subsidence and possible collapse of the road-bed into underground cave systems. Finally, the results of the 1998 Lynn Canal inventory indicated an approximate total of 20% of the currently proposed road route along the west side of Lynn Canal would overlie karst terrain, of moderate to high vulnerability, not 12% as estimated by ADOT defined primarily as moderate vulnerability (SDEIS 4-91). The SDEIS is unclear how ADOT determined their vulnerability ratings. We request that this information be disclosed in the Final EIS.

Although none of the members the Glacier Grotto or Tongass Cave Project members know of any significant karst features along the eastern side of Lynn Canal, no inventory that we are aware of, has ever been done. We request that additional geotechnical studies, addressing the presence or absence of karst and caves, be completed along the east side of Lynn Canal before the FHWA proceeds with a Record of Decision. In conclusion, we strongly oppose any road development along the west side of Lynn Canal (NO to Alternative 3) and would need to see additional karst and cave inventory along the eastern route to agree to support a road along that route. Our preferred alternative (Alternative 4) would be additional regular ferry service, not the high-speed ferry alternative, with continued service from Auke Bay. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Juneau Access project.

Sincerely, members of the Glacier Grotto and the Tongass Cave Project



This map was first published with a trip report in *Alaskan Caver*, Vol. 15, no. 3

BROKEN MOTOR CAVE

LYNN CANAL, ALASKA
 TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

REPORT #C1
 by Kevin Allred
 TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
 NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
 Oct. 31, 2001

Broken Motor Cave is a littoral cave formed in Silurian marble. The cave has two prominent entrances and three pillars. The thinly bedded marble dips steeply towards the west and resembles the marble deposits at Basket Bay on Chichagof Island.

Broken Motor Cave was surveyed by Soren Allred and Kevin Allred on April 19, 1995. A total of 99.1 feet was surveyed through the two entrances to the obvious end. A tree fragment lies midway in the cave and the floors are littered mostly in breakdown. The glacier rebound rate is about one foot every ten years in this area, so the cave was still very active only 60 to 80 years ago. More investigations in the region might reveal older littoral caves in higher benches. The littoral karst of the area is spectacular, and contains solution pans up to four feet in diameter. ¶

SPARK PLUG #5 CAVE

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, ALASKA
 TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

REPORT #278
 by Kevin Allred
 TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
 NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
 Oct. 31, 2001

Spark Plug #5 Cave was named by Allen Murray (see *Alaskan Caver* Vol.17, No.1 and Vol. 17, No.3). It had been surveyed by members of the Glacier Grotto, but the data was lost. It was relocated from a lead by Allen, and re-surveyed by Kevin Allred on June 28, 2001. A piece of flagging at the entrance identified it as Spark Plug #5, and included the names of Allen Murray and Dave Valentine, 4/11/96.

Spark Plug # 5 is basically the upper arch of a nearly horizontal spacious phreatic tube which is floored in rock fragments. In only 32 feet the cave ends in an angular rock choke. It appears that this cave has possibly been breached by glacial action, as just beyond the choked end is a deep surface solution channel. The cave seems a likely spot for a bear hibernaculum, but on the surface of the rocky floor no bones were found.

(continues on page 7)

SPARK PLUG CAVE... Continued from page 6

However, in two places near the center of the cave, rocks on the floor are fur-polished. At the end of the cave a fungus gnat larvae was found. Total feet surveyed is 23.2 feet and the depth is 4 feet.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Spark Plug #5 Cave should be protected from timber harvest along with the nearby caves (Zina Cave, Dave's Den, Tom's Tunnel, and Photo Ice Cave). This cave can be visited by the general public. It would be interesting to see how these small, shallow caves relate to the much larger and deeper Zina Cave. ππ

2005 USFS / GLACIER GROTTO EXPEDITION NOTICE

Hi friends,

Time for the annual horse trading around the dates for this year's expedition! Responding to the input of many people, we'll be moving the expedition forward to July this year. This seems to be the best fit for everyone's schedule.

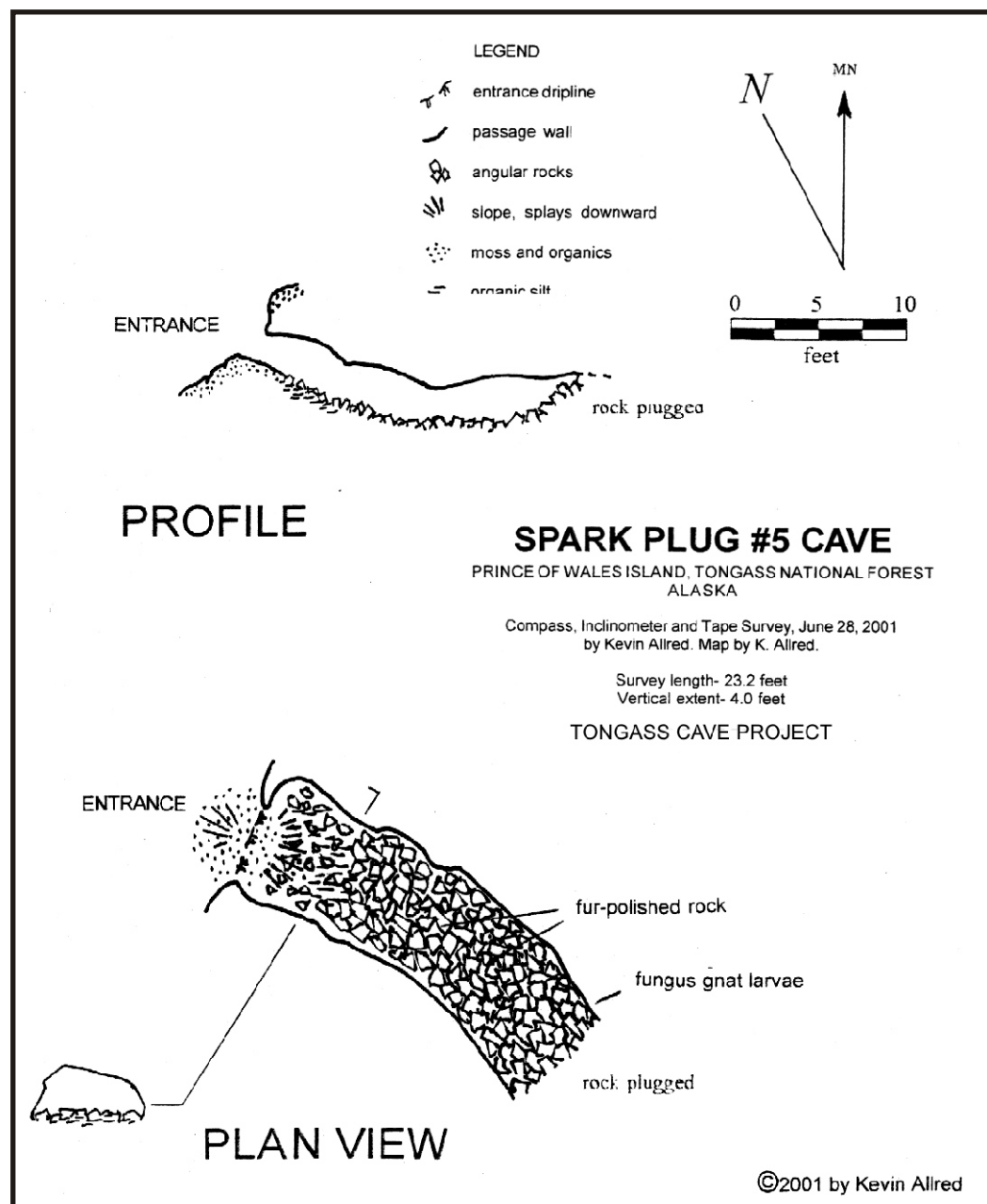
So here's what I'm going to suggest: Let's aim for July 8th July 29th. The 8th is a Friday. I'd like to get together in Thorne Bay that evening, providing rides from the afternoon ferry into Hollis. I would also like to spend at least one full day doing a refresher safety and rescue self-help session. Those who attended last

years clinic with BCCR can refresh their skills and make it for the rescue refresher, too. I'm also open to ideas. Let me know what you're thinking and what your schedules look like. Ho also share knowledge and experience with others. I figure we could probably rope up again in the TNB gym.

After that, I'm going to suggest we head to Heceta Island. There are several ongoing projects there that we would like to continue working on, including Icy Fate, Missing You and other littoral caves, collecting more GPS locations for caves and karst features, looking for new caves, etc ... I figure we'll spend ten days there, depending on how much work there is to do. For the second half of the expedition, I'm thinking of Kosciusko, though I'm waiting for word back from Jim on where exactly our time would be best spent. We have a few going leads from last year on the north side of Francis, and would be open to looking into other spots on Kosciusko.

So that's the schedule I'm proposing. I'd like to keep comings and goings to the mid-expedition break between sites. I'd also like as many people as possible to try to pe this finds you all well, look forward to hearing from you.

Kevin ππ

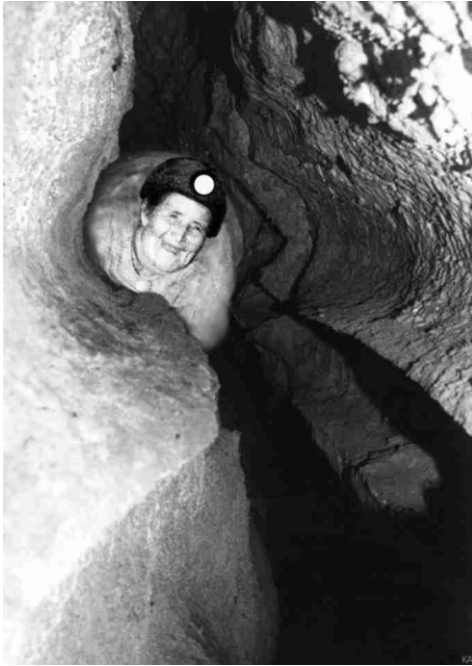


In order for our newsletter to compete with the tabloids I believe it is time for us to initiate headlines that grab readers. **

Lose 25 pounds in just three weeks on the diet Phreada Phreatic used. ****

No, she doesn't eat cave creatures and slurp cave dirt (although that is kind of tasty). She just gets stuck for 2 days every week. In 3 weeks she hopes to be able to fit into her wedding dress for her fourth wedding.

What follows is a brief history of her marriages. She married Rubber Caver first, but that wedding only lasted for a short stretch. She was home alone too often as Rubber Caver was



"I melted off 25 lbs. in Blowing in the Wind Cave!"

out saving caves, while she was at home writing her columns. Then she married Batboy but can you imagine eating dinner with someone who was always snapping at insects, and of course there was Batgirl. Her third marriage was to Batman, but it turned out that he really liked Robin instead. After that she decided not to marry a cave type person again, so she got married to Brad Pitt, (Well, maybe she did still have a hang-up about caving). This was before Jennifer. But that ended when Brad wanted kids and Phreada wanted to pursue her writing career. It didn't help when Phreada realized that Brads last name was not just a typo.

So, now Phreada has set her sights on her next marriage, (no, its not official yet) but she wants to snare Dr. Science. After the last column where Dr. Science made that

comment about women, Phreada has some ideas and props for their wedding night (purchased on line at dominatrix.com). Although her great plans might be interrupted

...SHE WANTS TO SNARE DR SCIENCE!

by the terminal disease she has to fight after recovering from her latest secret plastic surgery.

** Any resemblance of any of the people in the story to actual persons is purely coincidental. Readers, for maximum enjoyment please be prepared to suspend belief.

**** This makes a total of 125 tons she has lost on different diets. Caution in the caves must be taken so as not to pull a Floyd Collins, because Doctors do not recommend that kind of weight loss.



"Kazumura Cave shrunk me 30 more pounds!"



"While stuck in the gate of Lechiguilla I lost 15 more ugly pounds!"



Phreada hopes to wear this gown in May!



Pete Smith in Roaring Road Cave (Prince of Wales Island), photo by Gavin Newman/Greenpeace



Steve Lewis admires dripstone formations in a SE Alaskan cave, photo by Gavin Newman/Greenpeace

NOTES ON SOME NEW LED LIGHTS

By Scott Linn

Reprinted from the Cascade Caver, January- February 2005

Unless you have been living in a cave somewhere, you might not have seen that LED lights have REALLY taken off in the last few years. This is a very good thing for cavers, for a number of reasons:

- 1) LEDs are very shock resistant
- 2) LEDs produce a whiter light than incandescent bulbs
- 3) LEDs can be dimmed, with no decrease in efficiency (usually it increases)
- 4) LEDs can be run at very low power levels overall

If all you were ever going to do is run an LED light at full power, where the light output is >1 Watt, then it doesn't really gain you anything. The fact that you can dim them is what makes them so versatile and useful. The battery power savings by using only the light you need greatly increases the amount of time you can get out of a set of batteries, which often means you can use a smaller battery such as AA vs. C, or AAA vs. AA, or you can carry fewer spares. This is really important on multi-day caving trips or expedition caving.

One of the newer LED lights which has recently become available is the Princeton Tec EOS. This is a light which continues the trend of using a single high-power LED vs. an array. The LED is a 1.25 Watt Luxeon emitter from Lumileds. The advantage of a single emitter vs. an array of LEDs is that it can be focused. An array gives a very nice area light, but there isn't much "throw" or distance brightness. The EOS changes that.

What further differentiates the EOS is that it has a special optic lens which focuses the LED to a very narrow beam of light. This narrow beam is quite bright: You can still see it when comparing it to a 10 degree wide 5W beam! What that means is that you get a very

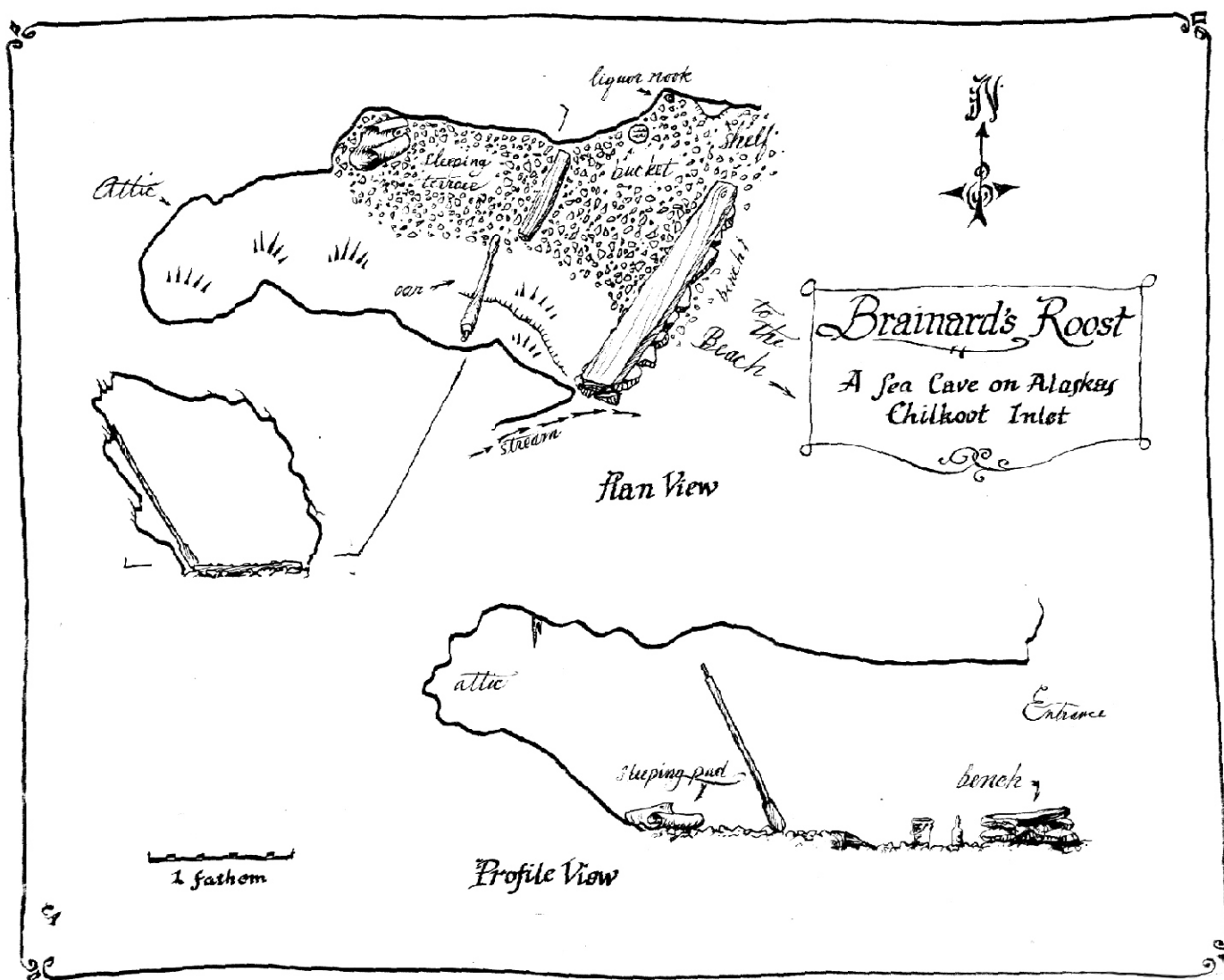
small spot which is very bright. Some people will actually like caving with this type of beam, as it is somewhat similar to a highly focused Mag light or similar incandescent light. Some cavers use pretty tight beams in their lights anyway due to the feature of incandescent focusing which creates a "hole" in the middle of the beam pattern. There is actually a little bit of side spill from the light too, so it's not as bad as just a super bright spot.

The EOS also has 3 brightness levels plus an emergency flash mode. I was glad to see they dropped the second flash mode, since that wasn't actually that useful. Power is supplied by 3 AAA batteries, which means that the light is integrated and quite small, but doesn't have a lot of battery power behind it, so it is relatively short-burning at high output.

In order to get an idea of where they set the brightness levels, I opened up the case and removed the batteries. The case is easy to open via a knurled knob on the back. It comes from the factory quite tight, so that you need a screwdriver or something else to put in the slot to loosen the knob. Princeton Tec, however, was quite smart in that they sized one of the plastic headband clips to fit into this slot, so you are never short of a method to open the case even if you slightly over-tightened the knob. Still, I recommend not over-tightening it to avoid problems in the cave.

After removing the batteries, I hooked up a variable power supply, set the voltage to 4.5V, and measured the current at the 3 brightness levels. I also varied the power supply voltage to see how the light responded. Princeton Tec "did the right thing" and incorporated a full step-down power supply in this light, which means it will stay at a constant brightness until the battery voltage drops somewhere below around 3.6-3.8V. That means that that you will get constant light using alkaline batteries

(continues on page 11)



NOTES... continued from page 10

until the batteries are around half depleted, at which point the light will start getting dimmer as the battery voltage goes further down.

The 3 brightness levels roughly correspond to 1.25W, 0.36W, and 0.1W. If the light put out a constant brightness for each of those levels over battery life, that would roughly correlate to 3 hours/13 hours/60 hours of light. In reality, those numbers will probably be slightly higher in the higher brightness case, and about the same for the lowest brightness level. Still, that's not too bad for a light running on 3 AAA batteries! Again, you have to evaluate whether the quality of the light (tight beam) is right for you. It isn't for me for a main light, but some people can get by. You could also put a diffuser of some sort on the front to get some spread, which of course would decrease the brightness both from scattering, and from the beam being wider.

The EOS can be had for as little as \$27.00 from Amazon.com, with more typical prices

in the mid-\$30s. In my opinion, this is a very nice little LED light with nice features for a good price.

Another new light along the same lines as the EOS is the Nite-Hawk ECO. Nite-Hawk is a Canadian company which mainly makes bike lights. They were looking for a light which would have great throw for cyclists so they could see down the road/trail at night while traveling at speed. Nite-Hawk ended up developing an optic lens of their own for use with a 1.25W Luxeon emitter. This optic is somewhat larger than the Princeton Tec optic, and has a slight efficiency advantage (a few percent less light loss). By the way, the optics in both of these lights are referred to as TIR or TIROS optics, with TIR meaning "Total Internal Reflection". Basically that means the lens keeps the light inside with little loss before reflecting out the front. Most lenses being designed for use with Luxeon LEDs utilize TIR optics. ¶

The Alaskan Caver
2525 Fourth Ave.
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Address Service Requested



Roaring Road Cave on Prince of Wales Island, photo by Gavin Newman/Greenpeace